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PROFILE: DR. WEI HU |
FEATURES, P. 4

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OP. ED: THE PRIVILEGED DEPENDENT |
OPINIONS, P. 6

STATE OF HIGHER ED. |
FEATURES, P. 4

ARTIST OF THE WEEK:
THOMAS RHETT FEATURES, P. 8

November 1, 2013 Vol. 110, No. 7



Houghton-Backed Vocal Group to Give Performance at Carnegie Hall



Past College Choir lineup, including new ensemble members WWW.HOUGHTON.EDU

KRISTINE NOLAN AND
GRETCHEN REEVES

Members of the Houghton College choirs will be embarking on a trip this spring to perform on the same stage that esteemed musicians such as the New York Philharmonic and The Beatles have graced over the years.

Led by Dr. Brandon Johnson, The National Sacred Honor Choir is an ensemble of Christian musicians wishing to spread their faith through music. The choir is made up of both past and present students, faculty, and staff, as well as other professionals and vocalists from around the globe, with Canada, China, Morocco, Vietnam, and Zimbabwe represented

among other countries. Accompanied by a skilled orchestra and including performances from professional soloists, the group will perform at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

"There is no more venerated hall in the world than Carnegie and launching this new national initiative at such a celebrated place as Carnegie is both an honor and a sacred trust," Dr. Stephen Plate, Dean and Director of the Greatbatch School of Music, said. "All the music performed will be done to the glory of the Lord by people who join their God-given talents in honor of the God who is the giver of every good and perfect gift."

In order to practice for the perfor-

See **CHOIR** page 3

Second Annual "Make a Difference Day" Promotes Student Volunteerism



Houghton student volunteers COLLIN BELT

STEPHANIE FORD

Over four-hundred Houghton College students participated in Saturday's Make a Difference Day, serving at sites across Allegany County. It was a day of sweaty hard work, team collaboration, laughter, conversations about life and service, and working with the heart to make a dif-

ference in Houghton's community.

This marks Houghton's second annual Make a Difference Day. Phyllis Gaerte, director of community relations, said the initiative started with the vision of Allegany County's higher education institutes uniting to practically serve the county. Gaerte

See **VOLUNTEERS** page 2

Upcoming Series of Parks to be Established Along Genesee River



State functionaries at a site recently opened by GRW. WWW.NYSENATE.GOV

KRISTINE NOLAN

The Genesee River Wilds, a group of community members seeking to "restore, protect and enjoy" the Genesee River, has plans to open up several parks in Allegany County. While still under renovation, one of these parks opened near Houghton, in the

town of Caneadea.

Courtney Waters, a project coordinator at the Southern Tier West Regional Planning Board and partner of the Genesee River Wilds, has been extensively involved with the project. "In the last three years, our group

See **PARKS** page 3

Houghton Music Faculty Attend Christian Composers' Fellowship

DAVID SMITH

On Oct. 25-26, the national Christian Fellowship of Art Music Composers (CFAMC) showcased works written by various modern composers and Houghton composition students in a series of six concerts. This was in conjunction with the CFAMC's 19th annual conference, which has previously been held in other locations throughout the United States.

Mark Hijleh, associate dean for academic affairs and professor of composition and conducting, said that composition students had their works performed during the conference while having the opportunity to put on works by other composers; "the value of this experience for them cannot be overstated." In addition, composers from around the country and a few from outside the U. S. who write music for opera, worship, and formal concerts attended and had their pieces performed by ensembles such as Symphonic Winds, Philharmonia and College Choir.

Last Friday evening's concert contained pieces by modern composers, almost all of whom were in the audience. David Davies, assistant professor of composition and theory, and Mark Hijleh both had pieces

performed as well. Attendees heard a wide variety of pieces, ranging from Michael Daugherty's energetic composition Niagara Falls to Mason Bates' Mothership, a work incorporating electronics that was commissioned by the YouTube Symphony. The audience gave lengthy ovations after each piece, especially noting Kelley Hijleh's vocal accompaniment to Robert Denham's Home. Kelley Hijleh said that she feels the way she can best serve living composers is by performing their pieces, and "if I feel called to serve living composers, I feel doubly called to serve living Christian composers."

In regards to the conference's purpose, Mark Hijleh said the CFAMC gathers annually in different locations "to meet and hear each other's music, pray together, discuss the issues of our work and spiritual lives." Mark Hijleh also mentioned that this is not just an organization, but also a ministry. The CFAMC's mission, as stated on its website, is to "glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and help build His kingdom by encouraging Christian fellowship among its members in the context of their work and witness as composers of art music."

See **COMPOSERS** page 2

NATIONAL // Issues Abound with HealthCare.Gov



GRETCHEN REEVES

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act has been no stranger to criticism, but since the official launch of its Healthcare Marketplace website HealthCare.gov at the beginning of October, criticism has become less ideological and more concrete.

The intent of HealthCare.gov was to provide insurance-seeking Americans with a simplified interface through which to compare private insurance plans, determine eligibility for government insurance subsidies, and ultimately enroll in an eligible plan as per the Affordable Care Act. However, the site’s launch on October 1st brought with it a bevy of issues, including a server unable to handle the incoming traffic as 250,000 visitors instead of the estimated 60,000 attempted to log in the first day. In addition, various glitches in back-end code—code controlling not the visual aspects of the website but the mechanics of it, what the site does that the user can not see—manifested themselves, keeping the site’s help hotline busy. One reported glitch resulted in incorrect recording of information entered into forms by users, information which then became unalterable after submission. Experts say much of the blame for the site’s current problems lies with CGI Group Inc., the Canadian IT firm which, along with several other firms, was contracted by the Obama administration to develop the back-end code. CGI in turn subcon-

tracted parts of the project to other firms, not an uncommon practice, but the numerous changes made to the project by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services since its inception not only caused the firm to blow through the estimated \$93.7 million for the project and raise costs to about \$292 million. The frequent changes also forced project employees to scrap large portions of the code and eventually brought them to code to accommodate these future frequent changes. While this method of coding is common amongst developers and often prevents the surpassing of funds budgeted for a project, it also employs shortcuts or certain practices which may not bode well for the strength or stability of the program, especially if such a program intends to service over 300 million people. However, CGI points to the rushed nature of the project as one of its reasons for downfall. A senior vice president at the company stated that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services decided to test the site two weeks before launch rather than months beforehand as CGI had recommended. Also to blame was Quality Software Services, Inc. (QSSI), an

