

DAY OF SERVICE
News, p. #1-2

ORNITHOLOGY
News, p. #1-2

TENNIS
News, p. #2

MENDING LOVE
Opinions, p. #3

AOTW
Columns, p. #4

INAUGURATION DAY OF SERVICE

ANNA CATHERMAN ('24)

The celebration of President Wayne D. Lewis Jr.'s inauguration as the sixth president of Houghton College will continue with an Inauguration Day of Service on March 12, 2022.

Volunteers will assemble at various locations throughout the areas surrounding the Houghton and Buffalo campuses to put into action the verse that President Lewis spoke on during his Inauguration last fall. Micah 6:8 lays out succinctly what Christians are expected to offer this broken world: "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

The day is being coordinated and planned by



President Lewis with Former President Shirley Mullen on Inauguration Day last semester.

the Center for Faith, Justice, and Global Engagement. Director Brian Webb explained that there are a total of 13 different project sites split between the Allegany County and Buffalo areas. Buses will transport students to the projects and bring them back; local projects are expected

to run roughly from 9 a.m. to noon, while Buffalo projects will take place from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., including transportation time. The projects will include a variety of traditional service activities such as cleaning, organizing and painting. Volunteers will help organizations with extra

projects and tasks that they might not ordinarily have the time or workers to accomplish.

A variety of campus groups have signed up to volunteer together, including the Men's soccer team, Immanuel Scholars, the Lending Paws Campaign, and the Advancement Office. "Un-

fortunately, it looks like the day we picked had a lot of conflicts with spring sports," Brian Webb noted. Still, despite the fact many students were unable to attend because of this, 134 volunteers were signed up for the event as of Monday, February 28.

When asked what excites him most about the day, Webb said, "I really like the idea of faculty, staff, and students serving together. We learn together, sometimes we'll eat together...but it's not very often that students, faculty, and staff get to serve together."

President Lewis told the STAR in an email, "I am excited about the opportunity to serve with Highlanders in Allegany County and in Buffalo on the Inauguration Day of

See **SERVICE** page #2

ORNITHOLOGY MAYTERM RETURNS TO HOUGHTON

JULIA WILMOT ('22)

After a brief recess due to the pandemic, the bird-watching Mayterm is back! Houghton's resident Ornithologist, Eli Knapp, is once again breaking out the binoculars and leading students on a wild adventure. According to Houghton College's Course Catalog, this class is "designed to investigate the basic principles of ornithology. The bulk of this course includes in-the-field identification skills with a combination of both visual and auditory senses." In addition, students work with "local experts as they learn to band birds and actively manage



A Houghton Screech Owl nestled in a tree.

habitats to assist bird populations."

This four week Mayterm class is broken into two sections; the first is based in Houghton, the second in Puerto Rico. "In both places it's intense; all birds all the time," Knapp explains, "but it's spring, the birds are migrating, the flowers are blooming, and there's

no better time to be sliding down a ravine or mucking through a swamp after a rare species." Participants will wake up when the birds do, and then spend the afternoons processing, reflecting, understanding, and recouping. During the first half of the class, students will sharpen their skills at lo-

cal bird hot-spots. Professor Knapp says these locations are "little known gems," including Keeney Swamp, Hanging Bog, and his personal favorite, Fort Hill, an old Native American enclave not far from Houghton.

In the past, for the second half of the class students have ventured to special places like Yel-

lowstone, Acadia, Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Iceland. A few years ago, a cohort went to Big Bend, Texas, and recent graduate Kyle Burrichter ('21) regaled the events, saying "Texas is super rich with bird diversity, so I had no problem seeing over 150 bird species during the Mayterm. During our time there we also got to see Carlsbad Caverns, sled on sand dunes, kayak on the Rio Grande River, and eat lunch in Mexico." This Mayterm trip may be based on birds, but that is not the only highlight. The flexibility of the schedule allows for many fun opportunities and adventures. Recent graduate Hannah Greidanus ('21) shared that the most memorable part of the trip was "taking a 4-hour long hike

