



TORRACA EARNS TENURE
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March 14, 2014

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College Expects Significant Tuition Increase



The Luckey building.

SARAH SLATER

The cost of attending Houghton next year is set to increase by three percent, bringing the total to approximately \$36,660. According to David Smith, vice president of finance, the

decision to raise tuition is a "board/trustee level decision" and what the trustees recommended was a three percent increase of room, board, and tuition. Data obtained from past

See **TUITION** page 3

Biology Department to Hire New Faculty Member

THOMAS ECKERT

The Biology Department is interviewing to hire a new professor for the fall semester of 2014, intending to fill the gap in its staff after losing Drs. Matthew Pelletier and Kurt Vandock. Pelletier left Houghton for Liberty University; Vandock, for a job at Bayer.

"The hire in biology is a critical need given the loss of two professors last year," said Dr. Jamie Potter of the Biology Department, "We have one of the largest majors at Houghton. As we look to the future of the biology department, a hire in biology is necessary to meet the needs of our students, majors and non-majors, in their educational preparedness and to share in our roles as advisors and mentors."

Having only three full-time faculty members makes both teaching and advising biology students difficult. There are roughly 100 declared biology majors. The classes that most demand to be filled are basic genetics, which is essential to a BS in Biology.

In the spring semester 2013, faculty in the department formed a committee consisting of the biology faculty and one

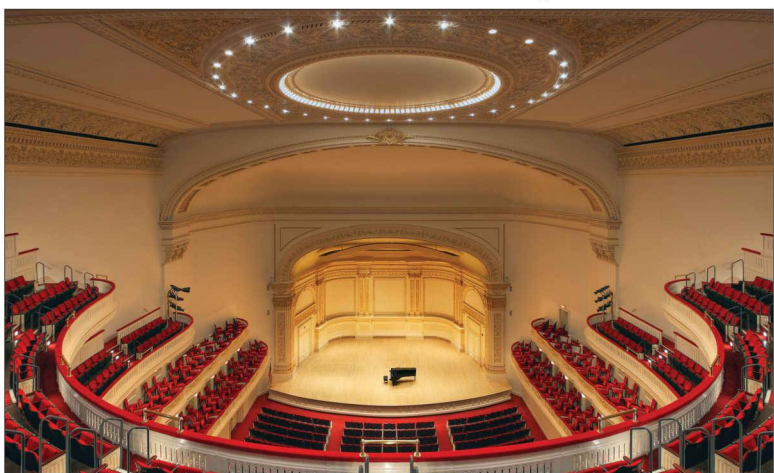
member from outside of the sciences. This committee, after receiving approval from college administration, developed a posting for the job. It was listed by the CCCU and the Chronicle of Higher Education.

The committee collected a list of those interested in the position. Each candidate was categorized as a "yes," "no," or "maybe" by Dr. Aaron Sullivan. Members of the committee reviewed the teaching philosophy, faith statement, and curriculum vitae of each candidate to narrow the selection from 30 to nine possibilities. The initial culling is very easy. Oftentimes, applicants do not include a statement of faith when they submit for candidacy. This automatically results in their elimination from the pool of potentials.

From here, the nine candidates' applications were parsed thoroughly by the committee. Members looked through written submissions and contacted the references listed by the applicants. After scrutinizing the applicants in detail, the members of the committee each ranked them from best to worst by their own criteria.

See **BIOLOGY** page 3

National Sacred Honor Choir Performs at Carnegie Hall



Carnegie Hall.

JONATHAN HARDY

As students returned back from break last weekend, one group of students did not look rested, though perhaps some of them looked rejuvenated. College Choir spent this past spring break riding in a tour bus and performing in churches from Pennsylvania to Virginia and back. From gospel music flash-mobs in King of Prussia Mall to Carnegie Hall, the College Choir generally was described as a rewarding experience by participants.

"Overall I felt that this tour was one where the choir connected the most with both each other and the music," said se-

nior Heather Todd, afterward, this being her third tour with College Choir. "Our group devotional times became incredibly personal and through sharing of our connections to the text it brought us closer as a group." The sense of community by working and sharing together was not limited to music and spiritual growth, however.

According to graduate assistant Kelly Van Kirk, "Choir members stepped up, above and way beyond the call of duty all throughout tour." One particular situation arose in Philadelphia, PA where the choir was singing at 10th

See **CHOIR** page 3

Baseball Team Heads to Florida for Championship

AMANDA IRWIN

This past spring break provided time for the Houghton Men's Baseball team to embark on the 26-hour drive from campus to Florida to participate in The RussMatt Central Florida Invitational. The week-long trip was an opportunity for the team to build relationships between each other and test their skills on the field. Ten games were scheduled; however one junior varsity game was rained out. A total of eight varsity games were played as well as one junior varsity game for freshman and sophomores.

Up to this point the baseball team had only participated in scrimmages. The tournament consisted of mostly northern college baseball teams and was intended to provide extra playing time for an otherwise short season. It also gives players the chance to encounter scenarios that do not surface while practicing indoors.

Having participated in the tournament two years previously, with a beginning record of 1-7, the team is excited about this year's record of 4-4.

Pitcher and DH Seth Cornell, a junior, remarks on the team saying, "We have improved every year and it's nice to see that we compete."

Coach Brian Reitnour says, "The team was competitive in all the games and this gives us a look at the big picture in order to move in the right direction for the upcoming season." Reitnour points to the two home runs and two triples by freshman Tommy Walker as just one example of the type of playing exhibited by Houghton during the tournament.

The trip involved many activities for the baseball team besides the tournament itself. Just one example was the parents' cookout that was held for family that travelled to see the team compete. Additionally, the team held a worship service for a time of praise and testimony, spotlighting players such as Mike Kerr and Kevin Cassa in which teammates were able to see each other in a more vulnerable light. They were also able to spend time bonding during a Washington Nationals and Miami Marlins game where two home run balls were caught.

For freshman Joe Gilligan, the trip gave him just a small look at the camaraderie shared between the players. Gilligan says, "I thank my teammates for making this such a great experience."

This season's team consists of 12 returning players, 17 new players

See **BASEBALL** page 3

WORLD // Crisis in Crimea Continues with Referendum



LUKE LAUER

SARAH HUTCHINSON

A referendum on the status of Crimea, formerly a subdivision of Ukraine, is to be held on this Sunday in which Crimeans will decide whether to join the Russian Federation or set a course for independence.

