



THE HOUGHTON STAR

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Area Businesses Feel Effects of Current Economic Crisis

By Monica Sandreczki

The financial crisis has affected cities across the country and around the globe, from Wall Street to Main Street. Out of Washington, D.C., in a press briefing on November 7, White House Deputy Press Secretary Tony Fratto commented that the root causes of the economic crisis are credit and housing.

"The credit markets froze up. And once that happened, no one was willing to lend to one another; inter-bank lending was coming to a standstill," said White House Press Secretary Dana Perino, on Oct. 24. She commented that the fundamental problems have been the drop in prices of houses and the glut on the housing market.

How, though, has it affected the businesses in the local Houghton community?

"My total volume of sales is down. My total sales are down about 15% from about a year ago," said Larry Wilson, who runs The Bird Feeder Shop next to the entrance to the college.

Wilson said that his core group of customers is still buying from him, but they are not buying as much product as they have in the past. At his shop, he sells bird feed, bird feeders, and birdhouses.

The price of his merchandise has gone up due to prices being raised by his supplier. For example, a 50lb. bag of black oil sunflower seeds, which he sold for \$16 one year ago, is now selling for \$27. He added that he made a higher percentage off of the \$16 bag than he does off of selling the sunflower seeds for \$27.

He also noted that he is not a good indication of how the economic crisis is affecting Houghton because his business is small and is "more of a glorified hobby than a business." He does not keep regular hours or advertise.

Wilson said that some of his competitors are doing as much as 40% less business than in previous years.

At the Allegany County Schools Federal Credit Union in Fillmore, manager, Craig Hodnett had a different story to tell in regard to the effects of the financial crisis.

"We haven't seen any ill-effects larger financial institutions may have," said Hodnett.

This Federal Credit Union does not lend money to other credit unions, which could be why they weren't affected, according to Hodnett. It is a \$9 million credit union, which is a small organization.

The Allegany County Schools Federal Credit Union is a non-commercial credit union which means that they are exclusive and only serve certain people with whom they have a charter, in this case, faculty and non-faculty workers in the Allegany County Schools. This credit union serves 2400 members. According to Hodnett, the reasons his credit union was not affected is because they have "no subprime mortgages that nearly brought down other financial institutions," a "solid, loyal member base," and have been "relatively conservative in [their] investments with excess cash."

"Even though we're in Allegany County—this isn't the Hamptons—we've done really well, and have been very fortunate and cautious," said Hodnett.

Bridget Samuels comes from a self-employed and also a family-owned business perspective. Samuels is a cosmetologist at Personal Effects at the bottom of the Rothenbuhler path on Route 19. She and other cosmetologist rent out space and pay rent every week to operate in the building under the name Personal Effects, but each has her own supply of products and clients.

She too has felt the firm hand of the economic crisis. Her supplies have raised their prices for hair color, nail supplies, and other product. For example, in February, a tube of color cost \$6.50 from the retailer, but went up to \$6.80 in August. Now, it has gone up to nearly \$9.

"We just raised most of our prices at the beginning of the month," said Samuels. "Most everything went up two to five dollars."

She has not seen decline in the number of her clients for hair appointments. However, according to Samuels, since nail service is more of a luxury, she has seen a

• *Economy continued on page 2*

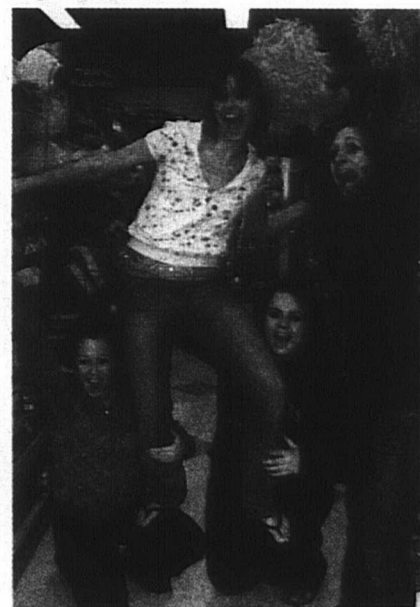
YFC: Reaching Out to Local Youth

By Kristen Palmer

Of the many opportunities Houghton students have to be involved in the local community, Youth for Christ is one of the oldest: the organization has been running since 1944 and is still going strong in Houghton and surrounding communities.

The affiliation is an outreach program aimed at non-Christians all over the world and has flourished at several schools in the area, including schools in Wellsville, Friendship, Cuba, Belfast, Angelica and Fillmore. Close to 40 students at Houghton volunteer with the organization by selecting a school and committing to visit the teens on a weekly basis. "Houghton volunteers go to the schools once a week, and I visit the Houghton campus once a week," said Joelle Potts, leader of the group at Wellsville Central Schools and a '07 Houghton graduate.

Potts, who is new on the job, is in



YFC leaders from Houghton schedule fun activities to reach out to local teenagers.

charge of campus life for Wellsville schools and works about 20 to 25 hours a week with the students in the community. She decided to become involved because of her love for youth. She meets with the nine Wellsville volunteers every week to discuss and plan activities they can share with the students at

• *Youth continued on page 3*

Simplicity Initiative Switches Focus to Consumerism, Sponsors Consumer Fast

By Shane Marcus

Recently, the Residence Life staff kicked-off the second phase of their year-long Simplicity Initiative. According to the Initiative's webpage, "The Simplicity Initiative is meant to help provide time and space for the Houghton community to engage in alternative practices related to issues of busyness, consumerism, media, and creation care that will deepen our understanding of how these areas impact our individual and community life."

Centered around the theme of examining consumerism, this part of the initiative is meant to be a time to consider how the commercialism of American culture affect Christians, especially in the time leading up to Christmas. This phase of the Simplicity Initiative follows several months of focus on the nature and role of the Sabbath in Christian life

at Houghton.