See **ORNITHOLOGY** page #2

MEN’S TENNIS READY FOR NEW SEASON

ISAAC LITTLE (‘24)

The Houghton Men’s Tennis team completed their 2021 spring campaign by claiming the Empire 8 Championship title and competing in the Division III National Tournament for the first time in program history. Since then, the program has promoted Coach Zach Shilvock to the Head Coach position, who has added five new faces to the roster. Although the Highlanders understand the obstacles that will arise during the season, Coach Shilvock says that he is “eager to see how this group responds to the challenges that are thrown our way this Spring”.

Houghton Men’s Tennis is centered around brotherhood, work ethic, and grit. When speaking to Coach Zach Shilvock about the upcoming season, he stated that “this is a new team with a whole new identity and ambitions. Our team is extremely dedicated to their craft, and that will

serve us well heading into competition.” The Houghton Men’s Tennis team wants to be known as the hardest working and grittiest team you play. Coach Shilvock echoed this, noting that “when you come to play Houghton, you better bring your game because we will never give up.” When speaking to captain Matt Cicero (‘22) about his ambitions for the season, he told the STAR that “I want to cement the crown on our head. To let everyone know that we are the best tennis team in the Empire 8, we belong at the top, and we will stay there for a long time. . . I want to create a dynasty.” Cicero has played an instrumental role on the Highlanders team as he claimed the match deciding victory in the conference finals match last year where he was awarded the tournament MVP trophy. The veteran has earned his right as a leader on the team where he displays consistent dedication

and effort and took on the challenge to improve the team's fitness.

Depth is one word that could be used to describe the Men’s team. Having a roster that is close in talent provides the ability to ensure that there will be competition between every match despite who is on each side of the net. Matt Cicero (‘22) adds that “this year we have a lot of guys whose talent levels are in close proximity, and that makes for a lot of exciting doubles pairings.” Depth could prove to be the difference maker between this team compared to other teams in the past. This can be proven in the fall when the Highlanders traveled to SUNY Oswego, and three of the Highlanders starters were out. Freshman Noah Harley (‘25) claimed a clutch victory at six singles to give Houghton the 5-4 win. Harley’s effort embodied relentlessness, determination, and grit. After adding



The Houghton College Tennis team in Florida over Winter Break.

Micah Schilke (‘23), Levi Webb (‘24), and Jaimie Staerkle (‘25), who missed the SUNY Oswego match back in the mix, the Highlanders pose a serious challenge to their opponents.

Houghton Tennis has been blessed to have some amazing crowd support from the Houghton community and student body. Coach Zach Shilvock adds that “I can state with certainty that we would not have won the E8 Championship match against Nazareth if it wasn’t for the support we had, and in particular from our baseball team that day.” When asking about their hopes for the spring, the team

stated that they have high hopes that people will come out to support them and bring some energy again this year. Coach Shilvock concluded his comments by stating that “tennis is always seen as the quiet sport, but we want to hear people cheering and getting loud at our matches.”

The Houghton Men’s Tennis team is approaching the spring season hungry, where they hope to reclaim the Empire 8 title, and put forth a strong showing at the Division III National Tournament. Regardless of the result, the team is entering the year with the mentality of “Hold the Vision, Trust the Process.”★



ELISE SWANSON (‘23)

With Valentine’s Day a few weeks behind us, I have been thinking a lot about love. Not the romantic, chocolate and flowers kind of love, but the love that we, as Christians, show each other. We are called as Christians to love our neighbors as ourselves and to strive to live like Christ. In this, we fail as often as we succeed.

Someone recently told me that the people who are the hardest to love need it the most. This, I think, is accurate. It is easy to love

those we like and get along with, and easy to dismiss those we don’t agree with. It’s very easy to say that we want to exemplify Christ, and then to pick and choose who we show our love to. I, too, am guilty of this. I lose patience with some people much faster than others, and this is not okay. Just because someone has a different belief, personality, or interests, it is not our place to judge them.

