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FINNEY PORTRAIT UNVEILING

ELIZABETH CARPENTER '27

This Saturday at 10:30 a.m., a portrait of Constance "Connie" Finney will be unveiled in the Recital Hall. Finney graduated from Houghton University (HU) in 1978. Since then, she has served at HU as the field hockey coach, the Resident Director of East Hall, the Director of Student Life at HU's West Seneca campus, and a professor at both Houghton's West Seneca campus and main campus. HU commissioned the portrait, done by Kyle Stevenson, to honor Finney for her contributions to the school and the community.



Dr. Constance "Connie" Finney poses for a photograph. COURTESY OF THE HOUGHTON ALUMNI FACEBOOK

While Finney was a student, she majored in Math and minored in Education, Psychology and Art. She was also very involved on campus, playing on both the field hockey and softball teams and serving as the Resident Assistant (RA) on First Old in East Hall. After graduating, she spent a year teaching middle school math in Cinncinatus, New York. Finney then returned to HU as the Resident Director (RD) of East Hall for two years while she worked on her Master's degree. When she finished the program, she was hired as a professor at HU's West Seneca campus, where she taught Finite Math, Educational Psychology and Remedial Study Skills.

Finney's involvement with Houghton didn't stop there; after five years in West Seneca, she became a full-time professor at the main Houghton campus in the Education department. She continued to live in Western New York and commuted between Houghton and Buffalo for more than a decade while she pastored a church in Buffalo.

While working at HU, Finney was kind and compassionate, fostering an environment in her classrooms that was welcoming, respectful and fun. Living in Belfast, she would frequently have students over to her house for lunch and told them not to bother with her title. "Call me Connie," she would say, "and I'll know if you respect me by the way you treat me."

When she served as the head coach of the field hockey team, she cultivated the same kind of environment. Dr. Karen Torraca, a current Professor of Chemistry at HU, remembers her seasons coached by Finney fondly. "Connie recognized strengths and weaknesses in each player and helped us to see them as well," she said. She remembered a program that Finney started where each girl was assigned a "hockey helper," who would leave anonymous notes,

See **FINNEY** *page #2*

Fearless Award Recipient

WESLEY STEVICK '28

This Saturday, Houghton University (HU) graduate, Derrick Tennant '93, will be performing a comedy show in the Van Dyk Lounge at 2:30 p.m.

Tennant is this year's recipient of the Houghton Fearless award at the homecoming Legacy Chapel. This award was created in 2022 as a part of the Houghton Fearless campaign, and is given yearly to a Houghton graduate, couple, or a friend of the university who fearlessly follows Jesus and displays with their life the fruit of the Holy Spirit and supreme confidence in the power of God to overcome challenges and adversity. Tennant displays this confidence throughout his life, from hosting SPOT as a student to earning his living performing "Bleep Free Comedy." This is also evident in his professional life, where he spreads the message, "Your obstacle equals your opportunity."



Derek Tennant '93 performs a comedy show in 2018 during Homecoming. COURTESY OF MARCOMM

In his comedy routine "Being Paralyzed Isn't So Bad," Tennant tells the story of his most famous injury. At the age of 14, he developed a medical condition described as "random bleeding from point x [in the brain] for an unknown reason," rendering him comatose for three days. The doctors expected him to die. Instead, the brain damage left him temporarily unable to walk and permanently paralyzed on the left side of his body, putting an abrupt halt to his dreams of a sports career.

It would have been easy for Tennant to let his injury define him. Instead, Tennant became a comedian. Dan Noyes '93, Regional Director of Development for HU and a classmate of Tennant's, described him as "super outgoing...very funny, very witty and very comfortable being upfront." Tennant hosted SPOT multiple times, sported "an amazing mullet" and drove a Mustang. "Everyone knew who he was," Noyes said, adding that "he never had any limitations; he was hysterical."