Building off that foundation, the Residence Life staff is sponsoring a consumer fast for the Christmas season. Junior Emily Tullar, a Gillette Hall RA, said that for her "this involves making a shopping list of the things I need and buying only those items... avoiding the things I want."

The guidelines of the fast do not prevent people from spending money on food, gas, or school expenses. A Western New York clause is written in to allow people to buy things like necessary winter accessories. The stated purpose of the consumer fast is to take time to urge participants to consider where they should be directing their resources, considering not only their own desires but also the needs in the world around them. Senior Mark Satta said that the hope is that Houghton students will be more

• *Initiative continued on page 2*

Inside
this
Issue...

Lantern Releases
New Edition
Page 3

From the Editor's Desk:
The Paradox of a
Christian Institution
Page 7

Artist of the Week:
Jessica Camp
Page 8



THE WORLD OUT THERE

By Joel VanderWeele

Conflict in Congo

U.N. officials have recently reported that Congolese soldiers have been looting villages, raping women, and ransacking homes in and around the capital of Goma. A ceasefire was called for by rebel leader Nkunda, but skirmishes continue to break out all over the country, killing hundreds of civilians and displacing villagers from their homes. In response to the conflict, neighboring Angola has pledged to send troops into the DR Congo. The European Union and the Southern African Development Community will oversee the military operation. The fighting between rebel and government forces began in August when tensions left over from the 1994 slaughter of ethnic Tutsis by the Hutus in Rwanda boiled over and Tutsi rebel forces mobilized. Over 250,000 Congolese have been displaced by the violence, adding to the 800,000 already displaced from previous conflicts.

Russian Sub Gas Leak

At least twenty people were killed and twenty-one injured by a gas leak on a nuclear-powered Russian submarine on Saturday. The apparent cause of the leak was an accidental activation of the fire-extinguishing system. The system is designed to disperse Freon gas, removing all the oxygen from the area, suffocating the fire. It is unknown how the system was activated, but military prosecutors are investigating the incident. Reports from Moscow assure that the problems were not linked to radiation poisoning or a malfunctioning nuclear reactor and claim that the sub is still in working order. The submarine, which was undergoing sea trials near the Sea of Japan, held 208 passengers and was set to be leased to the Indian navy. This is Russia's worst submarine disaster since August 2000, when the nuke-sub Kursk sank in the Barents Sea, killing 118.

Darfur Ceasefire

Under mounting pressure from the international community, Sudan's President Omar Hassan al-Bashir has called for a ceasefire in the Darfur region. Al-Bashir, who has been accused of genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court, announced that the Sudanese government would begin efforts to disarm militias and make weapons harder to obtain. Rebel groups have already announced that they cannot agree to the ceasefire, but the government in Khartoum plans to send diplomats to the rebel groups to promote peace. The ceasefire agreement also includes

a request for an independent monitoring body that could track and manage the peace efforts in Darfur. International authorities fear that this ceasefire is simply an empty proclamation meant to appease foreign diplomats and win favorable attention from the media. It is estimated that 300,000 people have died and two million have fled their homes in Darfur since 2003.

Iran Tests Missile

The Iranian Press TV news program announced that Iran has test-fired a new missile near the border of Iraq. The test coincides with a warning to the United States that any violation of airspace by American forces would not be tolerated. The warning goes on to state that an American attack on Iranian territory would result in an attack on U.S. interests, an attack on Israel, and the closing of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital thoroughfare for oil tankers. The missile test follows similar displays of aggression in July, when Iran launched nine advanced missiles which had a range capable of reaching U.S. and Israeli bases in the Middle East.

Gay Marriage Ban

Tens of thousands of protestors have staged demonstrations in opposition to the recent voter-approved ban on same-sex marriages in California. Many of the protests have focused on the involvement of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, which contributed an estimated \$15 million to the campaign against gay marriage. Because of their significant monetary contributions, thousands of protestors have signed a petition to have the tax-exempt status of the church revoked. Other protestors do not wish to take away the tax-exemption, but want to make sure the church remains a religious body, and not a political one. Although the protests have focused primarily on the LDS, Mormons make up only 2% of the population in California.

Leftist Nations Evict DEA

Bolivia has given the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) an ultimatum to leave the country within three months. According to Bolivian President Evo Morales, the DEA was causing divisions in the already unstable country which recently adopted a new Constitution that gives more control to the state and protects the rights of indigenous Bolivians. The DEA has also reduced its effort in Venezuela, citing poor cooperation within the Venezuelan government to combat drug cartels. Both Bolivia and Venezuela have also expelled their US Ambassadors this year.

• Initiative continued from page 1

aware of "the numerous charitable causes visible to the student body."

Tullar summed up the purposes of the fast: "We are trying to get people to think about the issues behind consumerism - the oppression of the poor, waste of money - and hopefully make changes to their everyday lives."

On November 4, around 60 students met in the cafeteria for a panel discussion about the practical ways to be more conscious of the effects every

day decisions

Americans make

about money

have on the rest

of the world.

The members of

the panel were

administrator

Brian Webb,

professor of

Recreation

and Physical

Education Thomas

Kettlekamp, and

English professor

Susan Bruxvoort

Lipscomb. They

discussed a range

of questions, from

shopping in locally

owned stores to

buying Fair Trade

products that are

more supportive

of developing

communities.

Lipscomb also

encouraged students

to buy better quality

products that

might be more

expensive, but

would last longer.

This was tied to

the issue of clothing,

and the panelists

emphasized the

need to try to live

with what one has,

instead of trying

to live up to the

latest fashions

that one might

want.