The move comes after Russian infiltration and influence on the Black Sea peninsula. In seemingly effortless political stagecraft, Russia was able to gain control of

Crimea in late February--all without firing a single shot. The crisis began to unfold following the uprisings in Ukraine's capital of Kiev with the ouster of then pro-Russian president Viktor Yanukovich. With its interests threatened following Yanukovich's flight, Russia was able to gain considerable political leverage over the new Ukrainian government by sending unidentifiable (no insignia or indication of national origin) soldiers to gradually take over the peninsula of Crimea. According to the Russian government, the intent was to protect the majority of ethnic-speaking Russians in Crimea who, the Kremlin claimed, were under threat from Ukrainian nationalist extremists in the new Ukrainian government.

After Russian soldiers took control of the airports, roads, and other major infrastructures, armed gunmen seized the main Crimean assembly building and presided over the election of Sergei Aksyonov (a high-profile advocate for Crimean unity with Russia) as prime minister of Crimea. Since the election of Aksyonov, the government of Crimea has set referendum for Sunday to decide whether Crimea joins Russia as a federal subject or becomes an independent state. (Additionally, the government voted ahead of the referendum to declare its intentions as independent should vot-

ers approve the split from Ukraine.)

A key question surrounding the Crimean referendum is its legality, something that the United States, along with other major world powers, have refused to recognize. In a statement to the press, President Obama claimed that the proposed referendum "would violate the Ukrainian constitution and violate international law," citing that any discussion on the future of Crimea had to include the "legitimate government of Ukraine." Said Obama, "In 2014, we are well beyond the days when borders can be redrawn over the heads of democratic leaders."

Likewise, a statement released from the G7 (a group of developed world powers, including the US) on Wednesday condemned the referendum and said that such a measure "would have no legal effect." The G7 leaders voiced their concerns over the hastiness of the referendum, as well as "the intimidating presence of Russian troops" which could sway the vote. According to the G7, "In addition to its impact on the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, the annexation of Crimea could have grave implications for the legal order that protects the unity and sovereignty of all states."

The Russian government, however, claims that the referendum is per-

fectly legal and within the bounds of international law. Citing the case of Kosovo and other international laws, President Vladimir Putin claimed that the Crimean referendum was nothing more than an expression of the right of self-determination. (One wonders, however, if Mr. Putin would feel the same if Chechnya were also presented with this same right.)

In response the crisis in Crimea, a new executive order issued by Obama authorized sanctions and travels bans against those found to be causing or benefiting from the crisis. Worldwide, other countries are following the same measures. In addition to sanctions and other penalties, the United States has also pledged to issue a \$1 billion loan package to support Ukraine, while the EU has put together a \$15 billion package. Though the US and other international bodies have promised harsher penalties on Russia, exactly what the international response will be following the referendum on Sunday remains to be seen. ★

Sarah is a senior political science major.

WORD ON THE STREET



LUKE LAUER

"My plan for HELP Day is just to go to different sessions to learn about what I can do after college and how that can contribute to my future."

--Renia Pacocha, junior

"I'll probably just catch up on all my work and everything. I've got a paper due next week, so it'll be a good time to focus on it."

--Stacey Rogers, sophomore



LUKE LAUER



LUKE LAUER

"I'm planning on trying to find a time to meet with both of my advisors, enjoy some of Airhart's donuts, and go to the planning for grad schools."

--David Gordon, freshman

What are your plans for HELP Day?

"I'm sleeping. [Is that it?] Yes."

--Carly Omdal, junior



LUKE LAUER

"I'm probably going to sleep in, and then at ten o'clock, I'm gonna go downstairs and have breakfast. It's convenient, breakfast a ten a.m. right at the dorms. Then I'm going to get chapel credit by going to chapel, and then I'm going to bed."

--Katrina Sawyer, senior

"For the first time, I'm not going to be able to do nothing. I'll be in line, filling out forms"

--Lacey Helmuth, senior



LUKE LAUER



LUKE LAUER

TUITION *from page 1*

Houghton College catalogs reveals that tuition has increased approximately 46% since the 2000-2001 school year.

However, it is not only Houghton making these changes—colleges across the nation are raising tuition. According to President Mullen, data compiled by Dale Wright, Houghton’s chief business officer, reveals that out of a group of seventy-five Christian colleges and universities, “only five have a lower tuition increase over the last three years... Our three-year change in the cost of attendance has been between 8-9% and the average was 13.8%.” Smith commented on the increase in comparison to similar Christian schools, saying that “although we’ve gone up, more than I would like, we’ve certainly gone up a lot less than our competition.”

There are multiple reasons behind the tuition increase. According to President Mullen, the main reason is that “the basic costs of doing operations in a college go up every year,” such as increases in utilities costs, increases in healthcare costs, increases in local taxes, and “Sodexo costs [also] go up every year.” Another reason for the tuition increase is “step increases for faculty... so that means that every year, even if you have the exact same number of faculty, you have slight increase in everyone’s salary.” Another factor leading to the decision to increase tuition is the New York state-mandated minimum wage increase. Smith stated that the college does hire a lot of students as workers and their labor costs alone are a “non-trivial expense.”

A final, slightly less well known cost Houghton has invested in over the last several years is putting more money from the operations into “improving the physical plant,” Mullen said. “We have beautiful buildings, but many of them are older. And it’s only fairly recently that we’ve tried to have an institutional facilities renewal policy.” Referred to in higher education as deferred maintenance, Mullen gave the example of Gillette Hall, which had a water main break earlier this semester, as being an example of a concern. Deferred main-

tenance is “not something that any individual student is going to see a drastic change in. But it’s the kind of thing we have to do,” Mullen said. Smith also described deferred maintenance as “something we’re really having to focus on.”

The alternative to tuition increases is cutting costs, which Houghton has experienced quite a bit of over the past few years. Smith stated that the two largest costs on Houghton’s budget are the college’s commitment to four-year financial aid for students, followed by the salaries of faculty. Mullen stated that the challenge to cutting costs as a strategy for lowering costs is that “every cost we cut hurts students in some way... I would say we’re still going to be trying to look at that, because that’s the other way”. Mullen also offered the suggestion that it might be “interesting to have students weigh in on that at some point... our dominant perspective on any of our conversations is not to hurt student experience; but when you have administrators thinking this way, it may not be the same as what students would say”.

At a time when our enrollment is a concern to all on campus—faculty, students, and staff alike—will the tuition increase have an effect on incoming students? Houghton’s recent joining of the Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP) will probably keep that from happening. Smith described the LRAP as a kind of insurance program, featuring a sliding scale of reimbursement from the foundation to future Houghton graduates who are working in the United States, ranging from full reimbursement of loans for those making less than \$20,000, and decreasing gradually until the cut-off point at \$38,000. Smith described it as a “safety net to help you have the debt not be a burden on you.”

