

# THE HOUGHTON STAR

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*Functionality, continuity, accessibility*

## Campus Enhancement Committee Starts Work on Campus Infrastructure Improvements

by Joella Eppheimer

Students returning to Houghton College next year can look forward to several changes that will take place over the summer. The Campus Enhancement Committee, formerly known as the Beautification Committee, is working to create aesthetic and accessibility alterations on the campus. The purpose of these modifications is "not just about making campus look pretty," according to Vice President for Student Life, Sharra Hynes. Goals of the committee include campus appearance, but also extend to "functionality, continuity between spaces on campus, and accessibility," said Hynes, adding that "right now we don't do a good job with [accessibility]."

Among the renovations that will be done this summer are improvements to Gillette Hall and the Randall and Leonard Houghton Townhouses. Gillette is the last of the dormitories to receive attention, as Hynes stated it is "so big and so outdated, we needed more steam to be able to take on Gillette." The emphasis in this project is brightness and the redecorating will include new lounge furniture, carpet, and

lighting in the hallways, as well as repainting rooms. Assistant Professor of Art and committee member, Jillian Sokso, said that changes within Gillette will occur very quickly and indicated that the color palette and

flooring, carpet, paint, and energy-efficient appliances will be installed.

Also receiving renovation is the dining service area. Sodexo, the new food service provider, is the primary financier of this task as part of

according to Hynes.

The committee has the assignment of "looking at the campus from the inside and out," according to Sokso. The next step she said, beyond the renovations that are already in progress, is to deliver a list of priorities to the president's staff. The new signage in the Van Dyk Lounge is visible evidence of progress already being made. Other changes to take place include new seating where the planters are currently located outside of the Campus Center. The Student Government Association is also participating in the renovation process. SGA President Zach Adams is on the Redecoration Committee and initiated a proposal that will be reviewed by the Campus Enhancement Committee. The goal of this redecoration process is to "create an office that is both a professional work space for the cabinet and a welcoming common space at the front of the office for club leadership use."

The prevalent feeling among committee members is that the appearance of the campus needs to reflect the purpose of the college. Sokso's objective is to "[bring] awareness to the fact that what our

*Enhancements cont'd on page 2*

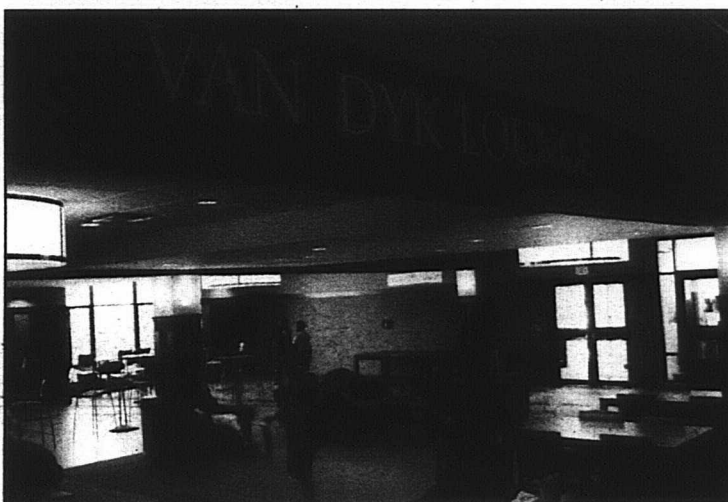


photo by Jordan Green

The new signage in the Van Dyk Lounge, located in the Campus Center, is one of the first in the many improvements being made on campus.

furniture have already been picked out. Hynes broadened the time frame, saying some renovations in Gillette took place last summer, some will occur this summer, and the project will be completed the following summer. In the townhouses, new

Houghton's seven-year contract with them. According to Hynes, the entire serving area will be transformed, beginning May 10. The committee also plans to "systematically address" accessibility issues on campus, as these measures have been lacking.

## Changes in Tuition and Financial Aid

### Direct Loan Eliminates Middleman

by Rebekah Miller

Due to the recent Healthcare Reform Bill recently passed by Congress, federal student loans are undergoing major overhaul. Where before all federal student loans, namely Stafford loans, were handled by individual banks, loans are now being processed the Department of Education. All loans will become direct loans and will be handled exclusively by the government, eliminating what they currently call "the middlemen," that is, the banks.

The change will come into effect for next semester's payments. All students borrowing money via federal loan will be required to fill out a Federal

Direct Loan Master Promissory Note, (MPN) before they will be able to receive or apply for Stafford Loans. Houghton College's Student Financial Services has encouraged students to sign their MPN sooner, rather than later. In fact, they have suggested logging onto <http://www.studentloans.gov> and signing the MPN before the end of the semester. Parents and students will receive further information and reminders about the process of direct loans when financial aid packages are mailed within the next couple of weeks.

Those in Student Financial Services are aware of the possibility

*Stafford Loan cont'd on page 2*

### Next Year's Tuition Up 3.75%

by Joel VanderWeele

Next year's students can expect a 3.75% increase in tuition, and an overall increase in total cost of up to 4.2%, depending on the room and board arrangement.

Although every increase is difficult, next year's increase is smaller than increases in recent years, and a far cry from the 32% increases recently proposed in California.

"It was very intentional to try to keep the cost of tuition, room and board, and overall increase less than it has been the last several years out of respect for families struggling with the financial crisis," said President Shirley Mullen.

According to Mullen, the costs that most directly push the increase are faculty and staff healthcare and other internal costs that go up every year. Between 2008-2009 and 2009-2010, for example, health care costs for the college when up \$400,000. "That's a huge chunk of money," said Mullen, but "as a result of recent changes to our healthcare coverage, we will at least slow the rate of increase."