Noyes said Tennant developed his comic tendencies into a career, doing his own marketing and promotion. Soon, he was spending most of his time on the road, performing everywhere from churches to cruise ships. Resenting the monthly rent he paid for his apartment, where he only slept 3-5 nights a month, he decided to "Live Simply. Love Completely." According to his blog, Tennant now has no home address, lives out of a carry-on suitcase and owns only seven shirts, each printed with a day of the week.

See **FEARLESS** *page #2*



COURTESY OF THE BOULDER YEARBOOK

SPOT hosts Chesnie Waddingham '26 and Caleb See '25 perform at spring SPOT 2025.

Fall SPOT '25

LIAM GILROY '29

Homecoming is here, which means that this year's SPOT—sponsored by the Campus Activities Board (CAB)—is on its way!

Since the fall of 1998, SPOT has entertained students and faculty every semester, making it a staple in Houghton University culture. This semester's SPOT will take place at the Wesley Chapel this Saturday from 9 to 11 p.m.

SPOT is a comedy show that features various acts by students, with professors occasionally making cameos. A show can have anything from songs like a spin on Glee's "Don't Stop Believing" to a live musical Mad Libs game. Director of CAB Emma Podobinski '27 stated, "SPOT represents the end of homecoming week, and... it's a meaningful way to end because a majority of [campus] is gathered together for a fun night of cheering on others and their acts."

Podobinski added, "[W]e can't forget that God gave each and every one of us the gifts used in these skits. So whether it's a gift in video editing, script making, or song writing, every skit can reflect God's glory and the gifts He has given us."

This year's hosts, Lucas Birt '27 and Asher Knight '26, picked the theme "Game On." Birt explained that he and Knight picked the theme because it allows them to improvise, be more flexible on stage and adjust to the audience's reactions.

"We want to deliver something that will engage people whether or not they like theater," Birt said.

Their goal is to make SPOT feel like one big game show, which includes some audience participation. In addition to this, they are adapting well-known game shows like Jeopardy, Family Feud and Wheel of Fortune into the show. Birt hinted that there will be great cameos from faculty this semester. He is looking forward the most "to seeing the band perform after all the work they've put in."

Faculty, staff, students and community members are encouraged to put their "game face" on and attend this semester's production. Additionally, there will be an After SPOT Clearance Sale. Giveaways will occur every 10 minutes, with the clearance sale going on until 11:30 p.m. ★

Update 10/03: New Members, Laundry Troubleshooting, and Student Engagement

HOUGHTON UNIVERSITY STUDENT COUNCIL

THOMAS MCGLYNN '26

Student Council has had a big start to the school year! The members of our team this year include Thomas McGlynn '26, Samuel Figard '26, Emily Schweigart '27, Jonathan Ford '28, Elizabeth Carpenter '27, Lee Camacho '27, Ethan Scally '27, Caleb Luce '28, James Adenuga '28, Caleb Holscher '26, Michael Carey '26 and Corban Gibson '29. Clay Templeton will also be serving as a volunteer Student Council member. We currently hold meetings every Tuesday from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. in the Student Engagement Office, located on the lower level of the Campus Center (CC), that students can attend. As many students have seen in our September monthly survey, we are looking to resolve any complications with the laundry machine transition. We are working on adding tablets to each of the laundry rooms so that people without access to the app or a cell phone can log in directly on the tablet. We are working with the Helpdesk and are awaiting a quote. On Monday, we had a very productive meeting with Houghton's Executive Leadership Cabinet where we had discussions regarding printers, student organization on sustainability and school spirit. The Cabinet was very responsive; they encouraged us to propose big ideas!

Student Council is emphasizing presence and communication this year. We understand that without the help of the student body, we cannot accurately reflect its needs to the administration. That is why we are actively seeking student input. A couple of ways in which the Student Council can be contacted are through email at *studentcouncil-@houghton.edu,* by our suggestion box in the CC, or by reaching out to a Student Council Representative, who will bring your conversation up during our meetings. Thank you for your continuous support in our work to make Houghton the best it can be! We sincerely appreciate the responses to our surveys and are looking forward to our Student Council Chapel next Friday! God bless!