Stewardship was

another idea

covered in the

forum. Kettlekamp,

referring to the

writings of Paul,

reminded students

of the need to

count everything

they do as joy,

even if it is difficult

to live different

lives than the

culture around

them.

Lipscomb said

that it was important

to think of stewardship

not only in

terms of personal

practices, but also

consider how actions

affect people

in the global

economy.

Satta also spoke

to the importance

of stewardship,

saying that he

hoped that "students

are encouraged [by

the consumer fast]

to stop spending

on unnecessary

items, to be good

stewards of their

money so that

they can not only

save themselves

the money, but

also so that they

can look into

other ways to

use the money

they are not

spending for

the good of

those in need."

The consumer

fast was announced

in chapel a few

weeks ago with

a video from

Advent Conspiracy.

According to

statistics from

the video, Americans

spend \$450 billion

every year during

the Christmas

season, in contrast

with the \$10 billion

it would take

to solve the clean

water problem

around the world.

The video

encouraged people

to reconsider

gift giving for

the Christmas

season, to give of

themselves, to

make creative

gifts and give

their money away.

The Initiative

will continue

in the next few

weeks with a

"Consumerism

Table" at certain

meals. Also, on

November 18 an

event is planned

to aid participants

in coming up

with concrete

ways to make

gifts for their

families for

Christmas instead

of buying them.

This phase of

the initiative

will end with

a debriefing

discussion after

Koinonia on

December 7. 

owned by the

Willard J. Houghton

Foundation and

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The Foundation

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"The mini-

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This may be

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over recent

weeks. Another

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of convenience

store purchases,

which tend to

be emergencies

or impulse

purchases,"

said Hannigan.

While isolated

from the rest

of the world

in many

respects,

Houghton

and surrounding

areas are not

exempt from

the dramatic

financial crisis

from which

Wall Street

is currently

trying to

recover. Even

in this relatively

small community,

it is apparent

that upheaval

of the economy

has widespread

effects. 

attended by

Houghton

students and

the community

is the mini-mart.

According to

Cheryl Hannigan,

Administrative

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Finance at

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"Think Tradition": Lanthorn Releases Biannual Edition

By Amy Buckingham

Released Wednesday, November 12, the Fall 2008 edition of the Lanthorn, Houghton's biannual poetry, prose and art anthology displays the talents of the campus in a format that one is encouraged to "read through till the end."

"The Lanthorn has always been a forum that I can go to, to hear the voices that are speaking on our campus right now. It is the closest thing we have to bohemian expression outside of the art building," said junior, Cameron Gayford. A collection of 34 pieces of poetry, prose and art, the Lanthorn is an opportunity for students to display their opinions through artistic expression outside of class.

Senior Business Editor, Kyle Vitale, said of this edition, "I'm really happy with how the collection speaks to itself and the bigger issues that Houghton is currently discussing." This particular issue of the Lanthorn tackles topics relevant to Houghton through pieces like Clara Jacob's "Storm, for Emily," a work of poetry dedicated to Emily Crikelair and Rachel Stowe's "Rainbow Children" which depicts an eye-opening missions experience. Pieces like Erin Clark's "Waiting in the Park" and Olivia Butz's "Gherkin and Church" reference the many off-campus opportunities that student's undertake and the life changing effects that they have.

"We're trying to breed creativity, and the Lanthorn is a perfect outlet for that."

Unique to the Lanthorn this fall is the application of a theme, an addition that has not been apart of this publication in the past. Prompted by Houghton's 125th anniversary, the Lanthorn is themed "Think Tradition," focusing not only on those traditions associated with Houghton's history, but also students' personal tradition. "We're amazed at how unified this issue is, as we applied a theme for the first time. The whole book is about looking at the past and the future and this issue of the Lanthorn

displays pieces that show students combining that well," said Chloe Ackerman, Editor-in-Chief of the Lanthorn.

Along with the addition of a theme, the Lanthorn has begun more frequent publications, with the introduction of "Chat Books," small selections of poetry, prose and art based around a more specific idea. The first Chat Book appeared over Homecoming weekend, as a collection of pieces created by Houghton Alumni. The next is due out in coming weeks, a collection of faculty pieces, and a third will be published with the beginning of the spring semester, composed entirely of entries to the Lanthorn writing competition in December.

Due to the addition of the Chat Books and an earlier release of the

actual publication, admissions to the Lanthorn were relatively low this year. Layout Editor, M. Chase Whittemore says, "One thing I'm proud of is the higher amount of prose, and we hope to see even more in future editions."

"As a liberal arts college, we're trying to breed creativity and the Lanthorn is a perfect outlet for that," said freshman, Nathalie Van Der Rijst at the release party on Wednesday. The party involved guests through poetry readings, encouraging attendees to choose a poem from a table covered in poetry books to read aloud. A staple in the Houghton community, the Lanthorn has published again, much to the delight of students and faculty alike.



Senior Kyle Vitale reads a poem of his choice to eager listeners at the Lanthorn Release Party on Wednesday

Photo by Jessica Camp

• Youth continued from page 1
the school.

"I organize the activities that we're going to do, plan out lessons and discussions, and meet with the volunteers that come from Houghton," Potts said. "We plan what we're going to do with the kids. We do anything we can to draw the kids in."

The group's goal is to support each other in making good choices while introducing the students to the Christian faith. The volunteers try to fill an hour and a half or so with fun and engaging activities in an attempt to keep the students interested. "Usually our time at the schools is structured. We share announcements, play about four or five games, lead discussions, eat dinner and just hang out," said Emma Hughes, co-president of the group. "We try to keep everyone as active as possible."

Hughes and her co-president, Kaylie Sauter, both volunteer at Friendship schools but keep in

touch with the other leaders because every so often the groups from each school come together for combined group events. "We have gym nights once a month at Houghton, we have ice cream socials, and we try to put together a game every semester," Hughes said. This semester, the group is organizing an FBI hunt in the Elmira mall. The volunteers will hide in costumes throughout the mall, and the students will have to try to find them. The team that wins will earn a free lunch.

