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the houghton STAR

Houghton College's Student Newspaper Since 1909

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College Pledges to Assist with Loan Repayment

LYDIA WILSON

Houghton College has entered into a partnership with the LRAP Association to offer a Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP) to incoming Houghton students. The program will officially begin with the arrival of next year's first year class. After their successful graduation from Houghton College, the Class of 2018 will receive monetary assistance based on their fulfillment of certain requirements, such as full-time employment within the United States and a maximum yearly income of \$38,000.

Houghton's conversation with LRAP began with an e-mail announcing Spring Arbor University's decision to implement LRAP at their institution. Spring Arbor experienced increased enrollment and satisfaction among its students and their parents. Houghton began discussing what it would look like to bring LRAP to its campus. "We looked at the profile of our students and at the students

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Women's and Men's Soccer Teams Compete at Nationals Tournament



Senior midfielder Paul Seddon

WWW.HOUGHTON.EDU

LAUREL WROBLICKY

As both the men's and women's soccer teams have finished their season play, they are headed to Kissimmee, Florida to play in the NCCAA regionals. Still in a transitional year to NCAA division III, neither team is allowed to compete in Empire 8 championship games.

The tournament is run like the

World Cup in that there are three pools of three teams each. Seven are their respective region's champions and two are at large bids. The top team that earns the most points from each pool will advance to the final four along with one wild card team. Three points are earned for winning, one point for tying, and no points for losing.

The women finished strong with

a record of 13-3-1. They hosted Regionals against Mount Vernon Nazarene University, defeating them 2-0, to go on to Nationals. This is the eleventh consecutive year that the women's team has headed to Florida for Nationals.

Houghton's pool includes: Trinity Christian College and Azusa Pacific University. The other teams competing are Palm Beach Atlantic University, Lee University, Grace College, Judson University, Point Loma University and Dallas Baptist University. Houghton is the eighth seed.

"Since we have made it to the final site for Nationals in the past, we are really seeking to get past that first game in the tournament with a win," said senior captain Amanda Zacchigna, "I'd love to see our team make it to the final four playing in our style that we have been working on mastering all season."

Unfortunately, the women lost both pool play games. The score of the first game against the second seed, Trinity Christian College was 3-1 and 2-1 against Azusa Pacific

See NATIONALS page 2

Update on Student Government Activities



Students indulge themselves during SGA's monthly donut day

SARAH HUTCHINSON

KATHARINE ADAMETZ

Recently, Houghton's student Senate has been focusing on issues smaller and less apparent than in semesters past, but the work they have been doing and the conversations in their Tuesday night meetings are still

relevant, and, arguably, increasingly more so, to the entire campus.

President Benjamin Hardy said one of "the most important things the SGA has done this semester [is] helping to distribute information about

See SGA page 3

Islamic Studies On the Ropes

GRETCHEN REEVES

As part of a recent series of academic budget cuts, Islamic Studies will no longer be offered as a minor or as a concentration in the Intercultural Studies major. Decisions to make such cuts began back in October, with various meetings with the Academic Council, faculty, and the academic affairs committee of the board of trustees aiding the decision-making process. Academic Dean Linda Mills Woolsey, in charge of making such cuts, stated that, "Ultimately, the decision is my decision as the dean, so I take responsibility for it even though I've consulted with other people," adding that "the decision making for these things is a process."

One of the driving reasons behind the cuts is a lack of student interest and enrollment in the program. The Islamic Studies program had managed to occupy a middle ground in terms of enrollment in the early years after its initiation in 2006; however, enrollment numbers have since dwindled. The minor has managed

to maintain an average of 8.2 minors every five years between 2009 and 2013, but the concentration in the Intercultural Studies major experienced a decline in numbers between 2011 and 2013, averaging 3.6 majors with the Islamic Studies concentration per five years. This year the minor numbers three students while the concentration numbers two. Mills Woolsey cites an overall decline in college enrollment as one of the reasons behind the shrinking of the program, but admits that certain disciplines have suffered more than others. "As our enrollment has declined, it hasn't declined proportionately across the board, so we're investing a lot in really small majors."

Michael Walters, chair of the religion, theology, and Bible departments, takes a different view. "I know our numbers in our department have been down a little bit, so I think it's reasonable to assume that the pool of students who would normally be interested in that sort of thing has

See ISLAM page 3

NATIONAL // Snowden Controversy Continues with New Report



ANDREA PACHECO

SARAH HUTCHINSON

He has been called a hero and a villain, a patriot and a traitor. However he will be judged in history, Edward Snowden’s actions have nevertheless caused something of a ruckus for one of the largest intelligence organizations in the United

States, the National Security Agency, and has reopened conversation on the ethics and lawfulness of government surveillance.

The leaks obtained by Snowden, a former contractor for the NSA, represent one of the largest breaches in security that the United States government has experienced in its history. Snowden’s critics warn that these leaks will threaten American security and interests and will enable terrorist organizations throughout the globe. On the other hand, privacy advocates say that Snowden has performed an important act of civil disobedience.

The full 58,000 files that Snowden leaked to the Guardian (a British newspaper) and the Washington Post last summer have not, as of yet, been fully revealed. The Guardian’s editor, Alan Rusbridger, reporting to a parliamentary committee investigating the newspaper’s handling of the Snowden leaks, explained that the Guardian has only published one percent of the files and has withheld the rest, mostly on account of the sensitive nature of the information. “I would not expect us to be publishing a huge amount more,” Rusbridger also said to the committee.