Throughout the interview, Mullen emphasized that “I wish we didn’t have to raise the tuition every year because I know that it falls most heavily on returning students... we’re not casual about this.” Smith similarly emphasized that all of the business decisions at the college are made with the good of students as the first and primary concern. ★



Increased tuition is a concern for current and future students. WWW.STRIPES.COM

BASEBALL *from page 1*

and no seniors. Being such a young team means that they are “not experienced yet at such a level, but have a lot of promise,” says Reitnour.

Watching the players grow into new roles on the team, especially those who have been on the team

since its start three years ago, has been exciting for Coach Reitnour. He says, “the guys teach each other academically, socially, and athletically.”

With such a team, Reitnour added that, “they play for something more than themselves, making it more meaningful individually and collectively.” ★

BIOLOGY *from page 1*

They met and discussed their rankings. Each member explained how they ranked the applicants and a loose consensus of ranking was reached. The applicants each scheduled an interview via Skype with the committee.

Following each interview, the committee conferred about the candidate in question. Members listed good attributes and poor ones in order to gauge how well the interviewee would do as a part of the faculty. By the time the candidates had reached this stage in the process, their qualifications are generally similar. These interviews focused more on the person as an individual. Are they personable? Are they going to be easy to work with? Will students be able to approach them?

After these meetings dismissed, the members of the committee were encouraged to pray about their decisions. Each took time to reflect on the candidates. No conclusions were to be reached until the follow-up meeting. In this meeting, the committee made cuts. They decided who to decline and who to invite to campus for one final assessment.

Of the 9 candidates interviewed, 2 were brought to campus the week before Spring Break. Because of the costs involved in flying someone to the school and accommodating them on their stay, the committee needed to make sure that the candidates they brought to campus were the right ones. They only chose the very best.

The candidates were led through a hectic day. It began with meeting the committee itself in person. Here, a more in depth interview took place. The candi-

dates, in their own meetings, were asked to elaborate on their faith statement. They spoke on how they would integrate faith into their teaching, what their biggest challenges would as professors, and where their passion for science came from. They met with several important figures on campus, including Dean of Science and Mathematics, Keith Horn; Dean of the Chapel, Michael Jordan; Dean of Academics, Mark Hijleh; and President Shirley Mullen.

They then taught a biology class. Members of the committee sat in on the class to evaluate their teaching skills. These also candidates gave lectures that were open to all students at a separate time. They met with students personally, without the committee present.

At the end of the day, they could relax. On both visits, some of the committee members went to dinner with the candidates. At a local restaurant, members sat down with candidates and chatted casually about their days. The members of the committee who were present enjoyed the ability to see the interviewee in a less formal setting. Here, they could really tell if they could work with this person as a colleague.

The candidates have both returned home and now the committee is in the process of choosing which one of them will join their faculty next semester. Having their opinions in place after interviewing and meeting the candidates, members of the committee will take into account the opinions of students both by word of mouth and survey. Once the committee has agreed, the candidate chosen will be announced and will join Houghton in the Fall semester. ★

CHOIR *from page 1*

Presbyterian Church. After some an afternoon of free time in the city, the choir went to the church to unload the trailer with equipment and risers and rest. “Dr. Johnson had mentioned a mandatory nap time and we were super excited!” said Todd. But the van with the trailer broke down a mile from the church, stranded with all of the equipment. Van Kirk described the experience, “I had to ask people who were short on sleep, had been wandering the city and were expecting a time of rest to skip that rest and carry hundreds of pounds of robes and risers a mile to the church. I felt terrible, but right away a group jumped up and said, ‘We’ll go.’ I was shocked.” A member of the group added, “A couple people would trade off every couple of blocks and we managed to get everything back in time for the concert.” “No one complained for the rest of tour,” said Todd. “We met the worst it could be and we got through it together!”

The climax of the tour was the performance on Sunday afternoon at Carnegie Hall strengthened by the Na-

tional Sacred Honor Choir. There were rehearsals for several days before the performance with the group of Christian college students, community members, and students at private Christian schools from the greater New York City area. Beyond the weekend of preparation and fellowship, the performance itself was agreed to be a memorable experience. “The hall was amazing!” said graduate student Elizabeth Martindale. “You could say something, hear it bounce off the wall behind you, go out over the audience and come back from the balconies.” Despite being a Sunday afternoon, the hall was fairly full, according to Van Kirk. “I was worried because of the time and day, but there were almost 2,000 people in the audience.” ... “I received really meaningful comments, from the high school students especially,” said Van Kirk who was in charge of most of the New York weekend. “I think we accomplished our goal of showing the younger singers what a joy it can be to make music for God in this kind of way.”

College Choir’s home concert is Friday at 7:30 PM in the Wesley Chapel. ★

WANTED
A highly-motivated, news-hungry individual to serve as news section editor for the 2014-2015 school year.

Interested? Send us an email at: houghtonstar@gmail.com

Torraca-in’ Her Way to Tenure

THOMAS ECKERT

Dr. Karen Torraca has pulled more all-nighters as a professor than she ever did as a student. This semester, they paid off. She was recently awarded tenure after six-and-a-half years at Houghton.

Tenure is recognition of a professor as an integral part their institution. Dr. Torraca’s tenure solidifies her relationship with Houghton College. She has come a long way to earn it.

Long before her professorship, Torraca came to Houghton as a student trying to get out of Delaware. “I’m the youngest of four kids; I’m the only girl,” she stated flatly. By the time she had finished high school, she was ready to leave home and go somewhere new.

For Torraca, Houghton was a perfect undergrad choice. It was the furthest her father would allow her to get away from home. Her uncle was a professor of physics at the college. It had a reputable science and math program. Also, it was small enough that she could still play the sports that she held so dearly.

Coming to Houghton in 1989, she pursued an interest in both math and science while playing on the field hockey team. The outlet of sports allowed her to get away from her studies and keep her mind fresh. In her first year at the college, she wasn’t sure what discipline she should follow. By her sophomore year, her love of organic chemistry made the answer clear. She made a pact with herself. If she could make it through the year and enjoy chemistry, she would stick with it.

Having survived the semester still keen on the subject, she made her decision. She



Dr. Karen Torraca in her office in the Paine Science Center.

LUKE LAUER

declared as a chemistry major with the help of her advisor, Dr. Christensen.

In her junior year, she began dating her future husband. He was an english major - a year younger than her.

Between her junior and senior years, she took an internship at Dow Chemical. She loved the experience of working in an industrial environment. She was ready to go to grad school and get out into the field as soon as she could. Yet, the journey would not prove to be so simple.