Not only does Youth for Christ provide an opportunity for students to get to know their peers from different areas, involvement in the club also offers a sense of security that may not be present in other areas of their lives. "A lot of kids filter in and out, but some truly commit to the program," Hughes said. "Some leaders have been here

since freshman year, so they know we will keep coming back, and they know that if they need anything, they can talk to us."

Another Youth For Christ leader, Andrew Irish, said, "I strive for YFC club time to be a time where kids in the Wellsville area can come and just be; I hope they can stop fearing and worrying, and just live."

Youth for Christ also gives at-risk students something to do, according to Potts. "If Houghton people were to come into the community, they would see how much peer pressure really exists. So many students are involved in drugs, drinking and even sex," she said. "[Youth for Christ] keeps them out of trouble. It is a nice place for them to come see that somebody cares about them."

The program attempts to offer a safe haven for students in the community, but the club also

benefits the leaders involved. Hughes originally became involved in the ministry because she wasn't from the area, and she wanted to get to know her new community. However, her involvement soon became much more than that. She quickly developed meaningful relationships with the students.

"Some nights I don't feel like going," she said. "But I get so much gratification. The volunteers get something out of the experience, and it's great knowing we are able to help people who may not have gotten the help beforehand."

The group's goal is to see the students come to accept the Christian faith through real expressions of friendship and love, according to Potts. "We want to see kids of every group and of every nation have an opportunity to hear about Christ. We don't go out and preach. We build friendships first and eventually talk to them about Christ," she said. "We want the kids to realize that they are loved and cared for."

"I hope they can stop fearing and worrying, and just live."



Leeland Concert Review: Sometimes Worshipful, Always Melodic

By Jody MacDonald

Grammy and Dove Award-nominated band Leeland's final show on their fall tour took place in Wesley chapel Monday night. Near capacity crowds roared as the Texas based progressive rockers took the stage at 8 pm. The band opened the two hour, 19 song set with three back-to-back songs from their newest album *Opposite Way*: "Wake Up," "Don't Go Away" and "Let it Out Now." The first half of the show was punctuated by lead

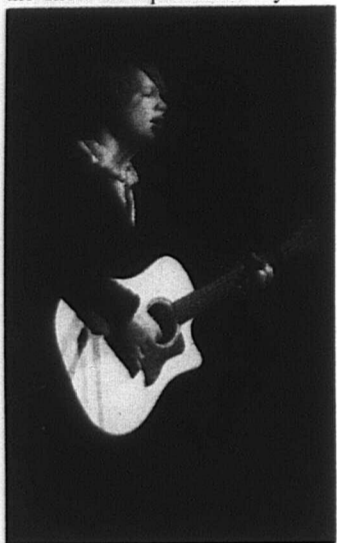


Photo by Ian Galloway

singer Leeland Mooring's intros, stories and spiritual exhortations between each song. The band's sound was tight and focused as they transitioned into "Yes You Have" from 2006's *Sound of Melodies*. This was the point in the show where the band audibly hit their stride. The crowd raised their hands to the familiar tune for the first time in the show; as Mooring moved from the mic, the audience responded in a unified chorus of the lyrics, "You've stolen my heart, yes, You have!"

The band was warmed up and ready for another hour of music, which soon progressed to an acoustic set featuring only brothers Jack and Leeland Mooring on piano and guitar. The duo performed a handful of hymns and originals before lead vocalist Leeland led the crowd through a traditional salvation message based on John 14. He paced the stage, visibly passionate about the students in attendance, urging them to take seriously Jesus' claim that "anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these."

The song "Brightest Days" from *Opposite Way* ended the acoustic set. The crowd responded



Photo by Ian Galloway

The Leeland performance on Monday drew near capacity crowds in Wesley Chapel.

energetically to the next three songs, which featured more velvety distorted guitars with Leeland's precise falsetto providing the perfect counterpoint to the driving rhythm section. In tribute to the freshly fallen snow blanketing Houghton, the band treated the audience to an impromptu rendering of Vince Guaraldi's Christmas favorite, "Linus and Lucy." Leeland ended the show with an expected encore of one lone piano number and a compulsory straight rock anthem that soon had fans in frenzy –

dancing "as David danced."

The show was a success on many levels; most significantly because it endowed students with hope, imparting a renewed sense of purpose to their calling and exemplifying the countercultural lifestyle we are required to model as Christians.

Leeland is: Leeland Mooring (lead vocals, guitar); Jack Mooring (keyboard, background vocals); Jake Holtz (bass); Mike Smith (drums); and Matt Campbell (lead guitar).

The Houghton Gridiron: Flag Football Season in Review

By Mike Danylak

As leaves are falling here at Houghton, there is always the promise of more papers, late nights of studying, and added stress from work. But above all of these there is flag football. Intramural flag football this season featured six teams vying for the top spot and, more than bragging rights, a championship t-shirt. Out of the six, there are three teams that have been tenured for four long seasons on the "Field of Dreams Gridiron." These teams were the Ligers, under the leadership of senior Dan Liggett; the Sloppy Seconds, under senior captain Dan Giles; and finally, the Great Danes led by quarterback Ed Santoro. With all three of these teams making championship game appearances in past seasons, there was promise for a phenomenal season. Along with them were newer teams formed in the past year such as the Rafters, Team X-Treme, and Prison Mike.

After all the franchises had played each other once during the regular season tournament, it was playoff time. Coming in the first two seeds, the Great Danes and the Sloppy Seconds secured bye weeks, while the remaining four teams were set to play for the right to move on to the semi-final round. Team X-Treme moved on to play

the Rafters. In the other match, Prison Mike defeated the Ligers in a hard-fought game in the snow.