American company also contracted by the Obama Administration to work on HealthCare.gov. Coincidentally, the Obama administration has since placed QSSI in charge of overseeing repairs on the site. Further controversy arises from the fact that QSSI is owned by United-Health Group, a major provider of private insurance in the U.S. Although officials from the Department of Health and Human Services state that exact healthcare enrollment numbers will not be released until November, at which point the site is expected to be fully functional, Bloomberg estimates that between the 1st and 21st of October, 1% of visitors successfully signed up for insurance through HealthCare.gov. This amounts to about 370,000 enrolled citizens. The deadline for healthcare enrollment has since been extended from the original date of December 15th to March 31, 2014, allowing more time for enrollment if technological difficulties persist. ★

Gretchen is a senior mathematics and Spanish major.

VOLUNTEERS from page 1

said, “It thrills me to see our students going out and working alongside our neighbors and meeting some real tangible needs in the community.” Students from Alfred State College, Alfred University, and Houghton College worked in teams of five to twenty-five people. They scrubbed floors, painted walls, picked up trash, raked fall leaves, ripped up carpets, landscaped, and forged trails through dense forests. Ben Hardy, SGA president, described the number of non-profit and community organizations lacking staffing to complete basic jobs. He said, “They maybe have staffing for day to day activities, but if they need to do some massive cleaning, redecorating, organizing, or a larger project, they may not have the staffing for that. There are ministries, towns, libraries, churches that just need extra hands. It’s service students can get involved in.”

As students served, community members responded. Describing the community response to last year’s Make a Difference Day, Gaerte said, “I have a folder of thank you notes, e-mails, and press from local newspapers that were part of the days following the event.” This year, students saw this same gratefulness as community organizations thanked them for their diligent work, positive attitudes, speed, and genuine desires to serve. Hardy said, “The fact that so many students are doing it together also means it builds community.” This community was built as students formed a giant snake of people to clear a path through a forest in Letchworth, jumped in the piles of leaves they raked for the Oakwood Cemetery, and shared conversation by the path they forged to the Genesee River.

Junior Collin Belt described this sense of community at the multiple sites he visited, and said, “There was such a spirit of joy. Students took tedious jobs and turned them into games, and as a result they got a lot done. It was a trend throughout the day: people planned what they thought was an exorbitant amount of work, but when a huge team of Houghton students getting together and just having fun would do the work, they would get it done faster than anyone ever expected.” Students served in midst of the mere glimpses of sun that shone through the grey sky and the strong wind that blew, whipping leaves and burning faces. The weather did not hinder students’ service. Hardy believes that this Make a Difference Day lies at the heart of Houghton’s Christian faith. He said, “I believe we are called to service. Jesus came to serve and as his disciples, we ought to be serving as well. This was a great opportunity for us to be hands for our community.” ★



Houghton volunteers

COLLIN BELT

COMPOSERS from page 1

fellowship among its members in the context of their work and witness as composers of art music.” Davies said, “My art is inseparable from my faith,” mentioning the fact that the CFAMC provides an intersection for Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox Christians who share Davies’ conclusion but have taken different paths to get there. Talking about the types of music represented, Davies referred to the philosophy held by J. S. Bach, “who drew no distinction as a composer between his

music composed for sacred or secular occasions.” Rather, Davies said the CFAMC desires to increase public interaction with Christian composers of “art music,” which is not necessarily what one might refer to as “sacred music.” Kelly Van Kirk, a graduate student at the Greatbatch School of Music, said the most important part of the conference for her was the “exposure to successful Christian musicians who are using their gifts not only to make a living but, more importantly, to bring glory to God.” ★

Have an opinion on today’s news stories?



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Co-op Continues to Suffer Financial Hardship



Customers at the co-op make their purchases

LUKE LAUER

JESSICA NIEDERLANDER

The Allegany Harvest Cooperative Market (Co-op) is struggling financially, and without significant improvement in their sales by December, it will be forced to close.

Dr. Sunshine Sullivan, co-op board president, said that one cause for the current situation is the fact that half the members did not renew their membership for another year. Part of the reason for this is that many members have moved out of the area and no longer find it practical to shop at the co-op. But, another reason may be that the co-op does not sell all that they need to keep afloat. Rather than being able to go to the co-op and get all they need, customers often must make a trip there and then to another store, often the Shop-n-Save in Fillmore, to finish buying all their necessary groceries.

Vice-president of the board Peter Meilaender stated that residents in the area were not as interested in organic items in the area as the board members initially thought that they would be. Therefore the number of families included in calculations for weekly organic sales were much lower, resulting in profits that were over-

all lower than expected.

Another problem the co-op faces is accommodating the diversity in what customers want and need, according to Meilaender. It has proven more difficult than expected to meet the diverse demands of the people in the area. Though some may shop at the co-op just for the fresh produce, others come for the organic food or for various other reasons. Keeping up with these demands continues to be a struggle for the co-op.

Further down the list of difficulties the co-op has faced include issues with its building and with store maintenance. “We’ve had repeated problems with the floor, problems with cooling systems, [and] two changes in management,” Meilaender explained. “All these things cause at least short and sometimes longer problem periods where we have to shut the store temporarily, or sell out (or throw out) stock at a loss, or re-design systems.” In addition to cutting into its sales during closed days, these problems have cost the co-op money that it cannot afford to spend.