Houghton is a unique place. We

“I remember thinking how strange it was to hold the hands of my ‘opponents,’ who I had just spent three hours playing against. I soon realized, as we bowed our heads in prayer, that this was not strange. This was what showing the love of God to others should look like.”

(even when the person is at an extremely awkward distance). We even buy each other Java drinks for each via pay it forwards. I am thankful to be part of a campus

deserve our love too. Covid-19 has just made the ways we fail to love each other clearer. Just because someone is or isn’t vaccinated doesn’t mean they are underserving of love. If someone has a different political belief, they still deserve love. If someone does not believe in God, or is of a different faith, they still deserve our love. God loves them even when we fail to, and this is something we cannot forget. If we truly want to exemplify Christ, we must stop widening the divide between each other through love.

Loving each other should not be something determined by choice. It is about setting aside our differences and seeing each other as fellow humans who were created by God and in His image. We can’t choose to love one

person and not another. To truly exemplify Christ, our love needs to be consistent for everyone.

I still remember the first game I played as a member of the Houghton softball team. After the game ended, we stood alternating with the opposing team, holding hands, and prayed. I remember thinking how strange it was to hold the hands of my “opponents,” who I had just spent three hours playing against. I soon realized, as we bowed our heads in prayer, that this was not strange. This was what showing the love of God to others should look like.

It was a beautiful experience, to know that we could put down our bats and come together with the singular goal of worshipping God. We were united by a love of Christ that overcame all dividing factors. This is what putting aside our differences can be. It can open the door to truly loving each other consistently and exemplifying God as we are called to do.★

Elise Swanson is a junior majoring in English and Political Science. In her spare time she loves to read, write, and watch movies. She also plays on the college softball and tennis teams.

SERVICE from page #1

Service. This day will give us the opportunity to put our faith into action as a college community. With Micah 6:8 as the theme for my inaugural year, nothing could be more appropriate for celebrating the start of a new chapter for Houghton College than coming together to serve our communities. I look forward to serving with Highlanders I have come to know and love and meeting and serving with new friends as well.”

Highlanders are also looking forward to coming together to “act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly”. Madelyn

Miller (‘23) expressed excitement at the opportunity to serve together. Mary Chichester (‘22) said it’s nice to see Houghton acting out its commitment to justice, adding “It’s really nice to honor what President Lewis said.” Hannah Duncan (‘22) noted “I think it will be a wonderful way to serve others. But also to live out the true spirit of what Houghton is all about: helping others.”★

ORNITHOLOGY from page #1

with one of my friends for fun during our free time.”

Not only is this a once-in-a-lifetime adventure, but it also gives students transferable skills and experience. Burrichter said that “being able to see and appreciate so many birds I didn’t know existed was mind blowing to me. It was a part of nature I was completely overlooking.” He now works at an ecotourism camp in Cambodia, where a large part of his job is guiding birders through the forest, and explained that this was “a career path I never would have chosen if it wasn’t for

this Mayterm.” Greidanus shared that in addition to a great experience, it is an “opportunity to make friends with people you see around campus, but may not necessarily know.” These friendships, combined with a fun adventure, make for an incredible opportunity.

This year’s bird enthusiasts are headed to Puerto Rico in May. While studying in Western New York, a few feathered creatures that are likely to be spotted include the Scarlet Tanagers, Louisiana Waterthrushes, and Barred Owls. In Texas, students

had the chance to see the Colima Warbler, which strictly resides on one mountain top in Big Bend National Park. In Iceland, students were able to observe the Arctic Puffins, and this year, Knapp says “we’ll do a circuit of the entire island as we hunt down the Antillean Mango, Pearly-eyed Thrasher, and the Bananaquit.”★

Have an opinion
you want to share?