The semi-finals brought further excitement as the Great Danes defeated Team X-Treme by only two points in a heart stopping finish. Meanwhile, in the other game, Prison Mike forced an upset against the higher-seeded Sloppy Seconds. The championship match was set: the upstart Prison Mike versus the high-powered offense of the Great Danes.

The championship did not disappoint, and proved to be a shoot-out as sophomores Alex Vitale, Mike Varriale, and Dan Albrecht were poised to keep pace with seniors Ed Santoro, Chris Weibel, and Jon Herr. A fast start to the game saw points pile up quickly and several lead changes. Finally, the nail in the coffin came with a final touchdown from the Great Danes, giving them a five-point lead as time ran out. The final score was 60-55. It was the second championship for the Great Danes in the last three years and a great note on which to finish their four-year career.

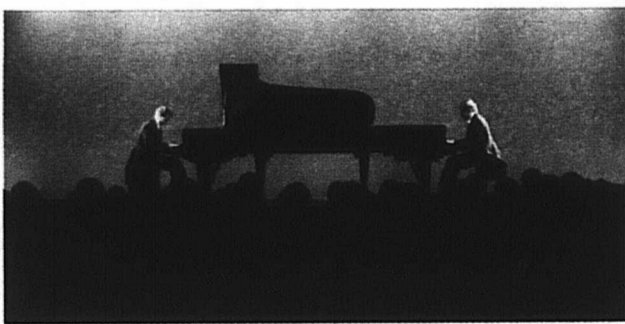
Three of the six teams in the tournament this year saw their four-year legacies come to an end. The Great Danes, Sloppy Seconds, and the Ligers will have the memories of great catches, interceptions for

touchdowns, and nail biting finishes that they will take with them—all the glory intramural football has to offer.

Indeed, the greatest tournament of the fall semester has come to an end, and a champion has

been crowned; but for other underclassman teams, it is time to start scouting and rebuilding for their own championship run next fall. They will prepare for the right to be king on the Houghton Gridiron.

Richard and John CONTIGUGLIA



"PHENOMENAL DUO-PIANISTS"

-The Washington Post

8 p.m., November 15, 2008

Wesley Chapel

This program will be repeated in London at the National Gallery Nov. 25; Houghton gets to hear it first!

Free student tickets available during lunch and dinner mealtimes in the Campus Center lounge. Faculty/staff contact the Music Office (X4000).

Houghton College Artist Series



Panel Explores Themes, Interpretations of *Measure for Measure*

By Micah Warf

Tuesday night's panel discussion of the play *Measure for Measure* was "a success on all counts," according to one student who attended.

Moderated by senior Clara Giebel, an English major and longtime Shakespeare fanatic, the discussion featured comments and insight from Professors Meilaender, Wardwell, and Murphy, and a cameo appearance by "Shakespeare" himself, played by senior Kyle Vitale in full costume.

The event was well attended, with students packed into every corner of the ChC classroom in which it was held. As Giebel dryly noted, reflecting the enthusiasm of many of the participants, "It's three brilliant men talking about Shakespeare — why would you want to be anywhere else?"

The discussion opened with a synopsis of the play by Giebel for those who had not been exposed to it previously. *Measure for Measure* is not one of Shakespeare's most well known plays, but the directors selected it with advice from the panel professors because the themes within were judged to be especially relevant for audiences at Houghton. As Professor Murphy said, "I think at its core, *Measure for Measure* addresses ideas and questions our students (and community here at Houghton) feel are important."

The initial summary of the play was followed by several minutes

of comments from each professor in turn, all noting different aspects and themes of the play. They discussed how these were relevant to both the Houghton student, and, on a broader scale, the 20th century individual. Meilaender, a professor of Political Science, opened the discussion, basing his comments around the political setting of the play. According to Meilaender, the play specifically addresses the importance of the nuclear family to a good political atmosphere. Set in a city rampant with affairs, fornication, and brothels, *M for M* highlights the absence of good citizenship in the face of low family values. Meilaender felt that this emphasized the need for strong families in the pursuit of a stable society.

Wardwell, a professor of English, and Shakespeare scholar, addressed the audience with a literary perspective on the play. *M for M* being one of his favorite plays, he finds it attractive both in its relative obscurity and because of the "complexity of the play," which he finds uncharacteristic of Shakespeare. Wardwell noted that the play was a sort of "problem comedy," in that it is a play that could have easily been a tragedy if circumstances had not taken a

turn for the better at the conclusion. He commented on Shakespeare's overall comedic view of life, and how this play in particular illustrates an optimism about life that sees human history working itself out in the end.

Murphy, professor of Art, commented on the visual aspects of the play. First, he noted that much of the play is set indoors and takes place on tightly blocked sets, reflecting on how the debauchery of the city has blocked out the joy of life. He also emphasized the themes of disguise and pretense in the play. We find a puritanical prince who turns out to have devious schemes, a duke who dresses as an anonymous friar, and a nun

"At its core, *Measure for Measure* addresses ideas our students feel are important," said Murphy.