In the area of room and board, Mullen stated, "It's very clear that a number of our facilities require more than just routine maintenance... All the money from increases in

*Tuition cont'd on page 2*

# THE WORLD TO THERE

by Derek Schwabe

## Georgia seizes Russian Enriched Uranium

The president of Georgia, Mikhail Saakashvili, confirmed this week that his country had seized a shipment of highly enriched uranium, and held Russia responsible for allowing and even encouraging smuggling in the border Caucasus region. He further announced that other such shipments seized by Georgian officials have come "mostly from the direction of Russia." Since the 2008 Russia-Georgia war, two former regions of Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia have declared independence, creating what Saakashvili calls a security black hole in the area. Georgia has repeatedly blamed Russia for fostering this lawless environment that now encourages smuggling. Along with the president's confirmation came an urgent request for American assistance, stating, "We are not asking for an American troop presence. We are asking for an American political, economic and security presence." News of the uranium seizure surfaced during President Obama's nuclear security summit in Washington last week, attended by Saakashvili.

## Rescuers Search for Survivors of La. Oil Rig Explosion

Helicopters and Boats scoured the Gulf of Mexico for 11 missing workers this week after an explosion shook a huge oil drilling platform and injured seventeen people. The explosion, visible for miles, occurred Tuesday night aboard the Deepwater Horizon rig, 50 miles off the Louisiana coast. The rig remained on fire over 24 hours after the blast, despite the efforts of surrounding fire boats. "We're hop-

ing everyone's in a life raft," Coast Guard Senior Chief Petty Officer Mike O'Berry said, reflecting the Coast Guard's optimism that much of the crew successfully escaped the disaster. According to Transocean spokespeople, the 100,000 square ft. rig, which was under contract to the oil giant BP, was assigned to exploratory drilling but was not in production. It is reported to have housed nine Transocean workers, six BP employees and 41 contract workers. Almost 100 workers made it aboard a supply boat and were expected to reach the Louisiana shore by evening. Family and friends of missing employees remain optimistic about their whereabouts. "He's on the boat. That's all we know. And that's all we need to know," said one family member.

## Pope Meets with Abuse Victims

Throughout the last year, many accusations of abuse have been brought upon the Catholic Church. Specifically targeted have been the Catholic clergy in Ireland, the Netherlands, Austria, and Germany. Pope Benedict XVI recently met with the victims to assure them that the church will indeed take action, and claimed that he was "greatly moved" by the interaction. The meeting was full of emotion, according to victim Joseph Magro, as Benedict described his feeling on the matter as "shame" while guaranteeing "justice" on the abusers. Eight victims came forward, and the twenty-minute meeting took place in Valletta, Malta. The group discussed matters, prayed together, and then the pope met with them each separately. "I made peace with the church," said Magro immediately following his meeting with the pope and interaction with the other victims.



## Black-Eyed Susan Acoustic Café

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## Enhancements cont'd from page 1

environment looks like communicates more than what we can articulate with language." Asserting that current community members and visitors, including prospective students and their parents, make judgments based on the college's physical appearance, she said that if the judgment is that "we don't care about accessibility and appearance," people will be less likely to view Houghton College in a positive manner. Aware that some may not think aesthetics should be addressed during a time of economic difficulty, she pointed out that "we live in a constantly changing world based on visual," and how the college presents itself is important for its continuation as a highly regarded institution.

Hynes echoed this sentiment, saying it is important for students to feel like they are "getting what they pay for." She said she believes that the community on campus creates a positive living experience, but the environment needs to promote the living experience as well. ★

## Stafford Loan cont'd from page 1

for such a severe change in the student loan system, but are still confident that Houghton College and its students will navigate the changes successfully.

Director of Student Financial Services Troy Martin stated, "I know that transition is never easy; however, our hope is that in the long run, this will be a simpler process for students obtaining student loans."

The process for obtaining loans may indeed be straightforward, with easy access to all federal student loans on <http://nslds.ed.gov>. Parents and students will be able to access their own loans with the same pin number and information with which they filled out the FAFSA. Along with the easy accessibility, the parent PLUS loan interest rate is decreasing from 8.5% to 7.9%.

At the same time, because of the sheer volume of student loans to be handled; the response time to changes in loan amounts may be slower. Martin encourages parents and students to carefully plan ahead to consider exactly how much money the student will need for the entire year, because changes to the loan amount may take between four and six weeks to process, as opposed to the two to three day process that took place when loans were carried out by the banks.

## Tuition cont'd from page 1

room fees will be plugged back into improvements. I feel the best that I have felt in my time here that the increase in cost is tied to visible improvements."

According to Vice President of Student Life Sharra Hynes, "The increase to room costs next year reflect improvements that are being made to several residences across the campus. For example, we are replacing carpet on several floors in Gillette Hall, providing new study lounge furniture throughout Gillette and replacing the aging appliances in all of the townhouses with new, energy efficient appliances. The changes to room and board were decided based on student and staff feedback, assessment of the quality of our living spaces and the desired improvement to our residential dining program."

Mullen also noted that changes in cost for student meal plans are "directly related to the change to Sodexo."

"The increase to board for the 2010-2011 academic year reflects an increase to the hours of service available to students in the dining hall (continuous dining from 7:00 am-7:30 pm M-F) and changes to the food program with our new food service provider," explained Hynes.

As a result of the bidding process, Houghton will also enjoy "major facilities improvements in food service areas." ★

Some are worried that the switchover to all federally handled federal loans may result in a lower standard of customer service. A lack of competition may mean a slow system with confusion, resulting from the complexity of the large number of students' loans to be handled, as well as the Department of Education's choice to use four separate servicers to oversee and manage student loans. Much of this concern lies in the same worry about big government in general.