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In Review

Armageddon (1998)

CALEB TIEDEMANN ('25)

Armageddon is a movie that I randomly remember renting from the library because I was looking for something to watch that night, little did I know I was just briefly glancing at what would be my favorite movie of all time. It's very weird, explaining that your favorite movie of all time is a movie that very few people have seen or even remember seeing. Directed by Michael Bay, it's a movie that many might glance over. Michael Bay is not necessarily known for anything great, other than the Transformers movies and a love of seamless explosions and action. You can guess how quickly interest is lost when someone hears that Bay is the director. Now, is this movie a masterpiece? No, it very clearly is not. However, in my humble opinion, it is.

Michael Bay's 1998 film: *Armageddon*, centers around an asteroid the size of Texas hurtling towards Earth that will surely wipe out the entire planet. Eager to destroy the asteroid before it hits, the world governments want to send a team into space to deposit a nuke on the asteroid and blow it up. The only problem: the nuke has to be planted within the asteroid for it to properly explode, which would shatter it into enough pieces that if any chunks did hit the Earth it would not be detrimental. With that in mind, NASA and head Dan Truman (Billy Bob Thornton) request the help of Harry Stamper (Bruce Willis) and his team of misfits (Liv Tyler, Ben Affleck, Michael Clarke Duncan, Steve Buscemi, etc.) all who work for Stamper Oil, a drilling company. These men are humanity's final hope of survival.

The first and possibly best thing about this movie is the characters. Within its 150 minute runtime, you are introduced to a multitude of characters, all of which have differing and quirky personalities setting each aside from another. Another amazing thing was that they were all absolutely hilarious, each character had at least one memorable line or scene that made me laugh aloud. It is through these personalities and brief lines that you can really glimpse each character for what they really are, which I absolutely adore. However, this makes the movie more nerve-racking to watch as not all of these characters are going to make it back alive. With this knowledge, I was incredibly saddened, but also incredibly surprised with how quickly I fell in love with these characters.

This is also one of the few movies that makes me cry and not just a couple of tears either, literal bawling like a baby, the using up tissues, and sobbing kind of cry. A testament to my love of this movie and firm belief that it is amazing. There's just such a good combination of intensity and emotion, all of which is way too much for me to handle. The main characters have to watch their friends and family die, brotherly love, ro-

mantic love, parental love, all forms are on display in these amazing characters. There's fear in not knowing if Harry will return to see his daughter, fear in not knowing if AJ will return to be married to his fiancée. It's the combination of all these things that put intense emotional stress upon the viewer. Somehow Michael Bay makes it all work.

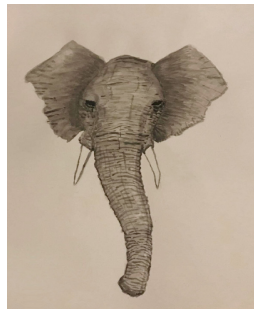
Along with those primary elements, the CGI is quite amazing, especially for a low-budget 90's movie, with the explosions and space CG being surprisingly realistic. Secondly, the score and soundtrack work very well. It helps to build the intensity of each situation as your group of characters are put through trial after trial. The single song, *I Don't Want To Miss A Thing* by Aerosmith is an immaculate song that was instantly added to my favorite playlist.

In conclusion, I personally think that *Armageddon* is the best movie, as of now, that I have ever seen. A unique plot and cast of characters further prove my point. The combination of score, cinematography and acting combine into a beautiful creation and an experience that I will never forget and want to share with as many people as humanly possible. I urge you to see this movie, I doubt many people will have the same reactions as I did but I still think the movie is worth your time to enjoy.



About the Artist

JT Reber is a senior Biology major with a minor in Chemistry. His preferred mediums are oil and watercolor, which he uses to experiment with in colors and in textures. He enjoys cooking, farming, outdoors, and reading fiction, all of which he draws on when making artwork. He is currently enrolled in Painting I and will be graduating at the end of semester.



Artist of the Week

JT Reber