Nevertheless, some of the information that Snowden provided is still forthcoming. On Wednesday, the Washington Post published a report that revealed the details of NSA’s cell phone tracking program, in which the agency monitors the data of individuals - wherever they happen to be in the world - using their personal mobile devices. The NSA accomplishes this by tapping into cell towers and tracking the movements of individuals using the signals from their cell phones to the towers. From this information, the NSA can also track the movements of possible associates, called “co-travelers”, if they pass through a number of the same cell tower zones. Furthermore, if monitored for a period of time, a target’s relationships and patterns of movements can also be uncovered using this information.

Though the NSA has said that it has no desire to map everyone’s movements, this is nonetheless the byproduct of tracking down target individuals that the NSA deems as dangerous or potentially dangerous. The Washington Post reports that the NSA is collecting almost 5 billion cell phone records every day throughout

the globe, which in turn amounts to 2 trillion per year.

Throughout the course of the “Snowden scandal”, the US government has insisted that these measures are lawful, but they have been challenged by many privacy advocates - seeing a boost in support and attention - who argue that these measures violate civil liberties and privacy of American citizens. Other groups think that Snowden’s actions have put the United States in peril.

The American public remains divided, however, according to a survey put forward by the Huffington Post in late October. According to the survey, 51% of respondents described Snowden as “something of a hero,” while 49% described him as “more of a traitor.”

Who is Edward Snowden and what will his actions prove? Only time will tell. ★

Sarah is a senior political science major.

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University. They finished well with a record of 13-5-1.

“We would like to play good, quality soccer and advance to the Final Four,” said Coach David Lewis.

“The players have been working exceptionally hard since the close of the regular season. Despite very cold conditions and occasional snow they have put in some strong training sessions. The level of improvement since the onset of the season is quite evident.”

The men concluded their season against Roberts Wesleyan with a score of 2-0. Their final record was 15-2-1. They are headed to Florida to compete for the NCCAA Division I national championship.

As the fourth seed, their competition for pool play consisted of Southern Wesleyan University, to which Houghton lost 2-1, and Campbellsville University, which won with a score of 4-1, knocking Houghton out of the tournament. The other teams competing were Fresno Pacific University, Lee University, Mid-America

Christian University, Judson University, Spring Arbor University, and Mississippi College.

“Goals are to play as many games as possible...and make it to the final,” said senior captain Paul Seddon, “But really to play to our full potential.”

Seddon was honored at the opening banquet with the Kyle Rote Jr. Award. He was honored for his leadership skills, academic performance, and contribution to the men’s soccer team throughout his years attending Houghton.

“I can see why old people move to Florida for retirement. It is so mild and comfortable this time of year,” said Seddon, “I couldn’t think of a better way to end my college career.”

“I am thrilled to have our season end in Florida. We did what we needed to do throughout the season to make it to this point and we’re exactly where we should be,” said Zacchigna, “We’re good enough to compete with the teams at this tournament, so anything less than making it to the final site would have been a disappointment.” ★

ISLAM from page 1

been a bit smaller than it was in the past, but I don’t think that’s a sufficient explanation.” Mills Woolsey also expressed a sense of confusion at the lack of student interest. “I thought with the coming of the Arab Spring there would be a resurgence in student interest in Islam, so I don’t know whether it’s that our students aren’t interested in that or that there’s something about the way we framed the minor or the concentration didn’t have a broad enough usefulness for students.”

Further rationale for the cuts determined that the funds from the minor and concentration were needed more in certain under resourced disciplines such as finance, digital media, and biochemistry. According to Mills Woolsey, the cut of the Islamic Studies program is part of the college’s effort to deal with problem areas “where we need to make full-time hires and we don’t have the budget to make those hires, so right now we’re looking at, and will continue to throughout the course of this year, minors and concentrations that have very few students.”

Another problem for the program is its dependence on two part-time professors also engaged in missions work, a situation which creates potential for future career conflicts. “It’s just owing to the good generosity of the missions agencies that Drs. Hegeman and Little work with that we’ve been able to do what we’ve done,” said Walters. “I think that’s very unsettling to a college administrator. What happens if those missions organizations simply say, “we need you to be full-time in Benin or Morocco”? We don’t have anybody in our department who can teach that stuff.” There had been consideration of merging Islamic Studies with the

religion department with religion professors teaching similar classes, but, as Walters further explained, “I don’t think we have faculty right now in the department that are qualified to do it.”

While various faculty members expressed regret at the cuts, there is some agreement that changes need to be made to its structure if there is any chance for its reinstatement in the future. Marcus Dean, chair of the Intercultural Studies department, attested to the diversity of the program in its applications, stating that “Some focus on developing an academic understanding of Islam and some are more outreach or missions focused. This makes the content applicable in diverse areas of service. For example, one of the Islam courses has been an option for international development programs.” Walters also cited applications in international business.

Mills Woolsey wondered if more areas could be covered in the program to capture student interest. “Islamic Studies as we’re doing it is primarily the study of Islam as a world religion and a study from an apologetic, missiological perspective, which are very good things, but it may be that there’s not a big enough group of students who want that perspective on Islam. The other areas where you could study Islamic culture would be social, political, even the art and architecture of the Islamic world. Islamic Studies is kind of a broad field.” She added, “It’s obvious that Islamic Studies is an important field of study, but we haven’t framed it in a way that’s attracting a lot of students, so we have to go back to the drawing board and see what can be done to make this more inviting to students, more accessible to students... sometimes you do have to take something down to build it up again.” ★



The women’s soccer team during a scrimmage

LUKE LAUER

SGA *from page 1*

the recent budget cuts via word-of-mouth communication by senators and cabinet members to their peers.” This is one of the essential functions of the Senate: to distribute information on a personal basis, and increasing the amount of actual face time between students serving as senators and their peers was one of the goals of the restructuring of the Senate, which happened last semester.