The board members’ ultimate goal, in order to remain in business in the long term, is to earn \$4000 more in sales per month. For now, the board members have a target amount

of \$150 to \$200 more monthly. This would be enough to hire a part-time manager and alleviate much of the current volunteer duties from the board members.

One of the ideas that board members have implemented to increase income is the practice of allowing co-op members to order and pre-pay for items. That way, members can purchase specific items not on shelves and purchase them in bulk.

Sullivan encourages student participation, saying that “students can help by shopping there more and putting suggestions in the suggestion box.” Although non-members cannot make pre-paid orders, they can advise board members as to which items of which they might like to see more in the co-op. All in all, what the co-op needs more than anything is patronage.

Closure of the co-op, if necessary, will affect many. The store still has loans from the bank and from about forty members who will not be repaid if it closes. The vendors who currently sell to the co-op will also have to find other venues through which to sell their goods. In addition, the customers in the Houghton area who depend on the co-op for much of their shopping will be forced to go elsewhere. Rebecca Rowley stated on Alleganyharvest.coop that, “The [Allegany Harvest Cooperative Market] will provide a way for me to both get the quality of food I desire and support the local economy without having to track down individual farmers – a win/win situation!” Closing the co-op will force customers like her to either travel greater distances to acquire the same goods or settle for unwanted food.

Although those who enjoy the benefits of the co-op are many, the store will most likely have to close if it does not gain business soon. The members do not wish for this to happen; however, a realistic view of the co-op’s current state is required. Until forced to close, it is their wish to keep the store running. ★

CHOIR *from page 1*

mance, students involved in this opportunity are required to take a great deal of time out of their schedules: approximately seven and a half hours every week just for choir rehearsals. Participation is by invitation or through audition only. Although Johnson and other faculty members have stopped at several Christian institutions on the east coast for auditions, the majority of student auditioners typically send in a letter of recommendation from a voice instructor which outlines their capabilities. Olivia Roland, a sophomore vocal performance major and soloist for the National Sacred Honor Choir, stressed the amount of work and detail that the choir is putting forth to ensure a spectacular performance this spring. “College choir meets every day for an hour and a half or so,” Roland stated, “Rehearsals are extremely rigorous. It’s hard work, but in the end, it will be so worth it.” Performers not only must integrate their voices with others’ in the group but also work on pronunciation, as the majority of the pieces are written in Latin.

Johnson emphasized that the point of the concert was not simply to perform a set of pieces and showcase the ensemble’s vocal abilities. “There are a lot of great musicians in the world and a lot of opportunities to make really great music, but I wanted to explore the ideas behind whether or not it mattered that we’re Christian, whether it mattered in our music-making, not just in an internal way, but in an external way.” Collin Price, a sophomore vocal music education major and member of the ensemble, also expressed the choir’s first and foremost priority as delivering the message of God through music to Christians and non-Christians alike. “I’ve learned that it’s not always what’s written on the page that matters,” Price said, “It’s how you convey the music and what it means to those listening.”

The audience can expect to hear three works during the choir’s performance: Mozart’s “Requiem”, Beethoven’s “Choral Fantasy”, and a new contemporary piece, “Cantata Domino,” by Houghton music professor Dr. David Davies. “It promises to be an emotional and powerful performance,” Plate ensured.

The National Sacred Honor Choir will meet together in New Jersey to rehearse for three days prior to their inaugural performance at Carnegie Hall on March 9, 2014. ★

PARKS *from page 1*

has gained so much,” Waters said. “We contacted several landowners around the river, legislators, senators, and anyone who we thought should know about our group and what we were doing. I have helped out with several successful river floats down the Genesee, painting of the kiosks that you see at our river access parks, and much more.”

The group, while small, has big plans for the local area. While working to improve the health of the Genesee River and its watershed and protect them from environmental threats, the Genesee River Wilds hopes to enhance the recreational potential of the river for the community to learn more about and enjoy.

“As an earth scientist, I have studied the Genesee River in great detail,” Waters said. “It really has so many unique features and a rich history, and I’d like to see people recognize and accept it as an asset to our region, rather than a detriment. Our kiosks at the river access parks explain some of that history as well as invite people to experience the river

for themselves.”

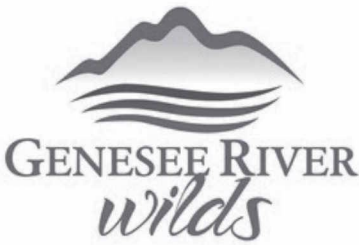
The river access parks will implement environmentally friendly changes so that the community can safely enjoy all of the benefits that the river has to offer. Features include an increase of hemlock and white pine trees to offer reforestation and to continue conservation in addition to reduced mowing costs associated with heavily shaded forest floors. As an added plus for community members, some of the parks will have amenities such as hiking trails, an amphitheater, playgrounds, swimming and wading areas, a watercraft staging area, and log cabins functioning as restrooms for visitor use.

With the town of Canadea approximately three miles away from the Houghton College campus, many opportunities will be opened up for students to experience the new access point for themselves.

“I think Houghton students would welcome any new opportunities to learn from, enjoy, and care for nature and the outside world,” Eliza Kelly, a sophomore and member of the Paddle Sports Club, said in regards to the new river access point. “I know that

many people enjoy the river in many different ways, from simply crossing it on a bridge to hiking along it or kayaking on it.”

