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Nicholas A. Smith Foundation to host 5K

By Rachel Brackins
Head Copy Editor

The Nicholas A. Smith Foundation is hosting an "Eskibeau 5K Run" to remember the life of former student Nicholas Smith and to raise funds for Bible major scholarships, summer camps and mission trips.

According to the website, The Nicholas A. Smith Foundation is a "non-profit organization focused on honoring the memory of Nicholas A. Smith by providing financial support in three areas for those in need." Amy Smith, founder of the organization and Nicholas Smith's mother, said her son was passionate about Biblical secondary education, summer camps and missions. The foundation is seeking to raise money through the 5K for scholarships to help those wishing to major in Bible at Christian universities.

"We want to make sure money isn't a setback for those kids," Amy Smith said. "For some kids it may be scholarships for books and tuition, for some it may be for housing and for some it may be that they need a little bit of extra money in their pocket so they aren't broke all of the time. If it is something they feel God is leading them to, we want to make it a little bit easier for them to make that choice."

According to Amy Smith, hosting a 5K run seemed to be a fun, simple way to raise a substantial amount of money while also allowing the community to gather together to remember her son. Amy Smith said multiple vendors offered to sponsor the event, with the most notable being Coca-Cola, who will provide all of the water needed.

"That was the most amazing thing," Amy Smith said. "Anyone who knows Nicholas knows that that poor kid doesn't drink anything but Coca-Cola. I couldn't get him to drink milk, and I could barely get him to drink water - it was always

Coke. So when they came on board it was an awesome, awesome thing."

Alumnus and Nicholas Smith's childhood friend Tyler Nutt is planning to participate in the event. Nutt said he is excited to reconnect with those who were also close to Nicholas Smith.

"I'm looking forward to seeing my friend group," Nutt said. "It's kind of weird how the friend group revolved around Nicholas. He wasn't the loudest guy, but he was friends with everyone in the group. When he passed, that group became super strong. If there's anything good that came from Nicholas' passing, it's that I gained much deeper relationships in the people in our group."

Senior Maurisa Hughes, another friend of Nicholas Smith, said the race will bring an opportunity for healing.

"I am most looking forward to the healing that I know this race will bring," Hughes said. "Many significant milestones are coming this time of year, so many 'firsts' without Nicholas. It is the perfect opportunity to band together around the Smith family and show that we are all still hurting and healing together."

Nutt said that although he runs on a semi-regular basis, his goal will not be to finish the race with a specific time. On the contrary, Nutt said he will run to help memorialize his good friend.

"The purpose of this isn't winning a race," Nutt said. "The purpose is to remember Nicholas and all of the great things he did in his life. He had such a servant heart and always wanted to include everyone. He didn't have any enemies, and that's a hard thing to do."

The race will take place in downtown Buford, Georgia, on Saturday, December 12, at 7:30 a.m. The race fee is \$30, and registration closes on Dec 11. For those not able to physically participate, there is a phantom runner option. For more information visit www.nicholasasmith.org.



The Nicholas A. Smith Foundation is hosting a 5K to raise funds for scholarships, summer camps and mission trips. To register for the race, visit www.nicholasasmith.org.

Harding updates inclement weather policy, fixes delays

By Phoebe Cunningham
Asst. Copy Editor

With the changing of the seasons comes changes in the university's inclement weather policy. According to Associate Provost of Undergraduate Marty Spears, the office of the provost and deans' council began discussions during the 2014-15 school year to change the primary means of communication and the abbreviated schedule for delayed starts after receiving feedback from students and faculty indicating issues and confusion.

Students, faculty and staff will now be informed of delays or cancellations via the emergency alert system provided by the Office of Public Safety and there will no longer be an abbreviated schedule of classes for days requiring a delayed start. Classes will follow the normal schedule after the delayed start. Labs beginning at 9:45 a.m. will start at 10 a.m.

"What we found was (that) we were having a lot of confusion with the abbreviated start schedule; students and faculty were confused," Spears said. "Sometimes the students would be showing up for their class at the wrong time or maybe the faculty member went too long or was not there at the right time. There was just a lot of confusion. We were trying to give each class the opportunity to meet and have some time, and what

ended up happening was a lot of unproductive class time."