Since, nothing quite so large or cumbersome has taken place, but Senate had been engaging in conversations about SPOT, the potential dropping of the Islamic Studies program, and, as stated above, the budget cuts that the college has been both contemplating and enforcing. These issues have come up during the open floor portion of Senate meetings, which is a time when any student may bring a concern or question to the SGA.

Though the student Senate cannot make the direct decision to, for example, keep Islamic Studies as a program, the members can engage in conversations with concerned students and then take those concerns into committee meetings.

President Hardy stressed the roles of students on committees. He said “[Senate has been] electing students to college councils and committees which service the present needs of students and help speak into the changes that are happening in meaningful ways. I think that a lot of students, even, sometimes, the students on committee, don’t realize how important this function is. Organizations are run part by committees and part by administrators and many of those administrators are closely advised or informed by committees.” Essentially, any student from the general population at Houghton can be a part of a committee, and they range from dealing with Houghton’s care for the environment to working with administrators in Student Life on concerns voiced by students.

Miriam Harms, a senior senator, feels that her involvement with Senate has made her better informed about the conversations and chang-

es happening on campus. She participates on the Creation Care and Academic Council committees, and also thinks that Senate’s talks with President Mullen are educational and helpful. The President visits Senate once a month, and Harms said “You can really ask her anything you want. She explains what the college is doing, and we can even give her questions beforehand from students and senators so that she can prepare information for us.”

In the coming semester, SGA will be working with the Student Programs Office to streamline the event proposal process and forms for students. President Hardy explained the intended benefits of SGA’s work in this area. He said, “This will enable [students] to have a ‘one-stop-shop’ experience when coordinating their event, as the [potential new form] will be designed to forward relevant information to, for example, the person who coordinates the Houghton fleet, persons who manage room reservations in the intended building, or the custodians to be aware of chair or table needs.”

Other plans of the SGA include creating some sort of central, physical calendar, which should cut back on the amount of emails, posters, and slips in CPO boxes as advertising for events.

In addition to helping better organize, advertise, and support events, SGA has been working to negotiate a deal with Sodexo for a discounted price on coffee for student-run events. Java 101 and SGA had an agreement which allowed for student organizations to have coffee at events for a good price, and Sodexo has been convinced to work with students in this way.

Vice President Andiana Sidell said, “The accomplishments of Senate have been more laidback in terms of importance, but are working towards a more unified and complete support of what programs we do run ... See You at the Pole and Operation Christmas Child were a hit this semester and Blood Drives continue to be something that students and Senate alike puts time into.” ★

LOANS *from page 1*

who did not matriculate this fall. 131 students responded to us that chose not to come to Houghton, and 79 of those cited debt and concerns about whether they would be able to get a job after they graduate,” explained Eric Currie, Vice President for Enrollment Management. “For the first time ever we had significant numbers of parents who refused to sign Parent PLUS loans.” From these developments, the team considering using LRAP at Houghton concluded that the program would be a good fit for the college. Ryan Spear, Associate Director of Admission, reinforced this reasoning, saying, “We’re responding to what people are saying they’re concerned about.” Houghton will be the first school in the Eastern United States to offer LRAP to all incoming students.

What this will end up looking like for incoming Houghton students is an ongoing relationship with LRAP representatives, starting from the moment they state their interest in receiving LRAP benefits after their graduation from Houghton. “In our financial aid package there will be a letter from the LRAP Association stating that the student is now able to participate in the LRAP program, and they will have paperwork that they will need to sign,” said Currie, “They meet as a group once a year and will come to campus to provide lunch for the students until they graduate, and then when they graduate they will connect with them in the first months to make sure that they have the proper paperwork, they understand how to file, and they understand the requirements.” As well as below \$38,000 per year, those requirements include graduating from Houghton College and at least 30 work hours per week. Beginning four months after the commencement of loan repayments, LRAP provides quarterly checks based on an inverse percentage-to-income relationship. The program also allows up to 18 months for finding employment after graduation, and a three-year grace period for graduate

school or overseas missions.

As this is a new partnership, LRAP will only be made available to incoming freshmen and selective transfer students, rather than all of the students currently at Houghton, something about which the team at Houghton is straightforward. “Students, you should not be upset,” said Ryan Trout, LRAP Association Training Representative, “There are a lot of staff that would like to have had this as well. This is Houghton College moving forward.... Be proud to be a Houghton College student, that your college is doing such a good thing.” Those involved with bringing LRAP to Houghton are confident about its possibilities as well as its alignment with Houghton’s goal as an institution. “It’s not just smart sense financially, but it fits with our mission. For years and years we’ve had the model of scholar service. Of the Houghton grads I know... they tend to have a bent and passion for serving others,” stated Spear. Houghton plans to use LRAP as a tool to engage students who are already interested in Houghton for other reasons, but who are held back by worries about finances. As Marshall Green, Community and Public Relations Specialist, said, “That’s not our selling point for this school. That’s an advantage to coming here on top of who we are as Houghton. Who we are as a college is our selling point.” In this sense, LRAP is intended provide a kind of safety net for interested students to pursue their passions regardless of income following graduation.

“We’re willing to invest in our students because we believe in the quality of our program and the life they’ll lead after this,” explained Green, “There are lots of other schools doing other things for incentives. Some schools are giving free room and board for the first year, or free books. Those types of incentives are great for that moment, but they don’t help you in the long run. This gives long-lasting security, until the student is either financially secure, or the loans are paid.” ★



Boxes for Operation Christmas Child, one of SGA’s charity events COURTESY OF SGA



Have an opinion on today’s news stories?