As her Senior year ended, she was set for a slot at the University of Florida. Pressure from those above her made her feel that she had to attend grad school right away. She was hesitant. Struck by illness and worry about her ability to handle a long-distance relationship, her gut told her not to go.

In the midst of this struggle, a friend of her now husband reached out to her. “They said to me ‘You know, if you don’t go to grad school, if you take a year off,

and you end up not going to grad school. Maybe you weren’t supposed to go.’,” she recounted, “All of a sudden, a lightbulb went off.” She concluded that she would defer a year before attending graduate school. Now the challenge came in the execution of such a plan.

She nervously called the University of Florida and spoke to an admissions counselor. Having not known what to expect, she was surprised at how accommodating the school was with her deference. Adding to that, the school’s waiting list for married housing happened to be about a year long, making it a perfect fit for the couple.

The deftness with which these plans fell together seemed unthinkable at the time. However, when she looks back, Torraca said it all makes sense to her, “In hindsight, when I was hitting my head against the wall, I needed to realize that maybe that’s not where God’s leading right away.”

Torraca spent the year living with her husband only a few houses down from the home they live in today. They had married in July of 1993 after deciding to do so only three months earlier. While her husband finished undergrad, she worked as a custodian and tutored for organic chemistry in the evenings.

In Autumn of 1994, she began attending the University of Florida. While being at a large school was a change from her roots at Houghton, she found that the work ethic she developed here provided a seamless transition. After five years studying organometallic chemistry - how metals interact with organic compounds - she had earned her PhD. Finally, she could get out of academia and into the real world.

“God had other things in store,” she said, nodding wistfully. Her advisor recommended that she do postdoctoral research. As much as she did not want to, a

TORRACA *page 5*

DAILY CALENDAR

- 14 / FRIDAY
- Chapel: Christena Cleveland
College Choir Tour Homecoming Concert
7:30 PM | Wesley Chapel
- 15 / SATURDAY
- Athletics
1 PM | WLAX vs. SUNY Canton
1 PM | MLAX @ Calvin College
12:30 PM | MT @ D'Youville
1 PM | BB @ Valley Forge Christian College
- 17 / MONDAY
- Graduate Recital: Margaret McGowan, soprano
6:30 PM | CFA Recital Hall
Student Recital: Michael Heyd, piano and organ
8 PM | Wesley Chapel
- 18 / TUESDAY
- CAB Coffeehouse
8 PM | Java 101
- 19 / WEDNESDAY
- H.E.L.P Day
Student Recitals: Emma Brown, voice and Heather Todd, voice
8 PM | CFA Recital Hall

High Stakes on High-Seas: Captain Phillips Review

SALLY MURPHY

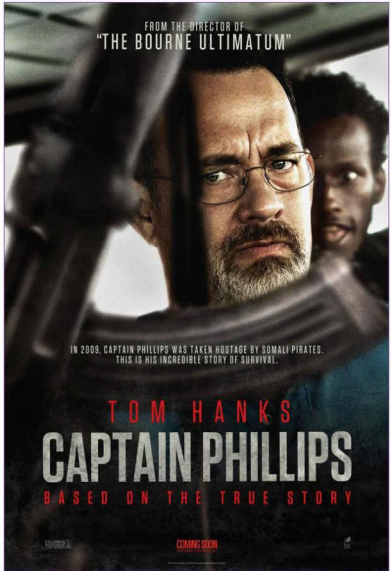
Out of all the films nominated for best picture this year I will admit I was least excited about Captain Phillips. Though based on a true story, I could not imagine it anything more than another “go America!” “Win!” “Kill” shoot-em-up fest on the high seas.

I could not have been more wrong.

Besides winning me over and finding a place in my top three for this years’ Oscars, the film earned respect from the Academy and claimed fame for its storytelling, acting, and filming.

The movie follows the true story of the US-flagged cargo ship MV Maersk Alabama which, in 2009, was hijacked by Somali pirates. Captain Richard Phillips, played by Tom Hanks, finds himself facing an almost impossible situation as he tries to keep the peace, stay alive, and employ as much diplomacy as possible.

The plot is uncomplicated. The ship is at sea, the pirates are spotted, and they soon invade the vessel. Since the ship is a cargo ship they have little weaponry, thus



Captain Phillips poster: ROPEOFSILICON.COM

soon the Somali pirates take control and hold the ship hostage.

What makes the film not only good but

great, however, is the nuanced storytelling. Director Paul Greengrass chose to have the movie filmed fairly raw, and the footage runs along with the hurried crewmen and shakes when disaster strikes. The colors are dulled and tinted with cool tones that makes it seem metallic and lonely. There are often close-ups of faces and objects, drawing the viewer onto the ship which will soon turn prison. The viewer knows that what is on this ship is all that there is, no greater world surrounds them. The viewer then understands that every emotion from fear to hope is encapsulated in this small space. By the time the hostage situation is underway the feeling of claustrophobia is so strong that the viewer cannot help but hang on tight to each moment. As a result, the second half of the film is both thrilling and terrifying.

Much of the success of the pure terror one eventually feels can be attributed to the stellar acting of the cast. From each Somali pirate to each American crewman, the acting is spot-on and extremely

CAPTAIN *page 5*

TORRACA *from Page 4*

poor economy and dearth of industrial jobs led Torraca to accept her advice.

She went on to do research at MIT in the laboratory of Steve Buchwald. Two years later, she had finished her research and was ready to begin interviewing for jobs. After many interviews with companies who wanted her, she decided on Eli Lilly and Company.

The plant she would be working at was in Lafayette, Indiana. She and her husband moved there having never lived off of the East Coast. The experience was new, but rewarding. She remembers, "I felt guilty for earning money doing what I did because I just loved it so much."

After several years of working her dream job, she got a call from Dr. Irmgard Howard, Professor of Chemistry at her alma mater. She was offered a job at Houghton and promptly answered, "No". However, in the weeks following, she and her husband talked the offer over. They prayed about it together and began to reconsider. She thought it might be better for their family to be in the environment that Houghton offered, even if that meant taking a pay cut to do so.

Torraca always felt that one day she would teach. It was the profession of both her parents and a passion of her's to mentor. She came to Houghton in 2007. It was a rough first year. She had no experience teaching before Houghton. She was suddenly thrown into a unknown territory: selecting textbooks, writing notes, and creating exams. At the same time, she had to develop a series of labs to parallel the coursework. Thankfully, her advisor from her undergraduate years, Dr. Christensen, was still in the community. She tapped him and her graduate advisor to help her develop notes for organic chemistry. She expresses great respect for those students who labored with her through the first year. Now, almost seven years later, she has fully reined in professorship. She understands how to cultivate learning in her classes, as well as in the lives of her students.