Student Financial Services at Houghton, however, feels prepared to forge forward into this time of change and are taking proactive steps to ensure students understand exactly what is going on with their loans. Martin recognizes that there will be bumps in the road, but hopes that they will be minimized due to Houghton's preparation and past experience with the direct loan system.

Students are encouraged to do their parts to ensure a smooth transition. This involves, mostly, signing their MPNs promptly and borrowing an accurate amount of money for the entire year, eliminating the need to change the loan amount at another point during the year.

If students have any questions about this change, they should feel free to contact Student Financial Services. ★

## Black-Eyed Susan Acoustic Café

May 6 Acoustic Open Mic 7pm (and every 'First Thursday' thereafter)  
May 8-9 "Main Street in May" Event Celebrate Spring in Angelica!  
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May 8 "Accidental Clarity" Dinner & Theatre Package at Black-Eyed Susan  
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## Poll Prompts Alcohol Education Program

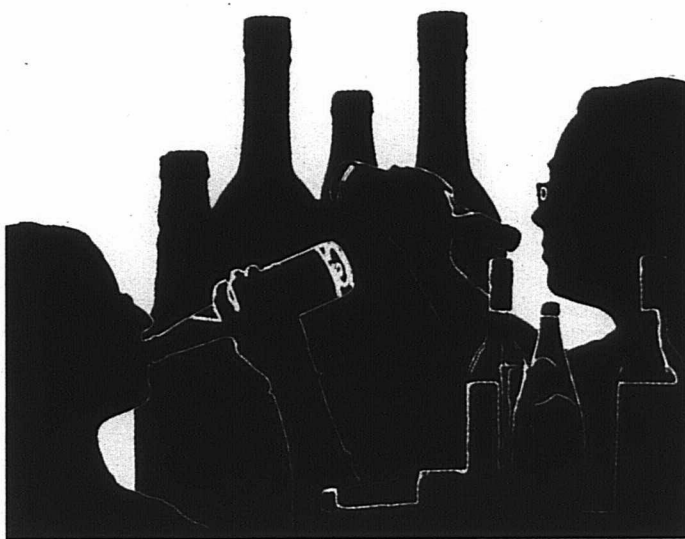


image by Hannah Yanega

**Houghton hops on board with other colleges that offer educational programs about alcohol consumption.**

by Colleen White

Based on the results of a recent survey done by the Counseling Center, Houghton will be offering an alcohol education program as part of FYI next year. The decision to introduce this program was made after the survey "Alcohol Opinions and Use" showed that, although nearly 55% of the student body never consumes alcohol, 70% said they planned on consuming it at least occasionally after graduation. Dr. Michael Lastoria, who conducted the survey, pointed out that this means between 20-30% of the students who graduate and do choose to drink will be at risk of not knowing how to drink responsibly. Lastoria also commented that most secular colleges and several Christian schools have educational programs about alcohol in place. Houghton, though the idea has been considered in the past, has, until now, pushed safe alcohol usage aside for more pressing issues.

This fall, that will all be changed by the introduction of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium Classroom program, "Alcohol-Wise." The program is an online questionnaire that students will fill out to create personal profiles of their alcohol habits. The idea of the profile is to demonstrate to the student how much of an impact his or her use of alcohol may be having on his or her life. After a pilot run this semester with a group of first-year students, the Counseling Center decided to integrate this program into FYI to allow more room for discussion and context. Lastoria stated that the intent of the program is neither to set a double standard

for Houghton students, nor to encourage drinking in any way, but rather to acknowledge the fact that students are not going to stay in the Houghton community forever, and will benefit from factual knowledge about alcohol use.

Of the almost 700 students who took the survey, most were ambivalent about a program regarding alcohol consumption, with around 30% replying they felt "neutral" to the statement "Most college students don't have enough factual information about alcohol use and abuse, and would benefit by being better informed, regardless of personal convictions." This type of response was reassuring to the survey-givers that there would be no student backlash from offering an alcohol education program, and with this knowledge the program was set in motion. It was also important to Lastoria and others that students who have a family member with alcohol problems will also benefit from this program. Almost a quarter of the students who responded fall into this category.

When particular topics, such as the biblical view of alcohol, the effect of alcohol on the brain, and the positive uses of alcohol were suggested in the survey, most of the respondents said they were "interested" in the idea, showing that the standard health class lecture on alcohol would be rejected by the student body, the majority of Houghton students really are interested in the true effects of alcohol on their lives and are willing to discuss it in more detail. According to Lastoria, this fall in FYI, first-year students will "jump in," and "we'll see how it goes." ★

## Technology Services Eliminates Student Laptop Program

by Kyle Johnson

Houghton's Technology Services has been kept busy during the past year. Specifically, Houghton's laptop program has been put to an end, so freshmen students will no longer be provided a laptop for their four-year stay at Houghton. Also, in the past several months, Technology Services has orchestrated the transition of Houghton's e-mail server from Windows to G-mail.

Houghton has provided laptops for its students since the 1990s.

"It was a way to let Houghton stand out from the crowd" and help achieve Houghton's goal of being "globally engaged," despite the college's small size and rural setting, according to Vice President of Admissions Wayne MacBeth, who was involved in the Admissions' part of the decision to end the program.

But times have changed. "Some people are bringing their own laptops," he said, as the price of laptops in general has decreased. The importance of a laptop program in a student's decision process for a college, "has virtually disappeared" and hardly anyone has claimed that "Houghton is my choice" because of its laptop program. Ending the program better serves current needs by letting students have "the option to make their own choices."

According to Director of Technology Services Don Haingray, student satisfaction with the program "was still pretty high" when inquiries about the continuation of the program were originally made. However, as Admissions' research had shown, many students had other technology preferences, and it was determined that the money for the program would be put to better use elsewhere. "It just makes sense to make this change," said Haingray.