Send a letter to the editor to: editor@houghtonstar.com

TWO NEWS VIEWS

Next week’s topic:
Is free market capitalism good and just?

Look for it in the Opinions section!

Behind the Scenes of Prism

ZAC PARSONS

The Houghton College website says, “The 2013 Christmas Prism, Savior of the Nations Come!, is an artistic exploration of the joy of Christmas manifest through music, dance, visual art, and poetry.” Although the show itself is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the performers, hundreds of hours of effort go into the production before any performer takes the stage.

Phyllis Gaerte, Director of Community Relations, opened the conversation by joking that she has had so many interviews with the Star this year that she should be well prepared for any questions. As a part of the Department of Community Relations, which organizes all the public and signature events for the college, being a target for interviews is quite understandable.

Although not a part of the onstage performances, Gaerte plays an integral part. She said, “For Prism, this means giving a birds-eye view of the whole Prism event...Outside of the performance itself and what the music department needs to do to make sure that is the quality is what it should be, community relations is responsible for all the other aspects of Prism.”

The Community Relations Department works closely with the Marketing Department on promotion, handling



Christmas Prism 2012.

box office issues, providing ushers at events, organizing the upscale dinner for over 200 people—including finding decor and planning a menu in conjunction with Sodexo—that precedes the performance, and developing the budget alongside other administrative offices.

John Buteyn also gives much of his time to making Prism the astounding display it is. He is both the designer and engineer of the lighting at the performances not just in Houghton, but also in Rochester and Buffalo. Additionally, Buteyn will be assisting with the live sound and recording for each performance, and in order to organize everything, he begins his work months in advance.

This year, Buteyn said that the budget was used to purchase lighting gear,

instead of merely renting it. Although this is believed to be a better use of the budget, there is now much less lighting gear available than in the past. To create a visual experience on par with previous years will be quite a challenge. Buteyn joked, “I think I’m up for it.”

Buteyn describes other challeng-

es such as older venues in Rochester and Buffalo that sometimes aren’t equipped to handle Prism’s power demand, where he “can’t tell you how many breakers I’ve tripped...Last year, I even stationed a student worker at the breaker box for the entire performance just in case.” Challenges allow an opportunity to improve though. Such as switching to LED lighting to reduce the power required. He said, “There is always something to learn, each year, at each performance, at each venue... I better understand the layout, architecture, and natural beauty of the venues to highlight with the lighting design.”

It is not without a humorous side though. “Let’s just say, when all the techs are working on very little sleep and very few calories, laughter keeps us going. Well, laughter and caffeine,” Buteyn joked.

Gaerte sums up Prism by telling a story from Houghton’s first year in Buffalo. This young woman came out to the ticket table with both her mother and grandmother: three generations of people familiar with the church. “Her words to me were: ‘This church seems to be dying, but it came to life tonight.’” ★

DAILY CALENDAR

6 / FRIDAY

Athletics
7 PM | MBB vs. SUNY Canton

CAB Friday Flix: Elf
7PM

7 / SATURDAY

Athletics
2 PM | WBB vs. D'Youville College
4 PM | MBB vs. D'Youville College
10 AM | TF @ Brockport
Christmas Prison: Savior of the Nations Come
8 PM | Wesley Chapel

9 / MONDAY

Chapel: Christmas Tree Lighting

10 / TUESDAY

Christmas Craft and Art Fair
10 AM | Campus Center

Science and Math Colloquium
11:45AM

11 / WEDNESDAY

Christmas Craft and Art Fair
10 AM | Campus Center
December Graduate Ceremony
6:30 AM | South End Dining Hall
Houghton Composers' Recital
8 PM | CFA Recital Hall

Film Review: “The Book Thief”

JORY KAUFFMAN

The recent release of the enthusiastically anticipated film, The Hunger Games: Catching Fire, completely overshadowed what I thought more worthy of enthusiastic anticipation: the Thanksgiving night debut of The Book Thief. When asked about my plans for break, after expressing my excitement towards seeing my family, my bed, and The Book Thief, I often faced the question, “The what?” Nevertheless, Black Friday found me not in line to buy that seventy-five-percent-off sweater, but rather waiting to purchase that full price movie ticket.

And the film proved well worth the anticipation along with the sacrifice of the sweater, even if my affection for Black Friday shopping was questionable to begin with.

Based on a book published in 2005 by Markus Zusak, the movie shows us part of a young girl’s life in Nazi Germany. The film generally stays true to its novel predecessor, leaving out, as films often must, only the unnecessary. Descriptions of both the book and the film include the setting of The Book Thief in WWII Germany, the hidden Jew in the main character’s basement, and the hobby of the book thief herself: stealing books from grave sites, Nazi book burnings, and a wealthy man’s



“The Book Thief” movie poster

library.

Though the excitement may initially sound thrilling and the plot may appear dangerous, the movie in fact points more toward the lover of a simple story, not an action-oriented or passion-inspired audience. It rather targets the sort of person that probably enjoyed the book before seeing the movie; more than half of the occupants in the theatre I sat in looked to be older than 60.

Still, the slow-moving plot gains appeal through lovable characters and clever scenes. We meet the Book Thief, Liesel Meminger, as a child of about ten, introduced to us by the surprisingly enticing, velvety voice of the film’s narrator, Death. We first encounter Liesel sitting on a train, lifting her enormous blue eyes to discover her just-dead brother. At his burial we watch her steal her first book, a neglected handbook for gravediggers, which she keeps as a memory of the one buried.