She is often lauded for both her work in academics and her joyful spirit. "Dr. Torraca is incredibly knowledgeable in her field of study. Her organic chemistry classes are very fast-paced and packed with a lot of information." Sophomore David Tse stated, continuing, "Students in the past have said that the MCAT chemistry sections are a breeze after taking Organic Chemistry from her. She is usually in her office and is always willing to provide explanations for homework or life advice." Junior Jina Libby added, "One time, I was studying for finals in the science building, and she and her kids came in with a tray of homemade crème puffs to give away to the students."

She will oftentimes have students plop themselves down in her office and begin a conversation with, "This has nothing to do with school." Dr. Torraca sees these four years as a formative time for her students. They are trying to define the world through a new perspective. In some cases, she can see organic chemistry acting as the first barrier that students hit, forcing them to stop and reconsider the path that they are taking. She enjoys mentoring them through these times and hopes that she can help them discover something about themselves.

Having thought back on her past few years and where she has ended up, Torraca reflected, "I'm amazed at the places that God has led and allowed us to be." She looks forward to a future at Houghton: teaching and learning from her students, having them over for dinner at the end of each year, and going into each new year watching the light bulb moments that flash in their eyes when something clicks. This is why she teaches. ★

Photos of the Week



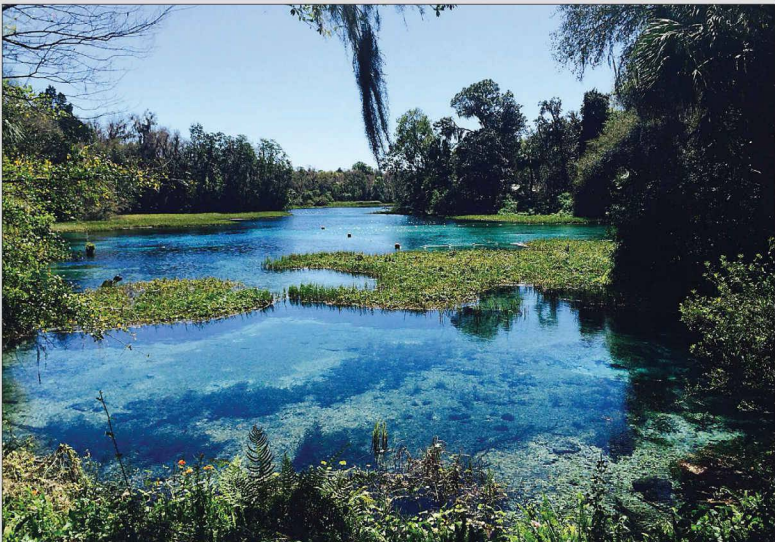
Spring Break Edition



EMILY MORROW

Hannah Henry, sophomore

This spring break I went down to Dunnellon Florida to help my Grandmother recover from her second hip replacement surgery. When I wasn't playing Scrabble or making pie for Grandpa I would bike to Rainbow River state park to hike through the waterfalls and swim in this beautiful water. Complete with alligators, tropical fish, and water fowl this river is spring fed and crystal clear at a temperature of 73 degrees all year round. The head spring basin (pictured here) produces between 400-600 million gallons of fresh water per day! This is a very unique body of water and one of my favorite places in the world!



HANNAH HENRY



WHITNEY ELDER

Emily Morrow, junior

I spent spring break visiting some great people on the west coast. I flew into LAX and met my friend Jenny Pak, a good friend from the UAE. We hadn't seen each other in over three years and it felt unreal to be meeting again in California. The next day, we ventured out of the city and into the mountains to go to Astrocamp where my boyfriend Colin Lauer '13 works. While I was at the camp, Luke Doty '12 visited us for the day and we all had fun catching up and hiking around near the camp. I spent the next few days finding micrometeorites, zip lining, and looking at stars and the moon through a telescope! Did you know that the moon is just a rock in the sky? What is it doing up there? It's crazy! I took the picture shown when Colin and I climbed Tahquitz Peak, a mountain near the camp. On the day we climbed the sky was so clear we could see towns an hour away. Though the camp was fun, the best part of my trip was seeing friends I don't get to see everyday. It feels good to know that there are people that you get on with well, even if they live thousands of miles away.

Whitney Elder, senior

My roommate and I spent spring break on her dairy farm in Pennsylvania. Her brother owns Royal Whites hair sheep, hence they have no wool. Although there was still a lot of snow and cold, spring was making a strong statement as there were five ewes lambing every day. These lambs were catching the sun around noon as their moms ate.

CAPTAIN *from Page 4*

interesting. Tom Hanks (Captain Phillips) plays his character with a stark authenticity that encompasses all of the insecurities that even such a strong leader would feel. The viewer sees a smart, seasoned, and well-prepared captain, yet it is clear that what he feels is genuine fear. He is not a superhero; humanity has failings and there is no telling whether this will end well. Tom Hanks brilliantly balances the line between unwavering control and lingering fear, all with a Boston accent. In a year full of amazing performances, Hanks' is surely the almost overlooked 6th candidate for best actor.

The only person who could match Tom Hanks (and even surpass him in this case) was found in the most unlikely of places. Plucked from his job as a chauffeur, Barkhad Abdirahman plays Muse, the acting leader of the Somali pirates. Abdirahman's stunning first and only acting performance carries all of the desperation and confusion of a man caught in his situation. Muse (Abdirahman) creates the crux of the film's strongest aspect--the leveling of humanity. We see a man bent to depravity, trapped in a world where he must choose between absolute poverty or rise to the promise of wealth and satisfaction. He is not merely an enemy or a villain, rather he is a fellow human,

striving for the same things we all desire. The most powerful testimony to this is when he is told he will see the elders of his village and the viewer sees a softness wash over him, but just for a moment. After all, those elders hold his respect, his admiration and his love. And we are reminded constantly that he and his fellow pirate embodies all of those things. This film is not so much about war as it is about humanity- the evils, the hopes, the good, and the bad found in so many parts of it. It is scary, tense, heartbreaking and beautifully filmed. And the story it tells is an important reality. ★

The More Things Change



LUKE LAUER

PETER MEILAENDER

For anyone over forty years of age, events in Ukraine over the past two weeks have evoked an uncomfortable sense of déjà vu. An assertive, vehemently anti-Western Russia seeking to resurrect its old sphere of influence in Eastern Europe conjures up memories of the Soviet bloc confronting NATO during the Cold War. The Russian occupation of Crimea raises the most significant threat to global security since the end of the Cold War, and the possibility of a war among great powers is higher now than at any time since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In such circumstances, small miscalculations can have vast consequences. Western options are limited. Neither the US nor NATO is likely to use force to stop Russia's occupation or even annexation

of Crimea. But the risks of acquiescence are high. Putin's claimed right to intervene on behalf of ethnic Russians in other countries--can anyone say Sudeten Germans?--is dangerous and destabilizing. And it is difficult to predict what Putin, or even the volatile Ukrainian government, might do next. Were an actual war to break out between Russia and Ukraine, bringing armed Russian troops to the borders of NATO, the US and its allies would almost surely be drawn into the conflict.