Zachary Kitchen, a junior and the president of the Paddle Sports Club, agreed with Kelly. “The river is very key to the Houghton community. It is the centralized object of our town: the place where people meet to swim and fish, the system our roads run along. I think it also adds life to the town,” Kitchen said. “A better park system would give people incentive to go and explore the river, opening an entire world of potentially new discoveries to them.” ★



GENESEERIVERWILDS.COM

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Dr. Wei Hu: Inspiring Students to Love Learning

ABIGAIL ERLANSON

The Cultural Revolution had recently ended in China. For the first time in ten years, students could enter college by taking a standardized exam instead of supporting a political system. Working parents studied beside teenagers newly graduated from high school. Wei Hu, a teenager at the time, recalls admiring the maturity of his older classmates, trying to follow their example, and with them cherishing the “privilege to go to college.” Now a professor with years of experience, Hu passes on his classmates’ legacy by mentoring and working alongside his students and inspiring them to love learning.

Hu, a professor of Mathematics and Computer Science, has spent years musing on his role as a teacher. One component of his role, he suggested, is that of learner. He stressed that he cannot acquire information and then turn his focus to delivering it skillfully to students. Instead, he must continually refresh his knowledge, particularly in the rapidly-shifting field of computer science. Even if he uses only a small fraction of his expertise, he said, he wants an abundant supply from which to draw.

Kristin Camenga, chair of the Mathematics and Computer Science department, emphasized the task that faces Hu. “Dr. Hu cannot depend on last year’s notes to teach almost any of the courses because the content has changed,” Camenga said. “He regularly changes the content and approach to the classes, changing software, adding new applications, and changing assignments.”

A second component of his role as teacher, said Hu, is to create valuable



Dr. Wei Hu in his office.

LUKE LAUER

interactions with his students. While exploring how to do this, he realized that collaborative research was unique, effective, and complementary to the strengths he brings to teaching.

Hu’s goal is to give every student the opportunity to learn through research. In upper level courses, classmates often collaborate on a research paper. Hu also involves students in more intensive research during the summer.

Brian Dickinson, a junior majoring in Computer Science and Business Administration, described summer research as “a full time job. Work-

ing from 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday for the first several weeks is typical, though in later weeks there is usually a significant amount of reading and writing outside of work as the deadline for the final product approaches.” Hu participates in and guides the student’s work, but also encourages them to experiment as they create and modify their algorithms and write their research papers. Hu “has very high expectations for what can be accomplished, and they can seem incredibly daunting,” Dickinson said. “In my experience with research however these expectations can always

achieved and surpassed.”

Even when the results do not match the expectations, Hu has an answer: “That’s research.” Failure and unpredictability are part of the research process.

Since 2009, Hu has published 14 research articles with his students. However, the results of Hu’s interactive teaching style extend farther than these tangible signs. Students appreciate the content they learn in Hu’s classes, Camenga emphasized, but even more thank him for his “encouragement to be the best student they could be and not ‘settle.’”★

Houghton In Context: The State of Higher Ed

JORY KAUFFMAN

Tuition rates seem to soar as enrollment drops. Staff suffers position cuts and Contemporary Contexts is discontinued. Students talk of the plummet of Houghton College as if momentary discouragement inevitably leads to downfall.

But according to studies of higher education in the rest of the country, Houghton simply stands as a participant in part of a larger trend, a number in a high percentage, and one that does not necessarily result in doom.

Many others echo the worry that those connected to Houghton College face. In a Huffington Post article, Cathy Sandeen wrote that the “vital liberal arts tradition is under attack;” Christopher Moraff of The Philadelphia Inquirer wrote of the decline of liberal arts degrees, saying, “Each year more students abandon the study of history, philosophy, English, and languages in favor of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.”

In a “survey of 436 small private colleges and comprehensive state institutions,” The Chronicle of Higher Education found that “nearly half of the respondents said that they missed either their enrollment or their net-tuition-revenue goals.”

The survey also identified factors that may currently affect enrollment decline – the smaller the college, the more likely

missing enrollment goals becomes; regional difficulties aided in more than half of small institutions in the Great Lakes region falling short of enrollment targets; competition surges as droves of colleges and universities work to recruit more students.

The fact that problems like low enrollment prove especially prominent at smaller institutions displays itself specifically at Houghton. As President Mullen said, “With schools that are less than 1,500 students, your margin for change in enrollment is much less – just 25 less students makes a huge difference.”

Though many four-year institutions lose appeal to lower-cost options like online courses or community colleges, many traditional higher education programs remain hopeful and endeavor to adjust.

An insert in this October’s first issue of The Chronicle of Higher Education, titled “A Special Report on the Future of Higher Education,” consists of articles considering such a trend. Throughout the various articles within, different reporters explain changes in institutions, both currently occurring and anticipated, among numerous traditional four-year colleges and universities that may better promote these institutions.

One such article entitled “Career Centers Stretch to Fill New Roles” discusses how multiple institutions recently started noting the importance

of post-graduation success appeal, and began to modify to meet such a demand.

“A competitive job market, rising student-loan debt, and questions about the value of a degree have pressured colleges to prove that they are a good investment,” the report reads. “These forces, coupled with a growing body of research on the value of experiential learning, have led colleges to rethink how they prepare students for careers.”

It proceeds to note that many colleges notice such a trend and act upon it, most notably “liberal-arts-focused colleges,” to dissuade the mindset that a liberal arts degree is not marketable.

Houghton College, as a liberal arts institution, also finds value in such an interest. Mullen explained the college’s plan to improve its own career services, to gain appeal through “helping students translate their Houghton education into what comes afterward.”

Littering the media, higher education reviews and surveys, websites, and news about the seemingly deteriorating state of higher education can discourage, worry, and overwhelm those currently enrolled.