From the graveyard we move to Heaven Street, where Liesel spends the rest of her movie-life. We learn that her mother entrusted Liesel to the foster care system, and as a result, the child meets her new parents. Rosa, a secretly softhearted woman encased in a hostile, insensitive shell, and Hans Hubermann, a large-nosed, winking, immediately lovable father figure, form a duo dubbed “Mama” and “Papa.” The pair repeatedly provoked chuckles from the audience, through Rosa’s witty nagging and Hans’ silent expressions and gentle retaliation.

During her time at Heaven Street, Liesel forms loving relationships between the two foster parents, the Jew, Max, whom the Hubermanns harbor in their basement, and Liesel’s new best

See **BOOK THIEF** on page 5

Paddle Sports: Throwing Caution to the Waves



Paddle Sports club on an outing

KRISTINE NOLAN

“Sometimes I see a rough wave or hole and know exactly what will happen if I hit it, which is usually something like being tossed upside down, scraped along the bottom, and spit out the other side. At these times, I remember something my great-great-grandmother told me right before she went base jumping off the grand canyon on New Year’s Eve: ‘Sonny, if you’re not living life on the edge, you’re taking up too much space,’” said junior Zach Kitchen.

As an authentic, fun-loving group, the paddle sports club is among one of the most unique and adventurous clubs on campus.

Kitchen, president of the paddle sports club, has an undeniable passion for the exciting – and perhaps dangerous – world of paddle sports. “Even though I never actually had a great-great-

grandmother that went base jumping, I still think it’s kind of fun to throw caution to the waves and get gobbled up by a giant, crashing wash of water,” Kitchen joked enthusiastically. “I think it’s a great alternative to energy drinks, anyways.”

The club seeks to provide an exhilarating outlet from all the stresses that students face in everyday life by participating in an important life skill: boating. Twice a week, members meet at the college swimming pool to practice skills such as rolling kayaks, handling water rescues, and practicing paddling techniques.

“We really want to get people on live, moving water, which is where they need experience. It’s too fun to watch folks on their first white water kayaking trip – such wide eyes and pale faces!” Kitchen laughed, “That’s exactly how my first river trip was. Other events we may do usually have to do with our

fearless advisor, Charlie, such as sailing when he can take us out, making apple cider at his house, or kayak sledding. We wouldn’t be able to do very much without his help.”

Working alongside Charlie Smith, their long-time and faithful advisor, the paddle sports club has also been able to coordinate trips to places such as the lower falls of the Genesee River at Letchworth State Park, Rushford Lake, and Zoar Valley. There, they not only learn to paddle class 2, 3, and 4 river rapids, but also serve as Christian witnesses to those they meet along the way.

“It really gets some students out of their comfort zone. It’s good fellowship and bonding with each other, and students are learning a skill they can use for life,” Smith said, “It’s a joy to watch these students grow and learn from the first time in a boat until they are able to roll a boat and surf on a big wave on the river.”

Not only does the club take part in meaningful fellowship and learn valuable life skills, they also share in many humorous instances during their time together.

“There are many exciting and funny moments in paddle sports,” Colleen Winton, a junior and the treasurer for the club, said, “Anytime that someone gets their roll for the first time, everyone is ecstatic. There are also plenty of hilarious moments – just the faces that we make



Kayaking on rough water.

when we roll out of the water, or how silly we look with nose plugs on, or how ridiculous – but awesome – we look with all our paddling gear.”

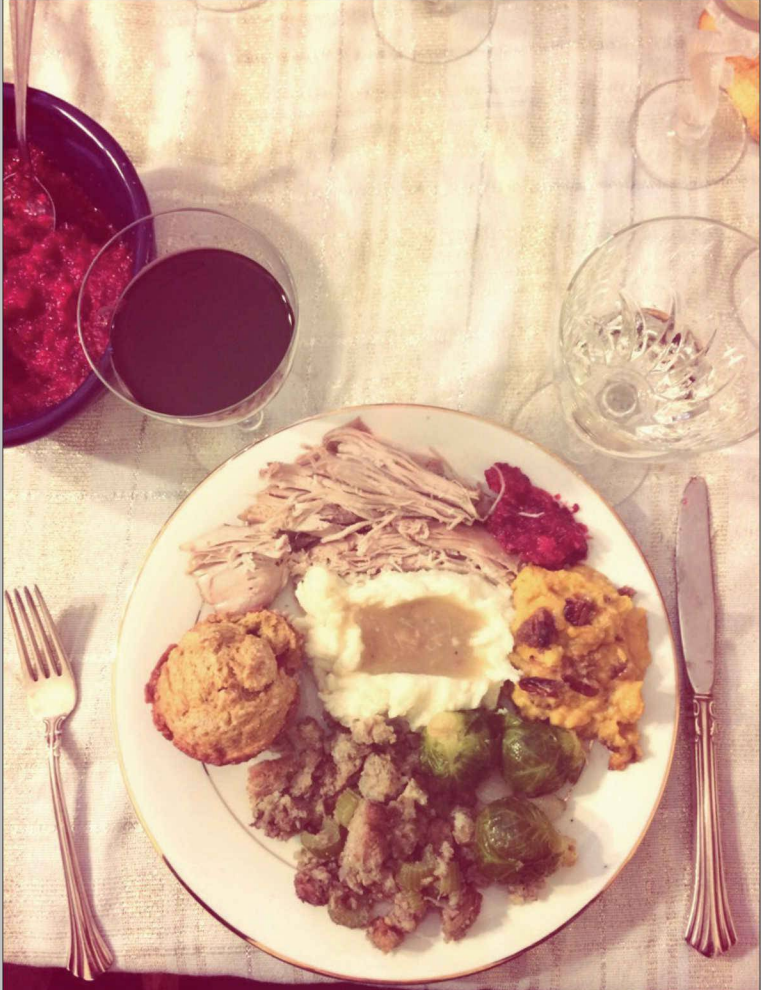
The sense of community and genuine fun that the paddle sports club possesses is that which no one should want to miss out on. The club meets on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:00 – 8:00 pm.