FEARLESS *from page #1*

"The reason we have so much stuff is we have a place to put it. So I got rid of the place," he said.

Tennant said people ask him whether his underwear is also printed with weekdays, claiming on his website that instead they display the months of the year.

He challenges his readers to "find a stranger with something you notice—a smile, their hair, a cool car, a fun hat. Then suck it up, be polite, and deliver the light." On his blog, Tennant described the reaction of McDonald's employees after thanking them: "Every time, I'm stunned. The employees light up. Faces brighten. It's like I just handed them a raise or a free trip to Disney." The impact of this kind of encouragement is sad, Tennant said, because it demonstrates how rare simple kindness is. The bright side is that now "even the smallest light now shines brighter than ever." ★

Find Tennant online at https://derricktennant.com, https://www.14sleeves.com, or "14sleeves" on social media.

FINNEY *from page #1*

This created a community where everyone was valued and appreciated, and pushed the girls to encourage and help one another, both on and off the field.

"Connie has such a wonderful sense of humor and joy in life," Torraca said. "I think that helped me to also have an optimistic outlook….There was so much laughter and encouragement."

Rachel Wright '07, the Director of the Office of Vocation and Calling, knew Finney as a professor and a mentor figure. "During college, I served as an RA… and then as the ARD," Wright said. "Since Connie had been an RD, she provided encouragement and insights about residence life in addition to teaching the course content." Although Wright wasn't majoring in Education, she took Educational Psychology because Connie was teaching it.

More recently, Wright facilitates service projects for new students to visit Connie's house in Belfast and help her with yard work.

Although she is retired now, Finney is still connected to the Houghton community. Emma Illian '27 helped with yardwork her freshman year and has since gotten to know Finney through the church they both attend.

"Connie is one of the most enjoyable, hospitable, and loving people I know," Illian said. "She has spent her entire life serving others and being the hands and feet of Jesus…She loves this place and the people here deeply."

Honoring over five decades of involvement with HU, this portrait is a fitting tribute to a woman who has put so much time, energy and love into the Houghton community. ★

Don't Let Today's Political Climate Make You Go Extremist



JULIA COLLINS '26

Picture this: you wake up in the morning, look on X to do some scrolling before you start your day, and as soon as you open the app, you see the following discourse:

A post detailing the words of Rep. Jasmine Crockett, stating that "the rhetoric that Charlie [Kirk] continuously put out there was rhetoric that specifically targeted people of color."

Now, this statement obviously generated responses. But the following tweets of MAGA activist Laura Loomer were bone-chillingly awful. Loomer escalated the situation by using racist language to personally attack Crockett, calling her "Ghetto" and other words that cannot be printed in this newspaper.

Is it really that controversial to say that this cruelty isn't right?

A recent article republished on PBS, covering the political climate after the murder of Charlie Kirk claimed President Donald Trump stated: "The radical left causes tremendous violence" and "they should be put in jail."

"IS IT REALLY THAT CONTROVERSIAL TO SAY THAT CRUELTY ISN'T RIGHT?"

Now, if these words were only taken in context of Kirk's assassination and the attempted assassination of Trump last summer, they would be taken as fact. However, Trump isn't telling the whole story. In 2017, Heather Heyer was killed at the Charlottesville Rally. In 2021, Ashley Babbitt was shot and killed on January 6, when MAGA republicans shouting "Hang Mike Pence!" vandalized the US Capitol Building. Following this, four law enforcement officers committed suicide. And many of us are quick to forget the murder of Melissa Hortman, a Minnesota State Representative, and her husband, Mark, this July.

Funny how that is.

As Christians, scholars, and people in general, we have to avoid the temptation to blame only one side for the horrendous political violence that is decimating America. We need to recognize that every life is meaningful, and that includes everyone on the political spectrum. We must try to respect our differences and disagree politely, even though so many will not give us the same courtesy. If we blame the other side for the same things that we do, how can we judge them?