This transition logistically represents for Technology Services "a shift from knowing every machine on the network by name, to... a much more complex environment," explained Haingray. Now, there will be computers on the network that Technology Services is not as familiar with, which will require a wide variety of operating systems. "So, from a support standpoint," there are "more issues in general." However, "there are some strategies we're looking at," he added, that would mitigate such complications. Aside from working case by case with problems as they

come, Haingray does not anticipate many logistical issues.

Another change for Technology Services at Houghton is the recent transition of e-mail servers from Windows to G-mail. There are several reasons this change was made, according to Haingray, and one of them being the request made by the Alumni office to give students the opportunity to keep the same e-mail addresses after college, which could be accomplished with G-mail. As a result, the decision was made to add the last two numbers of the students' graduation years to their addresses to avoid confusion with the much greater number of addresses that will be seen in the system in the future.

According to Seth Taylor, Technology Services' Network Administrator, the benefits of using G-mail also includes the opportunity to take advantage of the constant updates and new features that G-mail offers, noting that G-mail is in a "continuous state of development and improvement." The use of G-mail also provides users with an exponentially larger amount of storage, about 50 times the 150 MB limit of the previous server. What is furthermore helpful is that G-mail is a service "that people are familiar with when they come here," pointed out Haingray.

Students' responses to the e-mail server transition seems to generally affirm Haingray's expectations.

Sophomore Megan Toombs expressed her satisfaction with the change, saying, "I think the changeover is fantastic. I do not have to worry about being over the e-mail limit anymore. I love the chat function on G-mail, and I like how I can personalize my account."

Technology Services has focused on several smaller projects this year as well, such as some changes in web search restrictions. Erin Bard, a student employee of Technology Services expressed excitement with some of the things he has been working on.

"One of the kind of cool things we've been working on," he said, "is getting a higher speed connection to the more peripheral parts of campus, like the Equestrian center or the Center for Sustainability." Technology Services, in all projects, whether big or small, is always striving towards "providing the faculty and staff a better experience," said Bard. ★

## Volcanic Ash Strands Students in London



photo by Esther Lee

Professor Heidi Chamberlin provides meals and lodging for FYHP London students in her flat.

by Hannah Jennings

The eruption of Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull on April 15 could not have come at a worse time for the students of Houghton's First Year Honors Program in London. With the conclusion of the program on Monday, April 19, the continued flight cancellations left most students without housing and prevented their travel plans to fly home or to continental Europe. Some were able to take trains to destinations including Wales, Scotland and France with hopes that airspace

will reopen before return flights to London Heathrow Airport, where transatlantic flights are scheduled to depart.

Resident professors Benjamin and Susan Lipscomb have worked continuously since news of the eruption to ensure that students are not left without housing and food. Members of their local church, St. Augustine's, have generously opened their homes to house students for a few nights while new plans are arranged. In addition, each of the professors, including Heidi Chamberlin, have opened up their

own flats to students for sleeping and eating. Houghton's Off-Campus Programs Office is working with the professors, students and their parents to make sure they are able to get flights back to the States.

The National Air Traffic Service closed all airspace in the United Kingdom and most of Europe due to dangers of engine failure from atmospheric ash. Winds from the north continue to blow ash clouds over the UK, but, on Wednesday, many of the European airports reopened with some airlines losing close to \$1 billion.

Lipscomb described it as "an odd kind of crisis—all about money and inconvenience. No bombs are falling, no buildings are collapsing and the students get to spend some extra days in one of the most interesting and vibrant cities in the world."

Restrictions continue into this weekend, yet the students and professors are hopeful that air transportation will begin to open up soon. Some have been able to reschedule flights home on April 23 in hopes that the volcanic spewing will have subsided.

All have managed to take advantage of the opportunities that London has to offer despite news of continual and worsening eruption. Student Annelise Hein offers a positive outlook and reflects the general attitude in saying, "We're here; we might as well make the best of it".

Some have chosen to instead travel by bus or train within the United Kingdom to make up for not being able to travel elsewhere. Group dinners in the flats have kept spirits high and have given the students a taste of home in stressful times.

According to Lipscomb, "We're trying not to get too frustrated with the circumstances but enjoy these extra days of being together as a group." ★

### Cakes for all Occasions by Erica!



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## Senior Shows Open in CFA Tonight

by Emily Rinehart

The Class of 2010's Senior art and communication department shows premiere tonight. The shows, though set up side-by-side, will be presented separately. The Art majors' portion will be held in the Ortlip Gallery, while the Communications majors will present in the Dieder Board Room.

Under the guidance of Professor John Rhett, who served as both academic advisor and senior seminar professor, 12 Art majors will present their work.

One of the seniors, Emily Tullar, said that they benefited from "advice and encouragement from the professors in our concentrations." Tullar plans to exhibit watercolor flowers – but with an abstract twist.

Combined with the work of the remaining 11 seniors, the show offers a wide variety. Jeff Andersen and Ellen

Sortore have both created furniture, while Megan Scrafford will show oil and watercolor portraits. Photography has been pursued by several of the seniors. Jessica Camp plans to show photos with an emphasis on the color wheel, contrasting with Lauren DelGiorno's project entitled "Crack the Shutter," a photo series of nude silhouettes. Jen Puccio and Jessica Hozjan are also showing photography; Hozjan will accompany her photos with oil paintings as well. The show includes illustrations by Melanie Lippert, ceramics by Gerard Gentry, and prints by Hannah Byers. Susanna Addison prepared what Tullar called "an entire bakery" by refinishing a table and fashioning, among other items, boxes for cupcakes and bags for coffee.

The communications show takes a more student-led path.