Winton said, “I can always look forward to paddle sports not just as a time to kayak, but as a time I can laugh, be silly, and enjoy hanging out with people I love. It is a blast!” ★



Paddle Sports Club during one of their meetings at the pool.

Photo of the Week



Feast!

BOOK THIEF from Page 4

friend, the neighborhood energy-filled, “lemon-haired” boy, Rudy.

Though I found the film as a whole enjoyable, many aspects of the story seemed too beautiful for the plot and subject matter they surround. One scene in particular shows Liesel and Rudy just after the latter receives news that Nazi authorities selected him to enter into an early elite training program for the military. We see the two inexpressibly adorable fair-haired children laughing and yelling, “I hate Hitler,” across a clear lake, before a screen of bright green trees and sunshine.

In another more sober scene, following a shower of bombs from foreign planes, the camera focuses on burning rubble, shattered buildings, and a lineup of intact bodies, the occupants of each dismembered home lying peacefully on the ground, simply



Sophie Nelisse as Liesel in “The Book Thief”

sprinkled with a little dust.

Overall, I suppose this lack of realistic representation also appeals to the same story-loving audience, who may in turn cringe at accurate gore or the expression of depressed emotions. Nevertheless, for those who crave a spirit-lifting tonic every so often, I found The Book Thief, with its charming protagonist and touching performance just the film to do so. ★

The Irrelevancy of Cheerful Intentions



LUKE LAUER

BRITTANY LIBBY

With the close of another Thanksgiving season, I am excited to begin celebrating all things Christmas. I want to sing cheesy Christmas songs, eat lots of Christmas cookies, and wear wonderfully ugly Christmas sweaters, every-single-day. While this may actually be rather child-like, I have also come to appreciate the Christmas season’s emphasis upon giving unto others with the intent of selfless appreciation. Unfortunately, living in a consumer-oriented context, the bargain-hunting aggression of ‘Black Friday’ has come to more readily define ‘Christmas-like’ giving. The influx of consumerism during this season has simultaneously translated into innumerable opportunities for material charity amongst citizens of the Global North. It is initially daunting to challenge consumer-based charity, specifically with its populari-

ty among respectable citizens. However, there persists a need to re-conceptualize consumer-based charities popular during this holiday season. A needed shift in perspective specifically highlights the lack of depth, cultural relevance, and disregard for recipient perspectives. At the core of its shortcomings, however, consumer-based charity needs greater understanding for the complexity of human-related issues.

At the forefront of consumer-focused charity during the Christmas season is an initiative facilitated by the Samaritan’s Purse named Operation Christmas Child (OCC). Since 1993, OCC has collected shoeboxes from its participants in North America, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Each participant is to fill a shoebox with hygienic items and toys that Western children typically see as essential or enjoyable to play with (i.e. toothpaste, socks, crayons, coloring books, kazooos, etc.). Through OCC, participants are encouraged to label their toy-stuffed shoebox with a sticker indicating a preferred age and sex of the child who will receive the box. According to the Samaritans Purse website, these boxes are intended for children of the Global South who are ‘living in difficult situations’. Through participant’s shoebox donation, OCC mobilizes ‘privileged’ families of the

Global North to ‘share the good news of Jesus Christ’ with ‘underprivileged’ children of the Global South. Unfortunately, introducing Jesus Christ through toys and knick-knacks promotes a simplistic view of Christianity in association with Western consumer culture. As a result, the nature of Jesus Christ adopts attributes of our capitalist society rather than the magnitude of his humanity, divinity, and relevance.

In addition to its non-contextualized approach to evangelism, OCC promotes a one-way relationship between the ‘giver’ and the ‘receiver’, lacking parameters for reciprocity or consistency from year-to-year. In narrowing its concept of charity to a linear flow of western materials, OCC has missed potential for deeper impact through long-term relationship building. Further opportunities involve the development of healthy relationships among consistently participating communities, while better engaging the voice of OCC recipients to define such relationships. Never accessing the capabilities of mu-

tual relationships undermines the diverse expression of opinion amongst both donors and recipients, further hindering the determination of relevant outcomes. Just as one would wish to give a gift relevant to a family member’s indicated ‘wish list’, the voiced desires of OCC recipients need be better involved in determining the outcomes of donor strategies.

Operation Christmas Child currently represents a Westernized view of Christmas, evangelism, and the Global South. As members of the Houghton student body, it is critical that we better critique the premise of OCC and its campus-wide participation. From this perspective, we each are challenged to re-conceptualize the intents, means, and effects of how we choose to give.

As members of the Houghton student body, it is critical that we better critique the premise of OCC and its campus-wide participation.

Moving forward into this holiday season, let us contemplate the wonderful attributes of Christmas, while also reflecting upon its increasing focus on consumerism. In doing so, may we continually contemplate our well-meaning intentions with the valuable humanity of our neighbor, both local and abroad. ★

Brittany is a senior intercultural studies major

Students and the Recognition of the Sabbath



SHELBY WEIL

SHELBY WEIL

Every Sabbath, I ask myself this: to do homework or not to do homework – that is the question. Whether ‘tis nobler in the mind to conquer the papers and projects of outrageous overload, or to relax with my weekly Sabbath away from the tsunami of stress. Even here at a Christian college, I notice that many students spend their Sabbaths cramped up in their room, studying for that big exam they have the next day or starting that eight page paper that they have been avoiding like the plague. Where is their Sabbath day of rest in this? What has happened to the day that God has set aside as holy? Exodus 31 tells us, “You must keep the Sabbath day, for it is a holy day for you,” and what joy we feel when we observe the Sabbath!