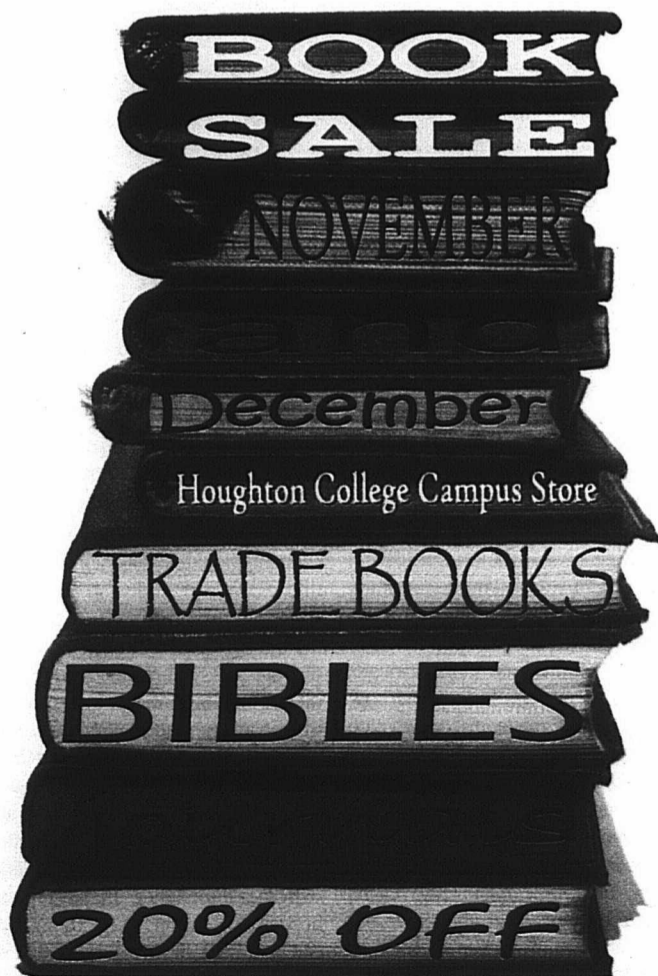
who seems to agree to marriage in seconds, after consistently valuing her chastity more than her brother's life. Murphy drew specific attention to the characters in the play who were more concerned about their actions than their hearts, and how this is relevant to the Houghton community. "The reason I like [this play] for Houghton," he said, "is that it's a place that's caught up in this tension between piety and grace. This is a place that puts so much emphasis on right behavior, but right behavior isn't a substitute for grace."

After the panelists had finished their initial comments, they took the remaining time to field questions from the audience on characters, themes, and narratives within *Measure for Measure*.

The panelists were pleased with the turnout and the success of the event overall. Meilaender noted that it is "always fun to have the chance to think about Shakespeare. And it's good to find opportunities for outside-of-class conversation between faculty and students about these sorts of things." Murphy echoed these sentiments, saying that he "enjoyed hearing what Wardwell and Meilaender had to say," adding modestly that, "nothing makes scholars sound more scholarly than painters uttering their opinions." Giebel felt that this was a great "plug for the Shakespeare Players."

The event was a step in a new direction for the Houghton campus, addressing theatre and playwright, both as historical art forms, and as ways of looking at current issues in society and religion. Wardwell sees "promoting Christian engagement with culture(s) in and through theatre" as a "significant part of [his] calling." To that end, "Houghton College Shakespeare Players is a great boon to our educational mission, and the kind of promotion the discussion offered furthered our community building."

Tickets for the performances of *Measure for Measure* will be sold at meal times.



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"Civil Religion: Prescription, Problem or Pufferfish?"
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Untying the Knot: Removing the Ban on a Discussion of Gay Marriage

Does the Christian community really understand what it is arguing for in banning same-sex marriage, or is it just blowing evangelical smoke?

by Joshua Nolen

Last Tuesday, when over 120 million Americans went to the polls, more was voted on than simply who would be the next President of the United States. Although my focus was primarily on the presidential election, I also closely followed my local elections, a few key state elections, and ballot measures in 11 different states. As the night went on and it became clear that Senator Obama was going to be elected, the majority of my attention was turned to these less focused on races. Even today, I am waiting to see how local ballot measures will impact American society.

As pointed out in last week's issue of The Star, three states passed constitutional amendments to ban same-sex marriage: California, Arizona and Florida, while Arkansas passed a law banning unmarried couples (straight or gay) from adopting children. Additionally, three states rejected a ban on abortion (that including exceptions for incest, rape and the health of the mother): California, South Dakota and Colorado. Now, I do not understand this. Why is abortion accepted, but gay marriage is not?

The anti-abortion amendment which Colorado rejected basically stated that human life begins at the moment of conception. As a Biology major, I am pretty certain that this is a scientific fact. I am not trying to argue that a woman *should not* have the right to choose, but I do believe that scientifically an abortion ends a human life. The real issue, then, is whether or not an

unborn fetus is a legal "person."

The part that confuses me is that a state like South Dakota (which voted for John McCain: 53% to 45%) could support keeping abortion by 55%; and a state like Florida (which voted for Barack Obama: 51% to 49%) could reject same-sex marriage by 62%. I know that most voters don't read party platforms, but the Republican National Convention 2008 Platform clearly states, "At its core, abortion is a fundamental assault on the sanctity of innocent human life." And the Democratic National Convention 2008 Platform says, "We support the full inclusion of all families, including same-sex couples."

Currently, abortion is legal (in some form) in all 50 states, while same-sex marriage is legal in two (gay marriage is legal in Connecticut as of Wednesday). In 12 states same-sex marriage and all equivalents (i.e. civil union, domestic partnership etc...) are banned.

The part that confuses me about banning gay marriage is I am not sure what people are trying to ban. In 2003, the US Supreme Court in *Lawrence v. Texas* ruled (6-3) that laws against sodomy were unconstitutional due to the Fourteenth Amendment. And, there is no law against homosexual cohabitation. So, banning homosexual marriage does not ban homosexuality or homosexuals;

instead, banning same-sex marriage is a policy of discrimination based on religious morality.

In 1664, the colony of Maryland passed the first law in American banning interracial marriages. When laws like this were challenged in 1883, the US Supreme Court ruled that these laws did not violate the Fourteenth Amendment, since all races were treated equally – all were allowed to marry within their own race, all were prohibited from marrying another race, and all races were punished equally for the violation of these laws.