“What I think is really important,” said Mullen, “is that students realize that this is a revolution going on in higher education in our country, and what we need to be doing... is to think, ‘What does it mean to respond to this in a way that’s creative and powerful and that assures that we’re going to be able to have Houghton for decades to come?’” ★

DAILY CALENDAR

1 / FRIDAY

Houghton Musical Theatre Players: “The Drowsy Chaperone”
7:30 PM | Houghton Academy

2 / SATURDAY

Athletics
11 AM | VB @ Brockport Tri.
12 PM | MS vs. St. John Fisher
1:30 PM | FH vs. Elmira College

“The Drowsy Chaperone”
7:30 PM | Houghton Academy

4 / MONDAY

Student Recital: Malcom Bell, composition; Casey Lockwood, oboe.
6:30 PM

5 / TUESDAY

Athletics
7 PM | VB vs. Alfred State
Science and Math Colloquium
11:45AM

6 / WEDNESDAY

Student Recital: Elizabeth Welling, flute
6:30 PM

7 / THURSDAY

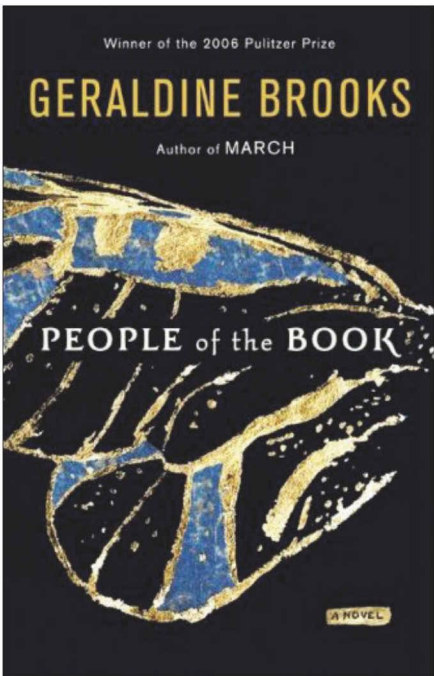
Athletics
7 PM | MS vs. Roberts Wesleyan

Recommended Reads: Geraldine Brooks “People of the Book”

HANNAH HANOVER

For those interested in the intersection of the East and West, or in novels, or in novels about the East meeting the West, the New York Times best-seller *People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks may seem very appealing. The novel is set in Bosnia and is composed of many vignettes that interrupt the present-day mystery of the opulent book, the Sarajevo Haggadah. Hanna Heath, a rare-book expert, examines the book after it is rescued from a library shelling in the 1990s, and as Hannah pursues the history of the Haggadah readers are given the stories of those who have possessed the book in times past.

This novel is deceptively well-reviewed, and stems from an author who won the Pulitzer Prize for her novel, *March*. However, whatever the merits of *March* may be, *People of the Book* is a fanciful tale of an expert who is only related to experts and only friends with experts.



“People of the Book” cover.

We meet these experts as she winds her way through a history, a people,

and a land she does not understand. From the outset Hanna is portrayed as a nerdy, knowledgeable expert. It is not until the first love scene unfolds – in addition to later scenes – that the reader realizes she is not a nerd at all, but rather a brilliant, gorgeous, desirable, wealthy, and talented woman for whom no doors are barred in life.

Her mentors are all world-experts in their fields, and her mother – from whom she is alienated – is also top-of-her-field. Everyone is an expert. Everyone is brilliant. Everyone knows Hanna.

None of this would be so irritating if the book were not simply so unbelievable. Hanna is the independent woman’s ideal as embodied by Geraldine Brooks, but the author takes great pains to ensure that Hanna is never more than somewhat familiar to a readership. The love affair threading through the novel is between two incompatible – you guessed it – experts. The only happy union of East and West in *People of the Book* happens between the sheets, a poor commentary on the

ability of Westerners to acclimate to an Eastern worldview.

As for the actual mystery – that of the Sarajevo Haggadah – the vignettes have moments of interest, though the characters featured often remain slightly stilted. The most notable vignette is that of Ruti, a dumpy young woman who saves the Haggadah from destruction in the midst of familial persecution. Otherwise, the characters are too extreme to be fully human and become mere caricatures of experts, gamblers, and adulterers.

If one can put aside the unbelievable love affair and the details of Bosnia that any tourist could glean from a five day trip, the history is enjoyable, the characters varied – if not believable – and the settings are colorful. If one wishes to read of the Balkans more intimately, however, I would recommend foregoing Brooks and picking up Jergovic’s *Sarajevo Marlboro* or Štivičić’s play, *Invisible*. ★

Fitting In: Transfer Students’ Experiences

GLENN HAMPSON

Cindy Austin, the Transfer Admission Counselor at Houghton College, loves her job. Officially, she works with students who are trying to make the transition to Houghton from another school. Unofficially, she is also the go-to information source for transfer students who are already enrolled and on campus.

“I’ll get calls from students all the time,” said Austin. “They’ll say something like ‘Hey, remember me, the student who wanted to transfer here? Well, I’m here now, and I need a ride home for Thanksgiving, what do I do?’” Laughing, she explained that helping transfer students who are already here, in addition to getting them here in the first place, is what makes her job fulfilling.

With the rate that transfers are coming in, however, Austin’s phone could well be ringing off the hook. According to a report by the New York Times, roughly one third of students who enroll in a four-year institution will transfer at some point during their college experience, and that rate is increasing each year.

The percentage of Houghton students that have transferred from another school have hovered around five percent since 2009. However, the college is likely to see the amount of incoming transfer students rise as the trend around the nation continues.

Austin believes that students may choose to transfer to Houghton after starting their college career elsewhere because of finances. “The majority of our transfers wanted to come here in the first place,” said Austin. “However, if the student is successful in academics, attending community college can basically be free. It’s difficult to compete with free tuition,” she explained. “So what we’re seeing now is an interest from students who have already

completed their integrative study requirements in community college and now want to be a part of our major programs here.”

Junior Neal Fahey, who transferred to Houghton after attending Utica Community College, backed up Austin’s statement. “I originally wanted to come here because of the emphasis on faith,” said Fahey. “I just didn’t have the finances...God had plans for me here, so thankfully He drew me back and made it work.”