Currently, a senior show is not

included in the Communications curriculum; involvement in tonight's show is strictly voluntary. Senior Laura Day, who based her project for the show on the idea of attachment, said that when several students showed interest, Professor Dave Huth agreed to "pull the strings." From there the seniors began preparing their projects and coordinating with the Art majors. Between all nine – Sonja Mindrebo, Laura Day, Shannon Hicks, Susanna Skillman, Michael Buttino, Jessica Stoddard, Bethany Christensen, Haleigh Johnson, and Sarah Brumbaugh – a myriad of visual media will be available. Digital imaging, digital photography, multimedia presentations, animations, and film will all be represented. Brumbaugh's project for the show is a 'mockumentary' following the story of a fictional band. Though each project will be available for individual

showing throughout the night, via separate screens and headphones, a screening of all film-based work will be held at 8:30pm – also in the Dieder Board Room.

The two shows not only promise a wide variety within themselves, but also as a whole. Though both groups expressed a desire to present their shows professionally, the atmosphere between the two will certainly contrast. While the art majors have set up a gallery-style viewing, the communications majors have created a show based on individual experience.

Both shows begin tonight at 7:00pm in the Center for the Fine Arts. The Communications show is open only tonight, though the Art show will remain on display until May 15. Afterwards, a reception co-hosted by both departments will be provided. ★



## Students Rock Out at HoughtonPalooza



photo by Jordan Green

Houghton Palooza, typically held in the courtyard between the Hazlet and Leonard townhouses, took place in the Campus Center due to inclement weather this year.

by Josephine Stawicki

HoughtonPalooza, the second annual musical extravaganza, drew a vast and varied group of Houghtonites together to celebrate a plethora of genres, style-adapted covers, and original talent, even though the event had to be moved into the Van Dyk Lounge due to inclement weather.

Last Saturday, the event began at 2pm and was jump-started by Matt and John Geeze of The Geeze Knees. They opened the show with a few smashing covers and even better originals. The Wolf Explosion took the stage next and whipped the audience into a wild, howling frenzy. Meghan Wehrle, the band's back-up vocalist, mentioned the family structure of a wolf pack and paralleled it with Houghton's tightly-knit campus. The general consensus could only describe it as, "Ahhh, this song will be stuck in my head for the rest of the semester."

The famous singer/songwriter Jesse Sprinkle followed suit – or not – as he declared that he "would be taking this thing to a whole new level."

A few of the bands had merchandise tables with T-shirts, buttons, stickers and even balloons for sale. The entirety of Sprinkle's profits went towards the "Ugandan Water Project," which he explained in detail throughout his set. After a moving performance including Sprinkle's family and a beautifully destructive djembe accompaniment by Josiah Armstrong, Sweet Hollow Drive picked up speed and caught a few stragglers in their wake. As the night wore on, the jumping, dancing, singing-along, and supportive hollering significantly increased. Wehrle commented, "This is filling my soul."

During some of the other band's set up time, Bethany Fonda brought the decibels down without a drop in the excitement level. Her melodic voice was paired with an exquisite duet of guitars featuring the one and only Luke Doty.

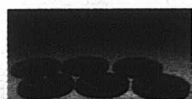
We are Wanderers injected an

original, spiritual, and sensational noise energy into the crowd, followed by Once and For All's combustion of some well known covers as well as one jazzy original. Dreaming Out Loud received some intense audience participation, as did the highly charged Epiphany. Patmos Vision carried the banner with a few covers and spiced them up with some drum solos. The night wrapped up with a killer performance by The Autumn Equinox: Fall, carrying the volume back up to the roof, and John Foster sent us off into a nostalgic 90s rampage.

Alex Glover expressed some regret that the event could not be held outside, but was satisfied with the turnout and performances nevertheless. He added, "It was good feelings day! Everyone put in a great effort: the Campus Center, allowing us to remain here for such a long portion of the day, the flats' free hamburgers and soda, it just seemed like everyone was ready to get on board and help out. For this I am immensely grateful."

Bennett Minchen of John Foster had similar feelings about the show and the event in general. "I am so thankful for everyone who spent their Saturday here to support us. I think all of Houghton needs this kind of energy," he said. All in all, the general consensus (based on a poll) was an absolutely ecstatic time. ★

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## Houghton responds to the

# United States Census 2010

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21% (I'm in favor)

7% (It's annoying)

7% (It's unconstitutional)

Results from 42 votes

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This week's issue was put together by Monica Sandreckzi, next year's STAR Editor-in-Chief. Next year's staff will also include Erin Carr, Chris Hartline, Lauren Kososki, Kristen Palmer, Joshua Wallace, Gordon Brown, and Jordan Green.

## Tights are Not Pants! (and Other Thoughts on Modesty)

by Jess Lehsten

"Men Speak on Modesty for Women Today."

I had a good chuckle when I first read the campus-wide email announcing that there would be a panel discussion on this topic. In typical senior class fashion, my first reaction was cynical. I assumed this was nothing more than a thinly veiled attempt by Student Life to prevent sunbathing on the Quad. I yelled to my flat-mates in the other room: "Seriously?! Men speaking to women about modesty?! You would, Houghton College! YOU SO WOULD!"

And yet, as so often happens to a cynic like me, I quickly found that my anger was misplaced. It turns out that the forum was not in fact initiated by Houghton administration, but rather by a group of female students who were interested in starting a conversation about the alleged battle faced by Christian males in pursuit of sexual "purity." I couldn't attend the panel discussion, so instead I went on my own little journey to try to get some perspective on this aspect of the male experience.

I asked a friend to describe to me what it is like for him (and, presumably, other males like him) when he sees a girl who is dressed "immodestly." He sheepishly said, "Remember that part in *Finding Nemo* when the shark is trying to not eat the fish? And then he smells blood in the water and his eyes go completely black? He forgets everything except going after the fish...It's kind of like that."

So what is it, then, that has the potential to derail the thoughts of an otherwise pious young man? What is the "blood in the water", so-to-speak?