In 1871, 1912 and 1928 amendments to the US Constitution were proposed in Congress to ban interracial marriage; however, none of them were passed. Finally, in the Supreme Court case of *Loving v. Virginia* in 1967, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that laws banning interracial marriage were a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. This ruling overturned laws in 16 US States and was decried by many conservatives as an instance of "judicial activism."

When deciding *Loving v. Virginia*, the Supreme Court stated that laws banning interracial marriage were simply "designed to maintain White Supremacy." Twenty-one years after that, same-sex marriage is still banned and is done so in order to maintain Heterosexual Supremacy.

Many argue that same-sex

marriage would "undermine the institution of marriage." Brittney Spears' first marriage lasted a total of 55 hours: there is no institution of marriage left to save. People also argue that same-sex marriage would negatively impact American families. My mother has been married and divorced twice; my father has been married three times and divorced two times; and neither one of them are gay. However, if I had been raised in a household with two loving parents of the same sex, my childhood would have been a lot more stable.

I can understand why people can think that homosexuality violates Old Testament law. But gay marriage is about equality under the eyes of the State, not the Church. Banning homosexual marriage does not ban the practice of homosexuality. So why aren't two people of the same gender granted the same rights as heterosexuals? Being against homosexuality is no reason to politically oppose gay marriage.

People don't actually care about morality, people care about personal preference. The reason why abortion is legal in the United States and same-sex marriage is not is because there are a lot more women in the US than there are gay people. I'm not saying that all people who support same-sex marriage are gay, but I am saying that most people who oppose it are not. That is why same-sex marriage was banned in the last election, but abortion, gambling, stem cell research, the decriminalization of drugs and doctor assisted suicide were approved.

Joshua is a senior Biology and Philosophy major.

People don't actually care about morality: they care about personal preference.

The HOUGHTON STAR is dedicated to the free exchange of ideas, and encourages community members to participate in the discussion. Ideas expressed in these pages reflect solely the opinion of the writer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit any contributions for reasons of length or decorum.

Letters to the editor (signed) should be 350 words or fewer and be submitted by Monday at 7 p.m. to STAR@houghton.edu.

Modern Music: More Than Meets the Ear

20th century music requires concentration and a willing listener -but it may be more than worth the effort.

by Emma McConnell

The average person rarely thinks about contemporary art music. If one does, it might go something like this: "Isn't it that random sounding classical music? It doesn't make any sense to me." Indeed, what is the point of something so inaccessible when there are many other appealing genres of music available?

As a classically trained musician, I am concerned about attitudes toward contemporary art music from both a cultural and a musical standpoint. Few non-musicians are willing to listen to any contemporary art music because they have a preconceived idea that it will be so abstract and nonsensical that it will not have aesthetic appeal. In reality, there were a variety of musical genres developed during the twentieth century, and some are very accessible. Generally, the music of the *impressionists*, most notably Debussy and Ravel, goes over well. Music out of Russia, such as that by Prokofiev and Shostakovich, is

generally very exciting and popular. Art music influenced by jazz and folk music, such as that of Gershwin or Copland, is well accepted. Exploration of these genres can be very rewarding.

It is generally the *atonal*, *serialist*, *aleatoric*, and *electronic* types of music that cause negative or confused reactions in musicians and non-musicians alike. These genres challenge all the rules of traditional "functional tonality," which is the system that governs most music from the Baroque era until the 20th century, and the system that still loosely governs the majority of pop and rock music. In atonal and serialist music, composers attempt to redefine how we hear and relate pitches, which results in an increased amount of dissonance. In aleatoric music, elements of the music are determined by chance, which results in both increased dissonance and a lack of order. Electronic music removes the need for a performer altogether and advocates the distortion of musical sound and the introduction of other

noise into music. Exploration of microtones results in music that is extremely dissonant and foreign. This music does not tend to sound appealing to either the general public or to most performing musicians.

I agree that much of the music of the 20th century and later is initially difficult to listen to; however, without the experimentation represented in these genres, the music many of us know and love could not exist. All levels of rock and pop music owe a great deal to the use of increased dissonance and electronic manipulation of sound. Think of the use of synthesizers and guitar distortion, not to mention the process of recording and creating special effects. Similarly, most great film scores draw heavily on techniques first explored in the abstract art music realm. Minimalism, microtones, electronic music, and extreme dissonance make regular appearances in this context, and we often sit back in awe at the effect of

• Continued on page 7



From the Editors' Desk...

Losing our Footing: The Paradox of a Christian Institution

"The foremost or indeed the sole condition required in order to succeed in centralizing the supreme power in a democratic community is to love equality, or to get men to believe you love it. Thus the science of despotism, which was once so complex, is simplified, and reduced, as it were, to a single principle." Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*.

By Katarina Kieffer

Balance is a concept we often hold up as an ideal: it implies rest, surety, and a certain equality that, as the children of the classical western tradition, we hold especially dear. The danger of extremism is something we've been warned against since the time of the ancient Greeks: virtue is a mean between two extremes, Aristotle wrote, and the "good life" is found in the middle ground. We should balance reason and passion, the flesh and the spirit. There is a time to build up, a time to tear down, a time to turn the other cheek and a time to fight for what you believe in: everything in moderation.

It is easy, in the midst of so many platitudes, to lose sight of the fact that balance is not often accompanied by unity. Rather, it implies that two seemingly irreconcilable entities are being held in a state of tension in order to achieve equilibrium. It is an equilibrium between very different and often opposing entities, not an equilibrium of similarity and agreement. This middle ground is difficult to find, and even harder to stand on for any length of time.

Take Houghton, for example. As a Christian Institution, Houghton College finds itself attempting not only to stand on this uncomfortable ground, but to build a permanent residence. Simply put, we struggle because we as Christians are equal under God, but we as students, faculty members and administrators are not equal at Houghton.