Of course, it can be difficult to transition to a different environment, as well as getting used to Houghton’s high standards for academics. So Houghton has taken steps to help transfer students adapt. “We are very gracious with transferred credits, so students don’t have to worry about taking classes they’ve already had,” said Austin. In addition, a required class called Transitions for Transfers was specifically designed to help students meet others and get acclimated into the culture of Houghton.

Angela Poblocki, a senior who transferred from St. John Fisher to finish her degree at Houghton, had mixed feelings about the class: “The Transitions class is a great way to meet other transfers, but it isn’t the most effective in building relationships,” she said. “The class enables us to be in one classroom together, but the interaction between the transfer students is limited...I wish the Transfer Transitions class had more group discussions with students, instead of just a speaker to the class.”

What Cindy Austin would encourage prospective students to do is apply to both community college and Houghton coming out of high school. “I think they would be surprised with how much we can help with the financial aspect,” said Austin. In the meantime, Austin will continue to help transfer students make the transition, officially or otherwise. ★



Houghton Musical Theater Players will be presenting “The Drowsy Chaperone” from October 31 to November 2. The “musical within a play” depicts an asocial theater-fanatic who plays the record of his favorite musical (the fictional “The Drowsy Chaperone”) while providing commentary as it comes to life on stage. “The Drowsy Chaperone” will be performed at 7:30 p.m. this weekend in the Houghton Academy Auditorium.

Photo of the Week



Having fun at Make a Difference Day

LAURA JOHNSON

The Woes of the Privileged Dependent



LUKE LAUER

ANDY NELSON

As dependents we like to complain. Or rather, as the privileged we like to complain, because it really is a question of privilege. It is a privilege to be dependent on someone financially, and even if you are an independent financially, as a student you are currently depending on this institution for food, lodging, and education. But we love to complain. Throughout my time at Houghton and even more so it seems since I graduated, all I hear from current students is how awful this place is. Sodexo is taking over everything. The rules are too constricting and frankly ridiculous. Res Life is on a constant witch hunt. The dorms are nasty. The education is minimalistic. Finally, my personal favorite, “Houghton shelters us and does not prepare us for the real world.” The list of complaints goes on, but you get my point.

Don’t get me wrong, I love to complain as well. But every once in a while you need to stop, sit back, and consider what you are complaining about. Because more often than not we sound pathetic, and the grounds for complaints are nothing more than juvenile trivialities.

Let me put things into perspective. According to Forbes, Houghton College is currently ranked in the top 4% of colleges nationwide. Our Investment Center just recently broke \$300K. Our Media program has had students go to Antarctica, and produce documentaries for the Gates Foundation. 83% of applicants from Houghton have been accepted into medical school (the national average is 43% according to the Association of American Medical Colleges). We may be small, but the quality of academics is undeniable.

During my last weekend on campus I went up to the cafeteria to eat lunch. I had to struggle choosing between numerous delicious-looking options. No institutional food will ever compare to your mother’s cooking, but have you eaten at other colleges? We get quality food, tons of variety, and all you can eat. Last but not least, Sodexo accommodates dietary restrictions like few other institutions. I would also like to praise the new management of Java 101. Flex dollars can be used to purchase coffee,

and it is now open all day Sunday! Our student guide requires students to not drink, use illegal substances, or act promiscuously. Now go find another Faith-based institution that promotes those. In fact, go find an actively Christian institution that is more liberal on those issues at all.

When it comes to Res Life, I have sat in on disciplinary hearings while serving as an RA, and I was shocked. Not because of the strictness, but because of the understanding and caring on behalf of the staff. The case I was in had to do with drugs, which under the student guide is a one-strike offense. The evidence was compelling; the confession was there. The student should have been expelled. But instead, the staff asked how the student was, what was the reasons for this, how they could help.

I was asked to be his mentor. Dorms are dorms. Hundreds of people have used the room you are in. Of course it’s not a five-star hotel in Monaco. But next time you feel compelled to whine, go spend a night in a state school dorm that has been sullied by thousands

of drunken, puking, fornicating residents, and then see how you feel.

Lastly, do you really need to drink, smoke, and have sex, or even be surrounded by such things, in order to prepare yourself for the “real world”? Let me give you a glimpse of the real world: most people work 8-5 jobs with an hour lunch break, after which they go home and watch TV. On occasion they enjoy happy hour at the local bar. Far fewer may hook up for some quick sex. But mostly this is just a television fantasy. According to the CDC, while two out of three American adults drink, the average amount consumed is 4 drinks per week. 19% of Americans smoke and only half of Americans purport to have sex once a week. So you really aren’t falling behind the rest of the population with

the amount of alcohol, tobacco and sex of which you are deprived.

Houghton is not perfect. There are things that could stand improvement, but by and large it is a truly quality institution. Remember that there are so

Houghton is not perfect ... but by and large it is a truly quality institution.

many issues in the world, i.e. world hunger, child prostitution, homelessness, domestic violence, and gender inequality. And explain to me why your life is particularly miserable at Houghton. ★

Andy is a 2013 Houghton graduate

Disce aut Discede / Worshipping Sentimentality



LUKE LAUER

LYDIA WILSON

In the beginning of October, Lenny Luchetti spoke in chapel on the virtues of worshipping God with the head as well as the heart. He explained that when he first began attending college, he loved to lose himself in the feeling of worship through praise songs, a semi-charismatic and hands-in-the-air kind of guy. He would observe with slight disdain the behaviors of others who sat quietly through worship services without actively taking part. Eventually, as he grew in his faith while at school, his perceptions changed, and the point he made was that God deeply values the efforts of the mind and the act of praise through academics and critical thought. What he left to be inferred, however, was that both methods of connection to God are equally worthwhile, and

that it is merely a matter of personality which form of worship one chooses to employ. I would argue that this is not true, and that worshipping God with the “heart” is not really worship at all.

