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FRANKENBEIN RETURNS

JULIANA SCHMIDT ('25)

On Oct. 28, the Halloween party, Frankenbein, will be held at 8:30 p.m. in the Larder Courtyard. This will be the second year Lambein has hosted Frankenbein, which was previously hosted by Shenawana.

Junior Hannah Sturdivant, a member of the Campus Activities Board (CAB), said "Frankenbein is an attempt to continue the old Shenawana tradition of Shenoween. To keep its good reputation alive there is a substantial amount of work that needs to be done. It is a group effort to even attempt to meet the expectations and standards that have been set by past years."

CAB is putting on this Halloween spooky night; a haunted trail and a party with a dance floor, costume contest and pumpkin painting.

Sturdivant stated, "It took a lot of theatrics and people

willing to battle the cold to scare people for the ambiance of the haunted trail."

Strudivant hoped that people would enjoy the trail, because it was really fun to figure out.

"I dressed up as a jellyfish last year and I won second place in the costume contest. It was very cool to see the costumes everyone came up with and share such a fun night, so I'm really looking forward to this year's event!" Junior Marjorie Gassler wrote.

The costume party was a hit last year and promises to be just as popular this year. Prizes are awarded for placing in the costume contest.

Senior Joey Schunemann, the Head of CAB, who is spearheading the event said, "The prizes for the costume contest remain a secret until the night of, although they are

certain to be fun."

While Frankenbein is a newer tradition for Lambein, they are working hard to make it their own.

"I'm very excited for this year's event and how it brings back slightly more of the old Shenoween party vibe, pouring more into that than last year's haunted trail," Schunemann said.

"It is a group effort to even attempt to meet the expectations and standards that have been set by past years," Sturdivant commented. "On behalf of CAB, I would like to thank anyone that has put any amount of time and effort into helping Frankenbein run smoothly. Past or present, you are helping form the college experience for those who have attended."

Look forward to this weekend's activities, and prepare your treats (or tricks).★



Frankenbein 2022 costume winner

COURTESY OF SAVANNAH STITT

Spooky Stories

OLIVIA KLEINAU ('23)

Dr. Douglas Gaerte, Professor of Communications, at Houghton University, shared two articles of spooky stories from the local area.

The first article was shared from Angelica, N.Y., 21 minutes from Houghton. Cindy Wagner, writing for the Olean Times Herald, writes about an abandoned poorhouse.

In the town of Angelica, Wagner writes, "some of the oldest graves in the Day of the Dawn Cemetery on the east side of the village have no names on the stones. Only numbers. The graves are those of long ago-residents of the Allegany County Home, one of the many almshouses—or poorhouses—opened around the country in the early 1800s."

According to a 1857 state report regarding the Allegany County Home, the people within these poorhouses were treated barbarously. The poorhouse also consisted of terrible living conditions.

Dr. John Norton, the county physician, wrote a report in 1864, describing the conditions as, "no ventilation, old, rotten, and filthy, and entirely inadequate for the purpose for which it is used."

On July 28, 1980, the house burnt down, but was rebuilt the next year. It remained open until the early 1960s and still stands today.

Another article, shared by Gaerte, is the tale of the disappearance of Flossie Wilbur from her home in Angelica, N.Y. John Anderson, writing for the Tyler Morning Telegraph, breaks down the mysterious disappearance of Wilbur. Her disappearance was described as an

unsolved murder for decades until a deathbed confession of a terminal cancer patient solved the case.

Wilbur had been missing since Aug 24, 1985, and all that was left of her were the groceries both in and out of her car.

Anderson writes that David Sherk, Wilbur's neighbor, allegedly confessed to the murder while, "in a medical facility in Wyoming County, N.Y. with terminal cancer."

According to neighbors, Sherk was well liked in the community, but Wilbur, however, was not. Two investigators on Wilbur's case revealed that she kept a diary talking badly about many people in the town.

Rolland Rasmusson, who lived across the street from Wilbur, said in an interview, "Most people didn't think very much of her. She kind of had a foul mouth when

See **SPOOKY** page #2



Spooky Stories Poster

COURTESY OF SAVANNAH STITT

Reflections on Halloween



JOHANNA LAMONT ('24)

As Halloween approaches, I think back to my childhood and reflect on how my family interacted with the holiday. We were never the type of people who would dress up and go trick or treating, or as the churches around home called it, "Trunk or Treating." We never really did anything for Halloween except the occasional Addams Family marathon. The candy, costumes, and history of the event were never of much importance to us, and holidays were never a priority in general. The one thing that stands out about it was my mother's exas-

peration at the amount of candy people would give to her children. We often had candy cleanses after the month of October, where we would purge the house of excess candy unless it was M&M's.