In response to this question, Professor Hegeman, the only faculty member on the aforementioned panel discussion, says that the primary enemy of the purity-seeking male is his imagination. He says, "If I am walking around campus and I see a girl sunbathing in a bikini, my imagination explodes!" (I interpreted this as, "most men probably have a sexual fantasy about bikini-girl").

But since string bikinis are in short supply on campus, I guess I wasn't really sure what else males might consider to be "immodest dress." So I asked some guys about it. Their answers ranged from "shirts showing cleavage" to "tights are not pants!" One guy even mentioned that a particular "demeanor" of a female might arouse an unwelcome thought: "Sometimes just the way a girl carries herself or flirts with me *seems* sexual." Another said, "It sounds sad to say, but even if I see a girl bend over I might have to fight a sexual thought." So what I gathered, un-empirically of course, is that it is not just immodest clothing that men find tempting.

Shifting gears a bit, let's now ask the oft-forgotten question: what can males do to encourage females towards a life of purity? (Why haven't you asked this question, guys?) I think it's almost taboo in our culture to say so, but the truth is that women too experience a difficult battle for sexual purity. The "triggers" of sexual temptation

might not be as pervasive, but they do exist for females. For example, every year, the guys from a particular dorm on campus make a show of running around campus in their boxers (I'm sorry, but what would you say if girls were running around the Quad in their bras and panties?). And while walking down to the flats last week (on a day that was not particularly hot, I might add), I noticed a guy riding his bike without a shirt on. I can't speak for all the women on campus, but I can speak for myself: seeing a nice-looking guy with no shirt on is not a helpful experience for my pursuit of sexual purity!

In the end, I think it's important to remember that sexual attraction *in itself* is not sinful. It is when sexual attraction is taken to a place in which another person is objectified and/or disrespected that it becomes questionable. Furthermore, I'm not sure it's the fault of bare-chested biker and bikini-wearer-on-the-Quad that they apparently have the potential to cause a member of the opposite sex to "stumble." Let's give ourselves a little more credit here - we aren't dogs. We *can* control our thoughts and our actions. Maybe it isn't easy. Maybe it will take hard work and discipline and perseverance and transparency. But isn't that ultimately what this whole "Christianity" thing is about?

*Jess Lehsten is a senior Intercultural Studies Major.*

## Letters

## to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Recently Glenn Beck said that Christians should "run" from churches that talk about social justice. He has since gotten into debate with Rev. Jim Wallis, founder of Sojourner's, and labeled him as "perverting the gospel." I for one am disturbed by the vast amount of Christians that take advice from Beck while simply ignoring a man like Reverend Wallis, a man who has worked tirelessly for the plight of those who have no advocate. I am not trying to make a political statement, but I think it is time we as a church take a look at the kind

of people we are supporting.

-Daniel Holtz, Class of 2010

Dear Editor,

I highly applaud the efforts of the Creation Care Committee in conjunction with our campus to become more "green." I realize there have been many changes on large levels. However, I am writing to suggest that the Creation Care Committee look at issues on smaller levels, such as in the dorms.

I do not know if I can speak for all dorms, but I know that Lambein would benefit greatly from better recycling opportunities. The clearly marked recycling bins in public areas are helpful, and widely used, but I would dare to suggest that even more recyclable materials are generated in the

dorms. For example, in Lambein, our recycling is supposed to be in the kitchens. However, there are three unmarked, identical garbage cans, and cardboard, cans, bottles, and garbage are placed into all three. As much as I would like to recycle, it is difficult, not to mention inconvenient (and I know I speak for more students than just myself).

I would suggest that clearly marked recycling containers on a smaller scale than those in the Chamberlain Center and the Campus Center be placed in the dorms. I see many students recycle in those public places, and believe that if given a better chance, they would do so in the dorms as well. Let's model creation care not only in public, but in our private living spaces.

-Susanna Brautigam, Class of 2012



From the Editor's Desk...

## Final Reflection: The Role of a Student Newspaper at Houghton College

-by Joel VanderWeele

Three years on the staff of *The Houghton Star* has taught me that there is sometimes a disconnect between what the readers of the newspaper expect and what its staff is actually trying to accomplish. This editorial seeks to narrow that gap and offer some insight into the goals, function, and limits of a student newspaper at Houghton College.

Our constitution states, "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."

Professional journalists often claim that an independent press is a vital part of life in a democratic society. With independence comes the ability to report on all groups objectively, bringing a third party perspective to disputes without violating loyalties to one group or another. Although the size of the Houghton community requires that the student newspaper be supported by the Campus Services Budget (rather than through the sale of advertisements, like a truly independent newspaper), it has also been afforded a great deal of editorial independence by the college. In this way, *The Houghton Star* at least comes close to qualifying as an independent newspaper.

What does this actually mean when putting the newspaper together every week?

The newspaper has three different sections, and the content of each serves our mission in a different way. These sections are clearly labeled at the top of each page, but I suspect that these labels, like many things that are always in the same place, are often overlooked.

First and foremost is Campus News. This section, located in the first three pages of the typical eight-page spread, seeks to keep the entire community informed about what is happening on campus in as straightforward and impartial a way as possible.

People who are informed about their community are also the most likely to take an active role in it, and we hope that by reading the newspaper, our audience will be empowered to take a more active role in this community.

Most of the time, the Campus News section is uncontroversial. Occasionally, however, we cover sensitive subjects that not everyone wants to read about in the student newspaper. Two prominent examples of this are "OS Taskforce Releases Recommendations to Faculty, Staff" and "What it's Like to be Gay at Houghton," both printed last semester.