According to Spears, the Office of the Provost is encouraging classes that will be affected by delayed starts to seek alternative methods of class instruction such as the use of Canvas or utilizing a type of online meeting space.

"We can take advantage of some of the technology nowadays," Spears said. "We've encouraged (faculty and staff) to be thinking about what they would do if they had to make up some time. We're encouraging them to explore things... do something online, if not, work with students to find another way to get that content."

Spears said he thinks the changes will make days requiring delayed starts more productive for all classes.

"I think in some ways it's going to help us do some things that are done in the real world anyway," Spears said. "When you work in an office in the real world, if you can't get to the office, you still have to work."

Senior Chandler Cupp, who lives off campus, said he thinks the change in the inclement weather policy will help clarify how the delay or closings will impact classes and events on campus.

"I can confidently say that starting classes as normal after delays will cut down on a lot of confusion and stress, and I'm very pleased to hear about this

change," Cupp said. "As far as the emergency alert system, I feel like Harding has done a pretty good job of informing us about inclement weather in a timely manner since I've been a student. However, if this makes things go more quickly or run smoother, then I welcome the change. I appreciate attempts at improvement."

Craig Russell, director of Public Safety, said that while President Bruce McLarty is the one who ultimately makes the decision on a closing or delay, his office plays a role in the process, including alerting students, faculty and staff of the decision via the emergency alert system.

"When it comes to inclement weather closings, we've always had the role where we're the office that is open 24/7, so typically our employees are out there in the wee hours of the morning and are the first to be able to observe what the weather is like," Russell said.

As the change is implemented and faculty and staff prepare for the winter season, Russell said that the ultimate goal of this change is to keep students, faculty and staff safe, and to do it in the most efficient manner possible.

"The whole goal is to get the message out as quickly and as early as possible, but also to get it out to as broad an audience as possible," Russell said. "This (change) will allow us to do that."



Zach Hailey | The Bison
The Office of the Provost has changed the inclement weather policy by canceling abbreviated periods. Classes will begin on schedule on days with a late start.

Safe Campus Act aims to protect victims of sexual violence

By Hannah Moore
Beat Reporter

H.R. 3403, or the Safe Campus Act (SCA) of 2015, was introduced in the U.S. House Education and the Workforce Committee on July 29 of this year by Rep. Matt Salmon of Arizona.

The SCA states that it aims to "protect victims of sexual violence" and "improve the adjudication of allegations related to sexual violence." The provisions of this bill explain that the victim of a sexual assault would need to file a report with the police before the university would be allowed to investigate the crime, and the university could not punish the perpetrator until they are convicted of the crime.

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) said that "sexual violence occurs when someone is forced or coerced into unwanted sexual activity without agreeing or consenting" and said that it includes "forced intercourse, sexual contact or touching, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and exposure or voyeurism." Also according to the NSVRC, 90 percent of sexual assaults will go unreported by the victim, and in 2014, 40 percent of universities admitted to not investigating a single report within the past five years.

Craig Russell, director of Public Safety, said that the SCA initially attracted many supporters because the provisions were thought to

encourage the reporting of sexual assaults. After further consideration, he said, the bill would not encourage reporting.

"You know, a lot of victims of sexual assault don't want to go to law enforcement," Russell said. "The university wouldn't be able to do much of anything until they went to the police to file a report. In many cases, that's going to discourage reporting of sexual violence."

According to Assistant Vice President of Student Life Zach Neal, the SCA would severely inhibit and lengthen the response process of universities in order to make accommodations for the victims.

"First of all, we're always very

sensitive to the needs and concerns of a victim, so no matter what happens moving forward with this law, we will continue to make that our primary effort," Neal said. "However, the law might change the chronological order of when we find out. Forcing the victim to report the matter to the police first before any investigation or action by us would make the process longer. It won't change how we approach things once we know about it, but it might affect if or when we know about it."