Under such circumstances, it becomes important for us to understand why Russia is acting as it is. Since the Berlin Wall fell, various theories have been advanced to explain the shape of international order in the post-Cold War world. Several of the most influential accounts, identifying different driving variables at the root of state behavior, potentially explain Russian actions in Ukraine.

Power. Since the end of World War II, the dominant school of thought in American foreign policy has been realism. Realists such as Kenneth Waltz or John Mearsheimer argue that states act in pursuit of their own national interest. That interest is shaped by the anarchical nature of the international system, in which states can ultimately rely only on their own resources for survival. They are thus driven primarily to seek power, in order to gain security. This does not mean that states are always aggressive; realists view states as rational actors, which can be deterred from acting in ways that would decrease their power and harm their

interests. But states are always seeking an opening. This competitive and antagonistic vision of international order fits the Russian move into Ukraine: Vladimir Putin, sensing an opportunity to extend Russian power and the unlikelyhood of an effective Western response, saw his opening and seized it.

Culture. Perhaps the most influential account of international politics over the past fifteen years has been that offered by Samuel Huntington in his book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Huntington argues that the world is divided into a number of core civilizations--among them Western, Islamic, Sinic, and Orthodox--which he defines as the largest cultural groupings toward which people feel affinity. After a Cold War era in which conflict was primarily ideological, he argues, conflict in our new era will occur primarily along civilizational lines. Thus we should not be surprised to see Russia, the dominant country within Orthodox civilization, confronting a Western world that it regards as increasingly encroaching upon it through actions such as EU expansion. Nor is it surprising that Ukraine--a country divided between an Orthodox eastern half and a Catholic western half--would become a battleground in civilizational conflict. When Putin claims the right to protect Russian minorities in other countries, he is making a typical civilizational gambit.

Ideology. It is tempting to think that ideological conflict ended with the Cold War. But ideological conflict

can take different shapes. Neoconservative analyst Robert Kagan has argued that instead of ideological conflict ending, it has instead re-emerged in an older form that dominated much of Western history during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: the struggle between freedom and authoritarianism. The United States has always been a "dangerous nation," Kagan says, because our example of free, democratic government, with its appeal for oppressed populations, poses by its very existence and success a threat to authoritarian governments everywhere. European monarchs knew this in 1800, and Vladimir Putin knows it today. So when he sees Western governments support a democratic movement to overthrow the pro-Russian Yanukovich government in Ukraine, he responds in kind, seeking to undermine the destabilizing spread of freedom and democracy on Russia's border.

It is a sign of the current situation's danger that all three of these theories point in the direction of continued likely conflict with Russia. There is no more pressing, or difficult, task facing the Obama administration at present than sorting out the roles of power, culture, and ideology in the current conflict and devising a response accordingly. ★

Dr. Meilaender is a professor of political science

L.I.F.E. Club Panel Disappoints



LUKE LAUER

ALLYSON MURPHY

I was horrified when I first received the L.I.F.E. club email stating in big bold letters "Abortion: A Modern Day Holocaust?" that was accompanied by the feet of what appeared to be an infant. I was horrified not because of my views on abortion, but because of the way the e-mail presented the event. The email claimed to be a panel "discussion" yet the way information was presented did not suggest any "discussion" would occur. Instead the email suggested that one viewpoint would automatically dominate the event. In addition to my horror, we must realize that even in this small community; there are most likely people who have experienced the effects of abortion to one degree or another. Therefore I do not feel that we should abruptly equate our fellow sisters and brothers to Nazis. Regardless of the impressions I re-

ceived from the email, I decided to attend, hoping that researched opinions and detailed thought would be respectfully presented.

Sadly my hope was, for the most part, in vain--the panel quickly veered in one direction and rarely slowed down to think about other avenues of opinion. However, though the conversation repeatedly traveled in one direction, I as well as fellow students, were very thankful to have Dean Jordan present. He continually inserted thought-provoking responses that were honest; reminding the students that there are not easily deduced answers when it comes to society's issue of abortion. However, this was not as true of the other two speakers.

The male guest speaker was a Bible-thumper, who continually repeated kitschy catchy phrases such as, "We have the World View, and then we have the Word View" or "God is Scripture and Scripture is God." I assure you, Scripture is not cut and dry. Issues dealing with morality are rarely-if ever- black and white. Yes John 1 does say, "In the beginning was the word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" but the Bible speaks in metaphor. As one student at the panel pointed out, there are thousands of denominations within the Protestant Church alone: clearly believers do not commonly agree on many issues regarding the hermeneutics of scripture.

In relation to this, Dean Jordan again pointed us to the important realization that the Bible never addresses abortion, but instead discusses the value of life as a theme prevalent within the Bible. We should approach abortion as intellectuals who can support opinions within secular communities, not just as believers who speak up in our small, faith-based town.

The female guest speaker reverted to a repeated tactic of statistical references throughout the discussion, and at one point admitted to looking up facts online recently to ensure she would have information to bring to the panel. Statistics work for initial effect,

...the panel quickly veered in one direction and rarely slowed down to think about other avenues of opinion.

but we have heard them before and we will hear them again. When bombarded with statistics, one does not often come away with new thoughts to dwell on, but rather one comes away with a jumble

of disorienting facts that are hard to process. Also this guest speaker was a Catholic and I, like other students, expected the discussion to at least briefly deal with the differences between Catholic and Protestant viewpoints on contraception, but this was never formally addressed. Instead, references were made to the differing thoughts, but time was not devoted to discussing this rift within the Church.

Lastly, the discussion was not clearly focused from the beginning. I expected the first question to be a start-

ing point that dealt with the definition of when life truly starts. This question was only addressed at the end, when a student asked for individualized definitions from each panelist.

Overall I was disappointed. The issue of abortion is regarded as a very heated discussion both inside the church and within the secular world. Students should experience a discussion that holds differing opinions respectfully presented in a way that stimulates an individual's thought instead of staunching it. Students who are not encouraged to carefully think about issues will not be ready to confidently present his/her own thoughts when given the chance later in life.