Now, as I am older and am embracing holidays with my own twist on tradition, I have to rethink how I see Halloween. I finally get the chance to break out from my family's tradition and make the holiday my own. The holiday itself has roots in the pagan celebration of Samhain, but the modern celebration of Halloween in America has little to do

"I don't get the opportunity to dress up and embrace my love of fictional worlds every day, so this is an exciting holiday for me."

it. Halloween is generally a night spent with friends and is full of fun and mischief. We've adapted this pagan holiday into a holiday that suits our modern mentality, and in doing so, we've sacrificed the original meaning of it. This new reincarnation of the holiday holds no real

potential for fun. However, like any situation, it can be taken and used for wrong things.

I plan on dressing up for Halloween this year, enjoying the day with friends, and embracing the time to play and have fun. I don't get the opportunity to dress up and embrace my love of fictional worlds every day, so this is an exciting holiday for me. I think that when dealing with holidays like Halloween that have complicated pasts or assumptions tied to them, it's best to consider your own opinion and moral convictions. I don't find anything wrong with celebrating Halloween, but for someone else, there might be an experience or conviction tied to the holiday that could cause an issue or distress for them. For me, it's all about how I approach the holiday, what I carry in my heart, and intentions toward it. If I approached Christmas with a heart of selfishness or greed, I could turn the holiday surrounding the celebration of Christ's birth into a day of sin. The inten-

tions and desires of our hearts determine how we interact with and respond to holidays and celebrations. Halloween can be used for ill, as you can use the mystery and chaos of the holiday to harm others or cause distraction and fear.

Overall, I like the freedom of dressing up and appreciating the candy sales. I love the cheap chocolate, looking through Halloween aisles, coordinating costumes with friends, and watching cheesy movies. The holiday is corny and full of fun traditions that are waiting to be embraced. It's a non-demanding holiday. There is no pressure to participate, and it has enough variations in how it's celebrated that anyone can find a way to enjoy it. I think that this is a time of year that I will continue to look forward to in the future and create my own spooky traditions for. I think that my inner Addams will always enjoy the spooky, mischievous gloom of Halloween - with or without the candy. ★

"I finally get the chance to break out from my family's tradition and make the holiday my own."

with pagan rites and celebrations. The holiday has been turned into a consumerist event, with companies marketing their costumes and candy like their lives depend on

moral meaning to it. There should be no guilt in someone's conscience for dressing up and having fun with friends. I think that Halloween is a fine holiday with a lot of

Have an opinion you want to share?

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SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor should be less than 600 words

SUBMIT TO
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Johanna Lamont is a senior studying for her bachelors in history. She can often be found singing along to a variety of songs in her room while painting or dabbling in poetry. Some of her interests include comic books, historical examinations of youth subcultures, pastries, and art.



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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Reviews

Jordan Peele Spotlight

Caleb Tiedemann ('25)

Jordan Peele is a name many people know. Perhaps not associated with his films but rather due to his comedy sketches with his good friend Keegan-Michael Key. The two appeared as the comedic Key and Peele with various SNL skits that originally prompted them to fame. But comedy reaches only so far, and Peele wanted to do more with his writing talents. Thus, he began writing and creating movies in an effort to “expose the ‘lie’ of post-racial America.” Through this, Peele not only casts very talented African-American actors and actresses, but he also steers clear of the “black guy dies first trope.” Each of his movies has a message behind it – one that needs to be deciphered through his magnificent writing. After watching the movies multiple times, I still have not discovered every single detail, yet that is what continually brings me back to his films – the message (Spoilers for all of Jordan Peele’s movies beyond this point).

His first film, *Get Out*, released in 2017 to much critical acclaim as it explores the race relations between a Caucasian family’s daughter who brings home her African-American boyfriend. Built from the very beginning with tense foundations, *Get Out* exposes the clash of cultures, lifestyles, and racial differences. The psychological horror element is on full display as the Armitage family attempts to take over and use Chris’s body; virtually enslaving him. The most positive aspect of this movie is its atmosphere. The tensions are dialed up to 100, but Peele keeps you guessing. He maintains the 0-20 range with ease, and then, out of nowhere, it spikes! And when it does... man, your heart starts beating, and blood starts pumping. The plot is very odd, but it’s unique, and the movie operates as more of a thriller than actual horror. The score is very reminiscent of John Carpenter’s *Halloween* with the tense build-up and spike of music. The message received from this movie is the desire, specifically in earlier America, but possibly in modern-day, to possess the African-American body.