On the one hand, the language and practice of Christianity as we usually understand it speaks of a community of equals, united on the basis of belief in and

acceptance by the same God. In this organic, spontaneous, and universal community, a person's gender, social standing, education, skin color, or other differentiating characteristic makes no difference in determining whether or not they are "in." Family imagery ties all members of the church together as brothers and sisters under one Parent, and everyone shares equal standing, because they share the same internal commitment, the same love.

Yet formal Institutions do not, and cannot, function in this way. An institution in this context is a group of people coming together for a common, external purpose, not a common, internal love. To stand in place of that common love, a certain group of rules and procedures must be formed to tie the members together, and someone has to be in charge of enforcing those rules and procedures. Think about the particulars in a college situation: whether students like it or not, papers have to be graded, and performances evaluated on some sort of scale of judgment. Whether faculty members like it or not, they as instructors have to be measured against a certain standard. Behavioral expectations have to be enforced, or common purpose will not be maintained. These are not based on some sort of natural fellow-feeling; rather, unity in this case is based on the common acceptance of an artificial power structure, with the understanding that this structure aids towards a common end.

And what exactly is that common end? In Houghton's case, it is, at a very basic level, learning. We have come together to create a space for students to learn, and learning takes

place not only through imitation, but through questioning, by making mistakes and learning from those mistakes.

But we have put an over-layer of Christian values on our institution of learning, complicating the discussion. Which mistakes are students allowed to make in order to learn, and what, if any, should the consequences be? How will we talk about those mistakes and consequences? Will we use the language of Christianity, of total equality in Christ, or will we use the language of Institutions, power differentials and artificial structures assumed? How will we find a balance between the rights of individual students, and the rights of the institution to regulate its members?

There is no easy answer because there is no way to entirely reconcile the tensions between Christianity and Institutions. At Houghton, at least, we cannot have both in their complete forms- we aren't a church, after all- and we must find the uneasy balance between the two and attempt to dwell in that tenuous place.

But it is at this point that Houghton has committed the crucial error. We have lost our footing and our foundations, and embraced the language of Christian community, all the while continuing to operate on the procedures of institutions out of necessity.

We use the language of Christianity to justify everything from required Chapel attendance

to disciplinary decisions, painting everything with Christian morality and justifying our decisions with a Christian code of conduct. By doing so, we are in danger of implying that the decisions we've made as an institution, like the decision to have a certain grading scale, require certain classes, require chapel, or prohibit alcohol or smoking, are somehow specifically Christian decisions, and thus universal, rather than institutional mandates set at a specific time for a specific purpose.

When that happens, the scale tips, and the balance is lost. The more that we emphasize equality and insist on community, the more we lose our ability to speak about the ever-present reality of power structures. Within the

language of Christian equality, we are not given even the vocabulary to address power structures and ensure that, even assuming the best intentions, the rights of the weak are protected from the powerful. We can emphasize unity in Christ to the point that individuals are lost within the community, and one voice is taken to speak for many. At that point, when we let our beliefs dictate, rather than inform, our decisions, we are dangerously close to slipping off the middle ground and losing sight not only of our freedom, but our faith.

Katarina is a senior Political Science major and serves as Editor of the Star.

Simply put, we as Christians are equal under God, but we as students, faculty members, and administrators are not equal at Houghton College.

• Continued from page 6
the music.

On a more general scale, since exploratory devices have allowed composers to be free from the rules of functional tonality, many have taken the opportunity to pick and choose what they like from tonal and non-tonal music. The result is incredible music that combines some sounds that are familiar with devices and additions that are fresh and interesting. In 1935, a serialist composer named Alban Berg wrote a famous violin concerto that combines the techniques of serialism with familiar melodic and harmonic materials. Since then, many composers have attempted to synthesize the aims of accessibility through familiar materials and vitality through new devices. Notably, composers in the choral world have

written works that alternate luscious tonality with cold, dissonant non-tonality to great effect.

There are some genuinely masterful compositions from the 20th century, but the most valuable role of the music of the twentieth century has been to provide numerous ways of extending creativity beyond the ultimately confining bounds of functional tonality. Be open to hearing and critically evaluating contemporary art music, both from the last century and from this. Otherwise, you will miss an opportunity for aesthetic experience and many incredible compositions will lack a deserved audience. And after all, what is music if it is not heard?

Emma is a senior Theory major.

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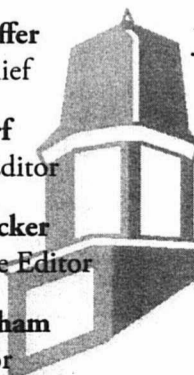
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artist: JESSICA OF THE WEEK: CAMP

Notes from the artist:

The first time I picked up a camera, I was hooked. I went exploring through the woods taking pictures with a disposable camera until the roll ran out. I found photography so intriguing because it has the ability to freeze-frame time. No matter what subject, you can capture one small glimpse of what time holds. I love to photograph nature, especially flowers. I can freeze time to capture flowers at the moment when they are most beautiful, people at the height of their joy, and moments in the peak of happiness. It's a beautiful thing. In my photography I hope to capture the attention of those who take advantage of all the beautiful things around them. We all have such busy lives that we never pause to thank God for the beauty He's put in this world, I hope to re-emphasize that in my work.

Jessica is junior Art major with concentration in Photography.



Cascade, photograph



Glow, photograph

SUDOKU

Submit your completed puzzles at the *Star* office for the chance to win a Sudoku book!

9	1	3	2						1	6		3			2		
6	5					8	9				2		8	1			7
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Congratulations to last week's winner, **Amanda Wilgus!**

SUDOKU answers

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