The other day while I was driving, Jamie Grace’s “Beautiful Day” came on the radio. The “It’s been ‘like’ a whole day” in the first verse managed to slip by me unnoticed the first time around, but the chorus left me incredulous and indignant. After a few bouncy lines about how happy God makes her, Grace sings, “This feeling can’t be wrong/ I’m about to get my worship on/ Take me away,” implying, or rather, explicitly stating that worship is some kind of altered state of being one enters into with the expectation that they will come away feeling blissful and transcendent, reminiscent of a drug-induced high or the rush of sexual intercourse. In her Grammy-nominated song “Hold Me,” Grace reinforces this interpretation with the lyrics, “I’ve had a long day, I just wanna relax ... I know I should be working but I’m thinking of you” in which Jesus is essentially equated with a happy hour cocktail, and put at odds with “work,” which I can only assume Grace is not, in this case, using as a means to honor Him.

I do not mean to personally insult the no-doubt well-meaning Jamie Grace. What I do mean, however, is to question the ease with which Christian society accepts this kind of bubblegum

Christian pop praise music without any basis in scripture or intentional theology. Worship is intended to be a thoughtful meditation on the grace and the goodness of God, a practice that should no doubt invite feelings of gratitude, joy, and peace, but that should nonetheless find its roots in concentrated

study and reflection. The concept of worship as it is found in the majority of contemporary praise and worship songs is that of “chasing the feeling,” craving the joy without the contemplation, the intimacy without the commitment, the sex without the relationship.

People do worship in different ways. I would not try to take away from those who connect most fully with

I mean to question the ease with which Christian society accepts praise music without any basis in scripture or intentional theology.

God through music the right to do so freely and with joy. But there cannot be a divide between inner- vation and cerebration. Those who worship through song must be able to count on the lyrics to be studied and deliberate. Difficult and far-reaching questions that exist within the Christian faith can have devastating effects on those seeped in the superficial, sensationalist

theology of pop praise music. They are not taught to ask, and they are unprepared to answer. In the words of Grace, “I’ve got not need to worry, I’ve got no room for doubt,” but what exactly grants her such infallible certainty is unclear, and in a faith as encompassing and exacting

as the Christian faith, there can be no room for sentiment without qualification. Impassioned worship without a strong grasp on the basics of Christian

Christians brought up in the tradition of vacant worship are not worshipping God.

theology is meaningless and empty, and Christians brought up in the tradition of vacant worship are not worshipping God, they are worshipping a semblance of the side effects of God’s entity. They are worshipping titillation.

I want to reassure you that I recognize the usefulness and, in fact, necessity of music in worship. The Bible would not contain so many references to praising God with song if it was not an important aspect of our faith. But let us never fail to recognize the dependence of meaningful emotional connection with God on intelligent and critical examination of our beliefs. ★

Lydia is a senior art and writing major

FEATURED EDITORIAL/

“In Yourself Right Now is All the Place You’ve Got”

HOLLY CHAISSON

Independence is a value we need to revive in our society. Individuals are primarily valued in the context of others, not as those who stand alone. Rather, society values the team, a conglomerate of individuals working together to embody the values of unity, cooperation, and interdependence. I’m not bashing these values or downplaying their worth, but I am arguing that our society, in venerating these so dearly, have neglected (almost entirely) the virtues of independence.

There is a disproportional amount of emphasis placed on teamwork and being able to lead a group, especially in the professional world, where common interview questions and required skills reflect these values. Participation in sports, student/other organizations, clubs, churches, etc. is essential for college applications, including those for graduate school. Although features such as GPA and various standardized tests speak to the success of the individual, they are quite often not enough for students who hope to attend Ivy League schools, receive scholarships, or participate in competitive academic programs.

Looking more generally outside the realms of education and profession, communities (perhaps even Houghton) intrinsically approve of those dubbed “social butterflies” and are prone to look down on the loner. Those who choose not to date, avoid parties and dances, and enjoy spending more time in solitude are no stranger to oddly judgmental looks and the label of “in-

trovert,” which in and of itself bears the prejudice of an unfavorable connotation.

In a world that thrives on connection, interdependence has become our comfort zone; others provide us the parameters to define ourselves, and their understanding of us frequently becomes our own. Ralph Waldo Emerson reflects, “it is easy in the world to live after the world’s opinion,” and I’d argue that this is why it’s comfortable for us to live in a world where we’re reliant on others who provide praise, encouragement, and assurance. If the qualities of independence and separation are not those we actively practice or seek out, it’s easy to remain in the mentality set forth and lauded by the majority. It gets us into the best schools, graduate programs, jobs, the best social circles, and the list could go on.

Independence thrives in separation, and I’m inclined to go as far as to argue that truly understanding yourself apart from others is invaluable, perhaps even “very healthy” in the words of Oscar Wilde. After all, we may tirelessly pour ourselves into other people and thrive on these social interactions and relationships, all in an attempt to find our place in the world amongst the masses. Yet when it comes down to it, as Flannery O’Connor candidly puts it, “in yourself right now is all the place you’ve got.” In other words, “[we] need to know how to be alone and not defined by another person,” as Wilde puts it. For if we neglect to start at square one and work at defining ourselves and then grow from there, how can we even begin to fit ourselves into the puzzle of society? Without form, without a solid definition of self, we’re doomed to slip like water through cracks in relationships, with our concept of

self pooling according into the bounds of what others dictate.

In separation and solitude we’re forced to be alone with ourselves. Without the distraction of anyone else, we have the luxury to examine our character, our desires, our hopes, and then devise the means to act on them, whether we choose to devote ourselves to reading great literature, writing poetry, creating art, going to the gym, or simply thinking. Independence signals a loyalty that is first to ourselves, and this fidelity grounds us not only in our self but also our principles, and that, at least, society agrees is desirable. I think we are perhaps prone to underestimating the depth of our potential in and of ourselves, and because we’re not really encouraged to pursue unearthing it, we miss out on what we have to offer. Society seems to value the trademarks of strong individuals, yet it forgets or perhaps even ignores what it takes to arrive there.