Next time the L.I.F.E. Club creates a panel discussion, I suggest they bring in a pro-choice opinion--there are academics in our community who hold this view. I also propose they find more readily equipped panelists to argue each side. This campus also holds people who have devoted time and energy into Pro-Life viewpoints through continual research from both a Christian perspective and a secular perspective. Once again, I was extremely glad that Dean Jordan had a voice in this discussion, but I wish the panel had been better prepared and more diverse. ★

Allyson is a sophomore English and art major

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I read the March 1 online STAR article, “Shades of Black Exhibition Defaced”, with dismay and a strong sense of déjà-vu. This is not the first time a public racialized event like this happened on campus. I was assistant professor of sociology at Houghton College from August 2008 – May 2012. In April 2009 a similar incident occurred during chapel with the Gospel Choir and Prof. Ndunge Kiiti on stage.

After I and others publicly expressed concern about it, anonymous notes appeared on our office doors and around campus belittling our views and disrespecting often marginalized groups in our society. When I wrote an open letter to Houghton College about these actions (copy provided to STAR), a student leader in a class cabinet warned me via e-mail that I was “moving into dangerous territory”. The person was right, but for the wrong reason. It is risky, but not to blacks – to whites. It means acknowledging our privilege and sacrificially giving it up.

In another year between now and then, Black History Month educational materials publicly displayed by the Black Heritage Club (BHC) were defaced with Nazi imagery. And there are more numerous instances of racial speech that happen in less visible spaces on campus. Most of us, especially if we’re white, remain unaware because they do not mar our everyday life experiences. Consider how they do for persons of color on campus for four (or more) of the last five years. Putting the February 2014 event in this recent historical and campus context suggests a systemic issue deeper, and far beyond, the solitary person reported to have defaced the BHC exhibition.

I hope future conversation on this will not be about individuals’ motivations. Instead, focus on understanding our racialized U.S. society and our place as white evangelicals in it. Griffin is right this is “not just a black issue” and that addressing its underlying causes “must start amongst faculty and in classrooms.” The problem is not

BHC students’ to solve or the faculty of color to speak out on. It is our responsibility as white followers of Christ. I believe Houghton College’s identity as a Christian, liberal arts school, in the Wesleyan tradition, calls us to face this difficult issue however discomforting it is. Avoiding it does not well reflect our Mission and the Biblical values of those striving to achieve it.

Other Christian liberal arts colleges offer examples for doing this. Bethel University (MN) implemented an institutional emphasis on racial reconciliation in 2003. It could start here with the next Houghton Reads book being “Reconciliation Blues: A Black Evangelical’s Inside View of White Christianity” (Edward Gilbreath), or “Being White: Finding Our Place in a Multiethnic World (Paula Harris and Doug Schaupp).

For myself as a Houghton College alum (’97) and former faculty member, I am sorry for how these repeated incidents make students and staff of color feel unwelcome and unsafe. If your (and until recently my) community is to come together - and include People of Color - it will take much more than gracious students and personal reconciliation. Besides the issue’s spiritual foundations that are everyone’s responsibility, I doubt these racialized events will cease happening at their current frequency until white faculty, staff, and students take ownership of them. I pray that in the next five years the Houghton story includes you walking together with God into this “dangerous” territory.

Aaron Routhe, Ph.D. (’97)
Former Assistant Professor of
Sociology
Houghton College

Dear Houghton,

We need to talk. On Monday, March 10, while on spring break from Boston University School of Theology, I decided to visit you to see some old friends and professors, and because life in the city can get a bit bleak, and Houghton is the least city-ish place I know. Upon arriving, I was shocked and insulted to pick up a copy of the Star and read the article “Julian Cook:

Houghton Legend Returns”.

Now, I have nothing against Mr. Cook personally. We were at Houghton together, and now we’re at BU STH together, and he’s a good guy. But a legend? Really? Do you think you’ll ever play a video game where he’s a princess that needs to be saved by an elf? Do you expect to hear a story about Julian as a headless singing horseman? I sure don’t.

Why is it that when he comes back to visit you to give a lecture and a chapel service, he gets a full article in the Star, but when I spontaneously decide to visit for four hours, I don’t? Is it because I can’t sing as well as he can? Well, neither can you. What does he have that I don’t? Sure, he’s talented, intelligent, polite, and dead sexy, but when have those qualities ever gotten anyone anywhere?

I even made a financial contribution to the school during my visit – I donated over one hundred hard-earned cents to the campus store, and they were so grateful that they gave me an Arizona iced tea. And don’t tell me you’ve forgotten all my other contributions over the years. Did Julian Cook successfully get Big Al’s to keep chicken quesadillas on the menu for another year? Did Julian Cook donate a 24 DVD set of Looney Tunes cartoons to the library? Did Julian Cook ever repeatedly tickle Nicholas Fuller in the campus center, much to the delight of everyone within earshot? No, no he did not.

I tell you, I do not take this snub lightly. I have friends in very high places – I’ve rubbed shoulders with such luminaries as author Sinead Tyrone, philosopher Robert Cummings Neville, Jon Foreman (if I’ve met him more than twice, does that count as us being friends?), and Julian Cook. Any one of them would say that I’m just as legendary as Julian, or at least that we’ve both got good grammar.

To your credit, during my impromptu visit I did receive a tender hug from Luke Lauer, a snarky quip from Dr. Pearse, and lots of random smiles from people I’ve never seen before. All of these are typical displays of affection on campus, and they are all things about you that I miss deeply. But I also missed reading an article called “Dan Sendker: Houghton Legend Re-

turns”. You didn’t even need to call me a Legend – I’d have been content with Myth or Epic, or even Folktale.

I expected better from you, Houghton. I really did.

Dan Sendker, Class of 2012

Dear Editor,

I’m writing to express my frustration with the posters around campus advertising the new theology major. For instance, one involves the phrase, “Why settle for a job when you can have a calling?” I’m assuming this poster does not intend to imply that those in ministerial careers have “callings” while the rest of the world pursues a “mere” job. (In fact, my understanding of the new theology major is that it’s intended to counteract this kind of dichotomy by making the theology major more accessible to those who intend to pursue careers outside of traditional ministry.) Rather, my issue with this poster (and the companion posters inquiring, “What are your dreams?”) is that calling/vocation/dreams rhetoric is unnecessary and unhelpful. Unnecessary, because I think you’re perfectly justified in choosing a career on the basis of it being sufficiently satisfying work, you having a relevant skill set, and the resulting paycheck. I don’t think it’s helpful to add “being called” to this list, since it’s hard enough to find a moderately satisfying job that will provide stable income. Besides, the calling of a Christian is to be a disciple of Christ, period. This will require discipleship in the workplace, of course, but your career is not the locus of your calling. Moreover, we would do well to realize that the ability to pursue our dreams is a facet of western life in the 21st century, and as such, is a privilege. It’s a gift to be able to ask, “What do I want to do?” It’s a distortion of this gift to wrap it in spiritual trappings and the rhetoric of calling.