Jordan Peele’s second film, *Us*, was released in 2019 and praised as a great horror thriller. I tend to agree; while *Get Out* works on a psychological level, *Us* works on a more personable horror level. It’s far more bloody and violent as the *Shadows* (Clones) of every person finally break from their underground prison and take revenge on their counterparts above. The general theme of *Us* is that there are clones of every human trapped beneath the surface of the Earth, copying the movements and experiences of everyone above. When one of these “shadows” traps a human girl and switches places with her, living her life, the human leads the rest of the *Shadows* on a brutal killing spree across the globe. This “spree” is exactly what makes *Us* more terrifying. In *Get Out*, the Armitage family did not necessarily want to hurt Chris – he was a good product. They wanted to replace him and use him. The entire movie operated on a less scary and more thrilling premise. *Us* is scary because the good directly mirrors the bad and vice versa. Peele perfectly encapsulates the feeling of being hunted and trying to survive. *Us* boasts a stellar cast of all ages with a wonderful score/soundtrack and some good classic horror tropes. Peele’s intended message is a more complicated one involving a bit more thought. One of the first things that is explored is the class division between the richer and poorer and the classic “money doesn’t buy happiness” cliché. The second message is one of isolation and how the isolation of communities such as the rich and poor can contribute to an “us vs. them” mentality. Upon my

first watch, I had trouble connecting the two, but upon my second viewing, I was able to navigate Peele’s careful insinuations. The *Shadows* refer to themselves as “tethered” to their above-ground clones, and only when they cut those tethers are they set free. This commentary seems to insinuate that society is often “tethered” to certain things that cause division among people who could just as easily be our friends but are rather portrayed as enemies.

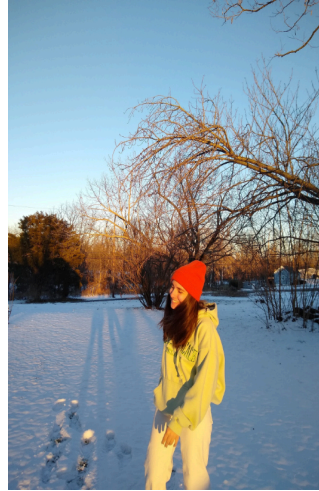
His third and most recent movie, *Nope*, was released in 2022 and follows the same lines of being another thriller type of horror film. It, again, released to much praise, and I even got the chance to see it in theaters. The best aspect about *Nope* is the unknown. *Nope* is more of a creature feature than anything else, and therein is where the commentary lies. The movie boasts a strong cast, with each member holding their own, as well as some never-impressive cinematography and score. The sound design alone should have won this movie an Oscar, and though it was nominated, it did not win. When strange occurrences happen on Haywood ranch, OJ and Em look to the clouds to discover a large alien UFO hiding within. They quickly learn that the “saucer” is animalistic; it hunts at night, flying over the valleys and abducting horses from the ranch, and as the plot progresses, it becomes more and more active. The sound design on the saucer was where the technical aspects shined the brightest. The fading of the whooshing and screams from within the saucer were truly bone-chilling. At one point, a nearby amusement park attempts to set free a horse for the saucer to abduct for the viewing pleasure of an audience. It goes all wrong, however, when the saucer instead abducts all the viewers and kills them. From that point forward, the UFO rejects being “tamed” and treated as a spectacle and becomes more active and territorial. This scene is essential to understanding the core message or, more accurately, a keyword within the movie. Spectacle. Each facet of this movie revolves around animals in the entertainment industry. The Haywood ranch specializes in training horses, a brief subplot features a trained chimpanzee that went berserk on an old television show, and an attempt to control the UFO all act as a message to watchers about “spectacle.” We often do not think about the live animals used in films – trained animals to entertain and enthrall audiences. But Peele’s message is clear: wild animals are not to be domesticated. The movie-making industry is very exploitative and attempts to make the impossible possible, but Peele offers up a counter-question: “What happens when you try to domesticate nature?” Nature is not meant to be tamed or controlled and lashes out in multiple ways and forms throughout this film. Unsurprisingly, *Nope* is another magnificent commentary on the entertainment industry, with both old and new being applicable.

Jordan Peele is one of the newer faces in the movie-making industry and has already made an interesting and provocative name for himself. I eagerly look forward to his next projects hoping for deeper exploration and commentary on societal norms or stereotypes. Hopefully, I have given everyone reading a couple of movies to look into and enjoy themselves.

Get Out- 9/10
Us- 10/10
Nope- 10/10

Artist of the Week

Savannah Stitt ('24)



Savannah Stitt is a senior majoring in a BFA of studio art and concentrating in photography. She has worked in oil and watercolor paint and photoshop, but photography has become the medium she is most passionate about. She has experimented with multiple genres of photography include fashion and portrait editorials, street, and documentary photography. Beach photography has recently become an environment she is especially intrigued by and has been inspired by photographers like Martin Parr, Luigi Ghirri, and Charles H. Traub. Savannah sees photography as a way of giving fresh perspective to everyday scenes and creating new realities from what is right in front of you.