That being said, I’ll admit that relationships are important. Emerson goes on to add that while “it is easy in solitude to live after our own [opinion],” it is the “great man who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.” It is not enough to merely recognize and then embrace the values of independence as an individual separated from society; rather, after we’ve grasped hold of them, we must continue to embody them as we re-enter our world interdependence and relationships. In his work, Walden, Thoreau explored the values of solitude and separating oneself from society, and while I’m not recommending everybody mimic his extensive solitary stint in the woods to develop an appreciation of the individual and independence, I

do think we can (and should) mimic it to some degree. Solitude does not need to be constant; in fact if it is, it can have pretty negative consequences (think effects of solitary confinement), but I would argue that it is essential in any daily routine, not just those of introverts.

Nevertheless, it is imperative we see that although Thoreau clearly appreciated the values of independence and solitude, he also did not disdain human camaraderie; in fact he valued it quite highly. This “solitude” that Thoreau praises, and what I am recommending we rediscover, is not loneliness or extreme isolation, but rather introspection and an understanding of self, and an ability to maintain these boundaries of self that define us in the midst of the real world, where relationships and interactions with others dominate our lives. In the words of Thoreau, “Individuals, like nations, must have suitable broad and natural boundaries, even a considerable neutral ground, between them.”

As individuals it’s vital we recognize the importance of independence and separation, and our intrinsic value outside the bounds of our relationships. Furthermore, it’s perhaps more essential, even crucial, that society not only acknowledges these values, but considers them to be worthwhile. Whether or not this will eventually be reflected on the institutional level has yet to be seen, but perhaps our starting point must be a change in our definition of what constitutes a valuable member of society. ★

Holly is a sophomore religion major

Want to Write?

Submit letters to the editor: email us editor@houghtonstar.com

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less



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.

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2013-2014

ARTIST OF THE WEEK



LUKE LAUER

THOMAS RHETT

I have always had a desire to make and create since I was little. I enjoy getting my hands dirty and working with the material. That is why my concentration is in the wood and ceramic arts. I believe in art with function. I think making something functional but still looking aesthetically appealing and ambitious is the challenge. Im inspired mostly by Japanese forms of art and aesthetic style. Wabi style to be precise. It means imperfect, like nature, and is what I tend to base my work around. Natural, imperfect, but still functional. I also dabble in photography.

Thomas Rhett is a sophomore fine arts major



Lantern, ceramics



Table, wood & metal

CROSSWORD: HALLOWEEN

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 10/2.

Last week's winner was CARSON MOORE! Your giftcard will be sent to you through campus mail.

- ACROSS
- 1. OPPOSITE OF RAPPEL
 - 6. BE MISTAKEN
 - 9. LONG, LONG TIME
 - 13. EAGLE'S NEST, E.G.
 - 14. REMAIN
 - 15. LIKE UNREFINED OIL
 - 16. ACTOR JEREMY
 - 17. CREDIT CARD ACRONYM
 - 18. *SPOOKY
 - 19. *IT'S ILLUMINATING
 - 21. TWO DOTS ABOVE A LETTER
 - 23. LAST WORD OF "AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL"
 - 24. SPEED UNIT
 - 25. HIGHEST CARD IN "WAR"
 - 28. CALF-LENGTH SKIRT
 - 30. RELATING TO LIVING ORGANISMS
 - 35. LEGAL PREFIX
 - 37. HYPERBOLIC TANGENT
 - 39. AROUND OR APPROXIMATELY
 - 40. SOCKET INSERT
 - 41. CRUISING
 - 43. BANK CLAIM
 - 44. CHINESE FRUIT
 - 46. SHELLS, E.G.
 - 47. "___ BE SURPRISED"
 - 48. UNLIKE A MAMMOTH, E.G.
 - 50. INSUBSTANTIAL
 - 52. BOND, E.G.
 - 53. *AVOIDED BY DRACULA
 - 55. CORN SITE
 - 57. *FAIRY
 - 60. *KIND OF HALLOWEEN HOUSE

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- 64. *SPECTER
- 65. TARZAN'S PARENTAL ROLE MODEL
- 67. OUT OF THE WAY
- 68. FIGURE OUT
- 69. ___ APPIA
- 70. FENCING MOVE
- 71. AT THE TOP
- 72. MORAY, E.G.
- 73. ARTISET FERNAND OR DESIGNER HERVE
- 8. OLD EPISODE
- 9. ACREAGE
- 10. LEADER OR EXPERT
- 11. PREP FOR PUBLICATION
- 12. GET THE PICTURE
- 15. BOSTON PRO
- 20. INDIAN RESTAURANT CONDIMENT
- 22. CAPONE'S FAMILY
- 24. FLESH AND BLOOD
- 25. *IN SEASON, SING.
- 26. FLOWER PART
- 27. SPEW
- 29. COMPUTER ENTRY
- 31. GREASY
- 32. THREESOMES
- 33. FREEZE
- 34. *HALLOWEEN SWAG
- 36. MUSLIM HONORIFIC
- 38. PART OF HEMOGLOBIN



Looking Up, photography

- 42. BLOOD CARRIER
- 45. COMPOSE
- 49. SYLVESTER, TO TWEETY
- 51. EVERYONE ELSE
- 54. BOXER'S MOVE
- 56. ARISE
- 57. 3-POINTER, E.G.
- 58. A.K.A. THE SPORT OF KINGS
- 59. PLEASE GET BACK TO ME
- 60. CURE
- 61. SOUND OF A SMALL BELL
- 62. U2 GUITARIST
- 63. DOE IN "DO-RE-MI" SONG
- 64. FED. PROPERTY MANAGER
- 66. *AROUND NOW PUMPKIN ONES BECOME POPULAR