The Sabbath was made to meet

the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27). We are human, and because of that, we have limitations. We cannot run continuously without ever getting exhausted; heck, I can barely run a mile without breathing like Darth Vader and getting side stickers. For us humans, rest is a necessity. In 2011, full-time college students studied an average of 15 hours a week, 30% got less than 6 hours a sleep a night, and 25% worked 20 hours or more a week (National Survey). These statistics alone show that college students overwork, under-sleep, and over-commit themselves.

But because God cares for us and loves us, He gives us a model to follow. That model is himself. On the third page of my Bible, I read, “On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation” (Genesis 2:2-3). Now, I can’t imagine that God was exhausted and that He actually needed an entire day to rest. But God set an example so that His children could emulate Him. So why don’t we? Why do we fill the Sabbath with work, homework, and constant business?

This is something that we as Christians should change. We should weekly take the Sabbath. So what is one to

do on the Sabbath? Are they just supposed to lie in bed all day sleeping? Well, there is a difference between being lazy and resting. I believe Barbara Brown Taylor, a priest, professor, and theologian, says it best in her book, *An Altar in the World*, when she describes the Sabbath as “a day of saying no. A day of spiritual growth. A day of not doing, but being.” I don’t think the question is so much, “If I do this, does that count as working on the Sabbath?” as much as “How can I rest today and enjoy this day that God has blessed me with and has made holy?”

That being said, I’m not going to be like the Pharisees, defining what can and cannot be done on the Sabbath, but know that the Sabbath looks different for each person. Sleep in. Go to Church. Spend time with God: through prayer, worship, his word. Journal. Spend time relaxing, giving your mind a break from all of the studying and paper writing. Fellowship with friends, enjoying their company. Go on a hike. Read a book. Take a nap. The options are endless.

But there is one thing that is impor-

tant, and that is to “Be still and know that God is God” (Psalm 46:10).

And I admit, it is hard to obey the Sabbath. This past Sunday, I battled with whether to do homework or not. With two papers and readings that were due on Monday alone, taking an entire day off from homework sounded unreasonable. But I tell you what, I kept the Sabbath. I spent time with God, I worshipped, I watched a movie, read a book, hung out with friends, and ended the night celebrating a friend’s birthday. And throughout it all, I had peace. When Monday morning rolled around, God gave me the strength to rise out of bed, and blessed me with an abundant amount of time to work on homework. And I am still at peace, thankful once again, that I obeyed my Father, rested, and took the Sabbath.

I believe Christian author Mark Buchanan sums up the Sabbath the best, saying, “Sabbath imparts the rest of God – physical, mental, spiritual rest, but also the rest of God – the things of God’s nature and presence we miss in our busyness.”

For these very reasons, every Sunday I say to myself: To observe Sabbath or to observe Sabbath. There is no question. ★

Shelby is a junior inclusive childhood education major

FEATURED EDITORIAL/

Words Matter: A Proposal for Change



LUKE LAUER

BEN MURPHY

“And Goddess said, Let us make woman in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So Goddess created woman in her own image, in the image of Goddess created she her; female and male created she them.”
—Genesis 1:26-27

The (somewhat) familiar words that appear above are taken from the digital version of the “Queen Jamie” Bible found through a curious little website called “regender.com.” Though I’m not proposing that we henceforth adopt this translation at Houghton, I include this

website as one example of many tools that are used to demonstrate the real and affective power of language. The issue of considerate, respectful usage extends to every aspect of meaningful interaction with others. Words mean things and exclusive, hurtful words, whether used deliberately or not, can communicate damaging messages. Words matter. As far as I’m concerned, the validity of this short statement is not up for debate. I’d add that, whether you’re incensed or intrigued by the passage quoted at the start, you’ve proved my analysis correct.

Acknowledging that words matter, the question becomes, how do we handle language? Issues of “language justice” are wide and varied. One may note that there are certain discriminatory names that we’ve agreed not to call one another. The fact that I need not identify them is proof enough of our more-or-less consensual agreement. I say more-or-less because, of course, battles are still being fought, and though I don’t want to callously ignore sensitive issues, I do want to zero in on the one area of language usage of which I believe Houghton as an institution is negligent, namely, gender-inclusive language.

Despite the way I started this piece, I don’t want to address gender-inclusive language only with respect to the Bible. Certainly, I think the way we talk about gender, theology, and Christianity is important to consider, and if you are interested in this intersection, get ahold of Dr. Lacelle-Peterson’s book, “Liberating Tradition.” Leaving that conversation to experts, I will use the remainder of my space to talk about the more broad presence (or,

rather, absence) of gender-inclusive language standards at Houghton.

I recently interviewed several faculty members as part of a project on inclusive language. None of them could point to any college-wide policy that actively addresses gender-inclusivity with respect to college communications, student usage and awareness, or academic writing guidelines. Though several years ago there was a “diversity committee” set up to draft a school-wide policy on the topic, the resulting document was never institutionalized. Though some individuals voluntarily include sections of this proposed policy in their syllabi, there are no stated, compulsory expectations.

I was surprised by my lack of findings. I decided to research official policies at other institutions. Every school that I found in my search was connected with respect to approving, adopting, or maintaining this or that guideline for non-sexist communication, whether in academic writing, in marketing, or in student handbooks (for example, UNC replaced every instance of “freshman” with “first year student”). Lest you think that I’m unjustly pushing “secular standards” of higher education (whatever that means), I’ll go ahead and mention some examples closer to home. Apart from many seminary institutions, Calvin College, George Fox University, Goshen College, Westmont College, and Wheaton College all deliberately and publicly use their website to address the importance of gender inclusive and non-discriminatory language.