"FINDING THIS BALANCE ISN'T EASY. BUT, WE HAVE TO START AT THE ROOT: CONDEMNING VIOLENCE"

I admit I don't always think in such a tolerant manner. Growing up in a large public school, among people amazed Republicans even existed, I was often tempted to blame the right for America's problems. After all, as a liberal, wouldn't that be the logical course of action? I rationalized blaming the other side. But after I'd do so, a feeling of deep conviction comes in. *Am I being a hypocrite? Would I hold Democrats to the same high standards that I hold Republicans to?*

Finding this balance isn't always easy. But, we have to start at the root: condemning violence. We should never celebrate when a person has been murdered. Nor should our anger over the tumultuous political climate make us mock others for their race, sexual orientation, gender, or faith. That restraint can be hard, especially when *everyone else* is viciously attacking each other. But seeing today's political headlines and posts on X reinforces the need to have civil conversation instead of cruel language and mocking rhetoric.

I hope this simple reminder of respecting others doesn't become obsolete in a world of extremism. We need to embody the basic kindness and courtesy towards others, as our LORD Jesus preached.

That can't be *that* controversial, can it? ⋆

Julia Collins is a senior with a major in history and a minor in english. In her spare time she enjoys reading fiction, annoying her friends, and whining about the Denver Broncos.

Have an opinion you want to share?

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SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor should be less than 300 words

SUBMIT TO
STAR@houghton.edu

The mission of the Houghton STAR is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have been the ideals of Houghton University since its inception. This is 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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The Houghton STAR

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Artist of the Week

B L I N DED

CALEB SEE ‘25

We are in support,

An olive tree cut down,

We are in support,

Palestinians forced out of Palestine,

We are in support,
“Iron Fist” Crushing skulls,

We are in support,
Palestinians denied work,

We are in support,
Seventy olive trees cut down,

We are in support,
Skies filled with gas,

We are in Support,
One hundred years of olive trees
cut down,

We are in support,
Ground littered with rubble,

We are in support,
Famine exacted by Israel,

We are in support,
Mass humiliation broadcast,

We are in support,
Olive trees burned to the ground,

We are in support,
Innocents killed through phone bombs,

We are in support,
Every Israeli male forced into the IDF,

We are in support,
Skies lit with flames and the barrage of bombs,

We are in support,
One hundred years of killing and hatred,

Ethnic cleansing,
We are in Support,

We are in support,
Every defender sent to prison without trial,

We are in support,
Rape, murder, and pillage,

We are in support,
Ten thousand more olive trees cut down, their means to life,

We are in support,
75% of olive trees targeted and destroyed,

We are in Support,
Jesus Christ is an example, under the rubble.

A generation of livelihoods destroyed, No way to provide for their families. A genocide fueled by Americans and Christians. One hundred fifty-eight billion dollars in aid of Israel’s Zionist eradication of the Palestinian peoples. War crimes sponsored by us, we are in support!

Why?



CALEB SEE ‘25

I am a multimedia artist that creates conceptual artworks with the intention of working through problems in the world from the mind of a Christian. In everything I do I try to do it through love.

My goal as an artist is to communicate love in its many respects to all others through a Christian lens. This love is communicated through vicarious contrition for my enemies, This is a way of joining the Other in their suffering as Christ did in his sacrifice on the cross. The artwork I create is intended to create conversations and propel God's futurity while being hospitable to all other religions and people.

We have such beautiful example,
Yet, it is the Other that we still trample,
We blind ourselves to God’s justice,
We must allow the Spirit to dwell in us,
So that our love may be ample. ⋆







Be prepared for a puzzling change in the columns section.

Calling all aspiring comic strip creators (email the STAR@houghton.edu)

- The Editors ⋆

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Difficulty: Diabolical

Provided by *Sudokuoftheday.com*