An argument against these "controversial" stories commonly runs as follows: "If a prospective parent was to pick up the newspaper or go online and read this article, what will they think about Houghton?" This is a valid concern, especially given the current focus on enrollment and retention. But I imagine (and hope) that for every reader who turns away after reading an article about contested budget cuts or homosexual students at Houghton, another will be impressed by our willingness to address difficult issues head-on.

I also imagine (and hope) that people who are bothered by such "controversial" articles will read the paper in its entirety or browse our website to get a more complete picture of life at Houghton, not just the "controversial" bits. The same week we ran the article "What it's Like to be Gay at Houghton," for instance, we also covered the success of the Turkey Drive and a youth Lego competition. Reality is not simple or one-dimensional, and the wide array of stories in the Campus News section is meant to reflect reality, not some sunnied and simplified version of it.

Another key responsibility of a student newspaper is to act as a campus watchdog, telling stories that people wouldn't learn about otherwise. If the decision-makers on campus know that what they do will be reported in the newspaper,

they are less likely to do something irresponsible. If there is something important happening on campus that no one is talking about, good or bad, the newspaper is in the position to fill that informational void and start the conversation.

The Sports & Culture section, located on pages four and five, typically covers cultural events like sporting events, new exhibits in the art gallery, and musical performances. Sometimes these take a straightforward approach similar to that of Campus News articles, but often Sports & Culture articles take the form of a critical review.

As in any newspaper, the reviews printed in *The Houghton Star* reflect the opinions of the reviewer. The Editorial staff tries to assign reviews to students who know a thing or two about the event they are covering and have no personal stake in the success or failure of the performance; this is easier said than done. We do not instruct our reviewers to take either a positive or negative approach

to their topic. The goal of these reviews is not to disparage the efforts of people working on campus, nor is it to dole out indiscriminate pats on the back.

The Commentary section, found on pages six and seven, is quite different than the Campus News and Sports & Culture sections. As its name suggests the Commentary section acts as a vehicle for student opinion. While the "From the Editor's Desk" column is reserved for the Editorial staff, the rest of the section is always open to student submissions in the form of commentary articles or letters to the editor. This year, we printed nearly every letter we received, only eliminating letters that were redundant or from an unknown source.

*The Houghton Star's* approach to the Commentary section is similar to author Wendell Berry's approach to essays. In an introduction to an essay by Courtney White, Berry writes:

"Courtney and I know, of course, that some people are going to disagree with his thoughts, as some will disagree with mine. As essayists, we know that the purpose of an essay is not to deliver the final word. An essay's purpose is merely to take part in a conversation. So let the disagreements come. Long live the conversation!"

The Commentary section strives to keep alive the conversation by printing well-argued articles from a wide variety of viewpoints, understanding that not everyone will agree with them, but hoping that they will prompt further thought, stimulate meaningful dialogue, and perhaps a greater understanding of the truth. While reading the Commentary section, it is important to keep in mind that it is participating in a conversation or many conversations, not delivering the final word.

Some have argued that because *The Houghton Star* is the only newspaper on campus, the Commentary section should seek to represent everyone who reads it. Nevermind the practical impossibility of representing every opinion held on campus, of what value is it to merely repeat what most students have already heard? For any given topic covered in the Commentary section, the newspaper is a catalyst for further thought and consideration, not a catalog of everything that has been said.

Finally, it's perhaps most important to understand that a student newspaper is accountable to its readers. I'll repeat what I wrote in the very first issue of this year's volume of *The Houghton Star*: "The success of *The Houghton Star* depends on its readers. Without lively dialogue, student newspapers are destined for failure. So we request your cooperation, knowing that without it we will fail. Write letters to the editor. Let us know when we've overstepped our bounds. Encourage us to continue digging when we haven't stepped far enough."

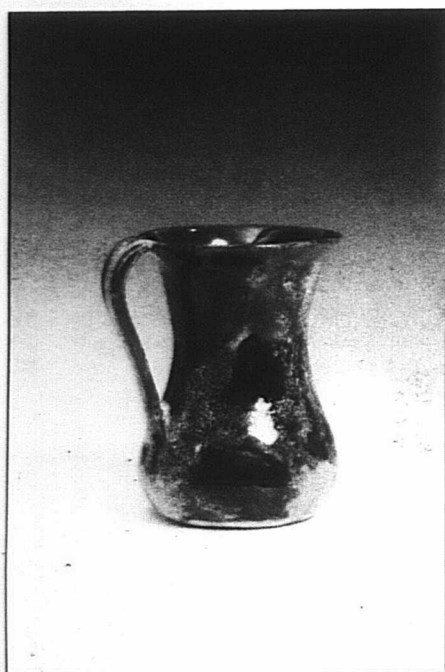
Joel VanderWeele is a senior Mathematics and Philosophy major and served as Editor-in-Chief

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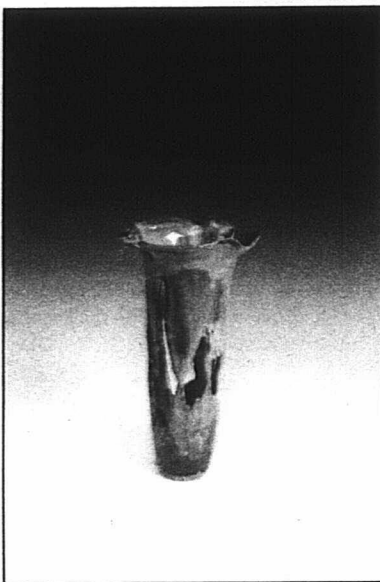
# artist OF THE WEEK

*Note from the artist:* Who are we? We are made of soul and body. These are not who we are, but equal elements that constitute the human being. Who we are and knowing who we are are dictated by what we love. My art, as much as anything else is an attempt at aiding in becoming and knowing. My work in ceramics stems from an enjoyment found in enriching what it is to be fully human. By participating in the valuable medium of ceramics (among others), my art is able to aid in the enriching and fulfilling of myself and hopefully others as complete human beings. More than the implicit value of creating and engaging in art, my work contains considerations and commentaries on ethics and society. My work often takes on themes of nature when speaking about these ideas. I believe that the physical world is just as intricately and importantly tied up in who we are as the conceptual and metaphysical. As a result, enjoying beauty and learning to let it play its role in human development is the process I enjoy most in art. I hope that my art will draw viewers deeper into the physical world and raise consideration of valuable concepts. Most of all, I hope that my work becomes one more aid in directing participants towards a proper orientation of loves.