In identifying the above schools, I don’t mean to suggest that they have all the kinks figured out. People

in higher education everywhere struggle with flawlessly maintaining gender-inclusive language; no one is perfect, and surely mistakes are made in myriad places and contexts. I’m also not insinuating that the Houghton community has done nothing to support gender-inclusive language. Many individuals consistently model consciousness usage, and I’m thankful that, as I mentioned, some professors have addressed gender-inclusive language on their own terms. I bring up other schools because doing so emphasizes the dramatic lack of institutional support at Houghton. Relying on instructor-initiated treatment unnecessarily politicizes what should be a non-issue, and the preeminence of gender-inclusive usage should supersede professorial preference. For deeply moral and political reasons, it’s simply a fact that no serious college has made it to this point in the 21st century without requiring gender-inclusive language.

Call it naiveté, but I’m optimistic that the majority of people at Houghton will agree with me. In the spirit of community dialogue recently championed by Dean Jordan in his “Christians and Same Sex Attraction” lecture, I welcome any disagreement in the form of conversation. However, if my hopes about this community prove true, then the institution need only stand behind its individuals. It’s time we make up our mind, make it policy, and make it public. ★

Ben is a senior writing and humanities double major



The mission of the Houghton Star is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have characterized Houghton College since its inception. This will be done by serving as a medium for the expression of student thought and as a quality publication of significant campus news, Houghton area news, and events.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

We sent our son to Houghton College because of its Christ centeredness and readily found that other parents did the same. As our student progressed through the years, we realized that some parents sent their children to Houghton to become more Christ-like. And so the battle field is set.....
12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age,[a] against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Ephesians 6:12 (NKJV). At Houghton a Christ-centered course is

set for all the students. ButSPOT challenges their freedom to make the right choices. It is a litmus for where the battle front is. Who is winning the battle at Houghton. We pray for Christian victory over “the darkness of this age”, and the enlightenment and true freedom found in our Lord Jesus for all the students. Counsel them, teach them, but the choices and consequences are ultimately theirs.

Bob Hampson, parent

SPEAK OUT

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less

SUBMIT TO

editor@houghtonstar.com

the houghton
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2013-2014

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LUKE LAUER

GRACE
BALENO

I enjoy trying to integrate mathematical concepts into my art in an attempt to bring my “two worlds” together. I also find influence from my Chinese background as way to explore a culture I’ve never truly known.

Grace is a junior studio art and math major.

ARTIST OF THE WEEK



Möbius Borromean Rings, ceramic



Modular Tessellation, sculptural letterpress printing



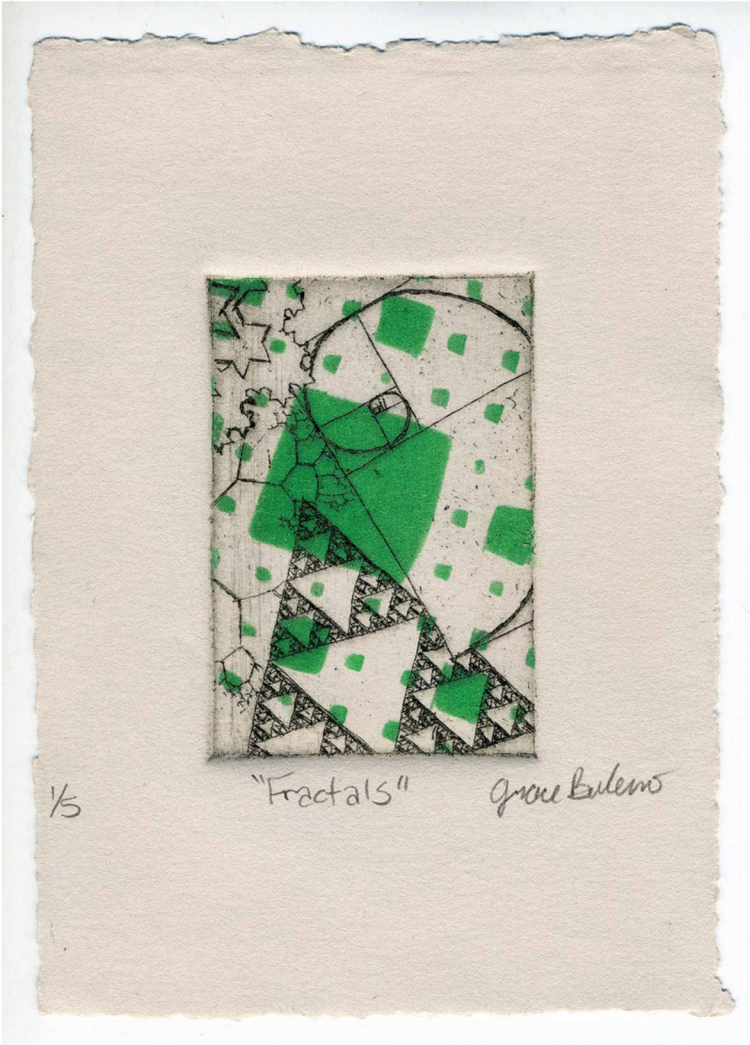
Rice Bowl, ceramic

SUDOKU

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Last week’s winner was: KAITLYN NIKIRK!
To enter a drawing for a **\$5 Allegany Harvest Co-op giftcard**, bring your finished puzzle, clearly marked with your full name and CPO, to the *Star* office in the basement of the Campus Center by 6PM on WED 12/11.



Fractals, etching