Best,
Abigail Bruxvoort



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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Artist of the Week

Kathryn-Rose Mello

//senior psychology major

“Ever since I can remember, I have loved taking pictures. I’m always the one on vacations with the camera or in friend circles documenting important events. Yet as my love for photography has grown over the years, so has my desire to use it in a way that tells stories and forces viewers toward a greater appreciation for life around them. My hope is that someday my love for documentary photography can be used to share stories that move viewers toward action in ways that words alone simply cannot.”



LUKE LAUER



Titles and Media

From left to right descending

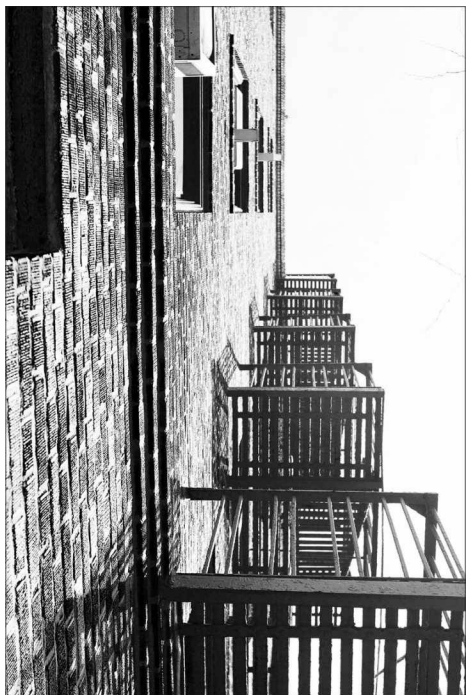
Breaking Free, digital photography

The Other Half, digital photography

City Escape, digital photography

When Sparks Fly, digital photography

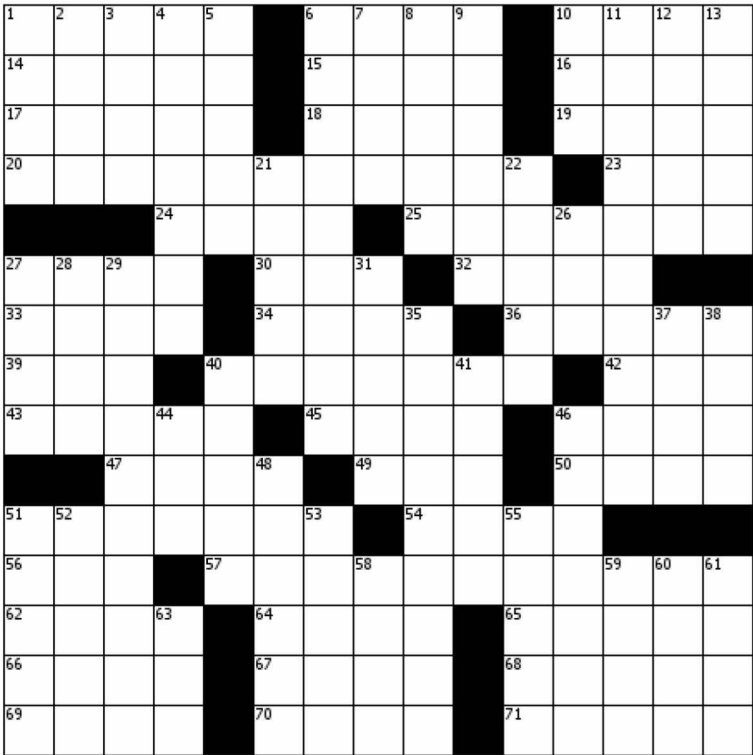
Back in Time, digital photography



“The camera is an instrument that teaches people how to see without a camera.”

Dorothea Lange

Crossword



ONLINECROSSWORDS.NET

ACROSS

- 1. Like bubble bath
- 6. Thieves’ undoer
- 10. You’re tense on this
- 14. Witchy woman
- 15. Hole punchers
- 16. Atlas datum

- 17. Grant portrayer
- 18. “Gentlemen Prefer Blondes” author
- 19. Worked for Avon?
- 20. Bonds’ topper?
- 23. Heartache
- 24. Go berserk

- 25. Metric unit of pressure
- 27. Make sport of
- 30. Taxing org.
- 32. Place to hibernate
- 33. Bonedry
- 34. Made one’s nose grow
- 36. Hipbone
- 39. Mrs., in Marseilles
- 40. Drillmaster? (and a hint at this puzzle’s theme)
- 42. Hightech ID
- 43. Very much
- 45. Em, to Dorothy
- 46. Sponsorship
- 47. Caspian Sea land
- 49. Tour for Woods
- 50. On deck
- 51. Sympathized with
- 54. Slackjawed
- 56. Slim swimmer
- 57. Sport of kings rarity
- 62. Branch of math
- 64. Timbuktu’s land
- 65. Asian capital
- 66. Strict grammarian’s bane
- 67. ___ impasse
- 68. Meet segment
- 69. Gift for young builders
- 70. k.d. of country music
- 71. Ends one’s case

DOWN

- 1. Picketer’s replacement
- 2. Celestial bear
- 3. Figures at a gangland summit

- 4. Looked like Snidely
- 5. ___ maté (tealike beverage)
- 6. She’s often on her toes
- 7. “Over the hill” in the military
- 8. City sector
- 9. Lay into
- 10. Pencil holder, at times
- 11. Castle feature
- 12. Salami selection
- 13. Raring to go
- 21. Light on one’s feet
- 22. Braid
- 26. Black gold
- 27. Part of a doorframe
- 28. Type of ant
- 29. Apples or cherries, sometimes
- 31. Arrange, as a blind date
- 35. Knucklehead
- 37. Windows alternative
- 38. Crow’snest site
- 40. What dodgers dodged
- 41. Kind of coach
- 44. Gallery fare
- 46. Personalize a bracelet
- 48. A body temperature of 98.6, e.g.
- 51. Kind of position
- 52. Creepsinducing
- 53. Rodeo rope
- 55. Fall hue
- 58. Drawing board product
- 59. They’re white in Monopoly
- 60. Refusal word
- 61. Lousy deposits?
- 63. Muscle car ltrs.