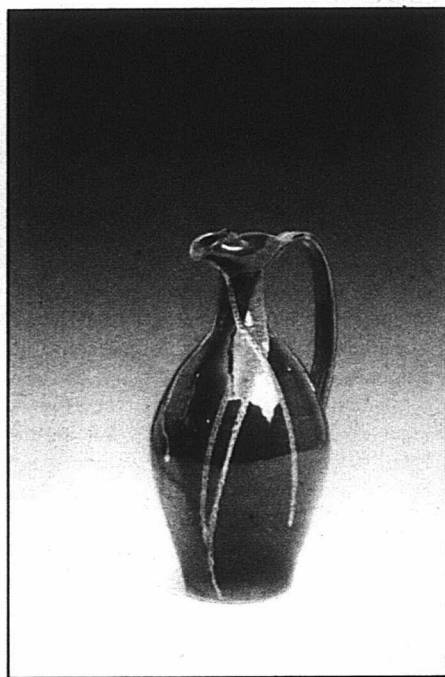


Ocean, ceramic

## GERAD GENTRY



Spelunking Through Life, ceramic

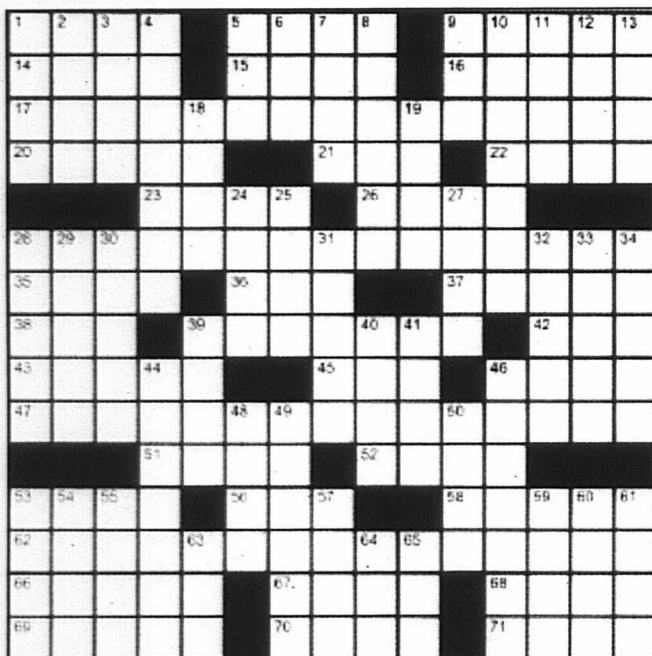


J. London, ceramic

## Crossword CHALLENGE

Bring your finished crosswords to the STAR office to claim your copy of LEROY TOWNES AND THE LONE STARS album!

Puzzle constructor Brad Wilber ('91) is a member of the library faculty. He has a crossword puzzle appearing in the New York Times today as well, response to which can be seen at various locations in the blogosphere.



Congratulations to last week's Sudoku Challenge winner, Staci Hinderliter!

### Across

1. Palindromic form of address
5. Adonis was killed by one
9. Construction girder
14. W.W. II vet, e.g.
15. It's green in "Risk"
16. Number of Ali Baba's thieves
17. Final exam aid #1
20. Hall-of-Fame slugger Dawson
21. Org. that created the Silver Gavel award
22. Driver's bad impression?
23. Poker-table declaration
26. Maker of Liv-A-Snaps
28. Final exam aid #2
35. "You wish!"
36. Check the "no" box, e.g.
37. Pick up on
38. Owner of a TV diner
39. "To summarize..."
42. Dept. of Defense code-cracking grp.
43. Weed-B-Gon's company
45. Fury
46. Face-off
47. Final exam aid #3
51. Proceeds, slangily
52. Req. for admission to schools accredited by the 21-Across
53. Expand
56. Variety

## CLUES

18. Big rig
19. Sentry's order
24. Revered symbol
25. Puppy bites
27. "Hey...over here!"
28. Margaret Mead's subject
29. Tech support callers
30. Squalor
31. Personal credo
32. Jaded feeling
33. City north of Cologne
34. "The Power of Positive Thinking" clergyman
39. Smidgen
40. Like some vaccines
41. Certain whistle blowers
44. Start without a key
46. Roundabout routes
48. Depression-era Dust Bowl refugee
49. Lion or tiger
50. Babe in the woods?
53. Aussie hail
54. "Bed" in many restaurants
55. Future embryo
57. Lego rival
59. Opinion
60. Europe's highest volcano
61. Refusal, in Russia
63. One of the four Bobbsey Twins
64. Dental aesthetics problem
65. "Xanadu" soundtrack band, for short

### Down

1. Prefix with bucks
2. Nerve impulse transmitter
3. "To \_\_\_ Unknown" (Steinbeck novel)
4. Where to find a six-pack?
5. Nocturnal flier
6. Jesse Owens' alma mater, briefly
7. Opera set in Egypt
8. Big name in shades
9. "\_\_\_ tree falls in the forest..."
10. 1996 presidential candidate
11. Lake bordering four states
12. Mailroom-routing abbr.
13. Top-selling 1990s computer game