According to the NSVRC, one in every five women and one in every 16 men will be sexually assaulted during their years at college. Senior Rachel Moran said that the bill

does not promote safety or protect victims of sexual assault.

"Violence against women is a huge issue on college campuses, especially those with fraternities and sororities," Moran said. "The SCA would prevent universities from investigating sexual assault until the victim reports the crime. This is working against keeping campuses safe. It is protecting the accused, instead of protecting the victim."

On Nov. 13th, the National Pan-Hellenic Conference and The North-American Interfraternity Conference withdrew their support from the SCA and further action is pending. Many other college organizations continue to speak out against the bill.

Mockingjay Part 2, page 2B

HU Hack, page 2A

The Final HU Hack of the semester taught students to get plenty of rest

New Soccer Coach, page 1B

The men's soccer team welcomes new coach, Jon Ireland

Christmas, page 3B



Courtesy of Emily Woodruff

Students in the Harding University in Florence (HUF) program gather in the cloister of San Bartolomeo, a WWII internment camp. Travis McNeal, assistant professor of behavioral sciences, led them in a moment of silence and prayer.



Courtesy of Lauren Bryan Knight

Lauren Bryan Knight and students in the Harding University in England (HUE) program prayed at York Minister for the citizens of Paris on the night of the attacks. Knight is the director of both the HUE and HIP programs.

Final HU Hack covers holistic, healthy living

By Sara Denney
Student Writer

The Center for Student Success held its final HU Hack of the semester titled “The Freshman 15 Blues” on Tuesday, Nov. 17.

“The Freshman 15 Blues” addressed some every day issues many students encounter during their time in college.

“We started out by defining the word ‘holistic,’” Cameisha Brewer, graduate assistant intern for the professional counseling program and speaker at Tuesday’s HU Hack, said. “Holistic is how your physical well-being ties into every other area of your life, academically, emotionally and spiritually.”

A lot of emphasis is placed on a student’s education, when they come to college, but the other aspects of a person’s life directly influence their learning experience, Brewer said.

“You have an identity,” Brewer said. “You are unique. There are so many levels that make up you as a person.”

Brewer presented on physical, emotional, social, mental, spiritual and academic health. According to Brewer, one of the most important things a student can do to have a healthier lifestyle is self-care.

Self-care, which includes things like sleep, exercise and hobbies, is often over-

looked, Brewer said.

“Go outside,” Brewer said. “Do things that make you happy and feel good. It will decrease your stress level.”

The Center for Student Success has held six HU Hacks this semester and they are anticipating to host six or seven in the spring semester.

These sessions have been over topics like stress management, time management, technology, on-campus resources, learning styles, study tips and wellness.

Sixty-five students attended Tuesday’s event on wellness.

The topics are chosen based on what the Center for Student Success sees as the most necessary and helpful for the student body, Stephanie O’Brian, the director of academic resources, said.

“Working in the Center for Student Success, we see the areas where students struggle,” O’Brian said.

The Center for Student Success loves to help students discover the resources available to them or to let them know that they can get help, according to O’Brian.

“Getting a degree is not the only thing that is important,” O’Brian said. “We try to give (students) tips to simplify their academic area so they have time to focus on other things.”

HIP program continues despite recent attacks

By Savanna DiStefano
Features Editor

Students scheduled to study abroad in Paris next semester as part of the Harding University in Paris (HIP) program will leave at the end of January as planned, despite the terrorist attacks in the city on Friday, Nov. 13. Dr. Jeff Hopper, dean of international programs, said he is attentive to the safety of students studying overseas and the attacks did not frighten him.

“There’s a lot of concern, and I am just saddened when it goes to fear because that’s the exact desired result ... of the people who do these horrific horrible things,” Hopper said. “They want you to be afraid, and create as much disruption as possible. We can give them what they want or we can do what the writer John in the Bible said, ‘don’t fear’...”

Hopper said Lauren Bryan Knight, director of HIP, is in regular contact with the U.S. Embassy in Paris, regional security officers and Bruce Tully, Harding’s security consultant.

Tully, a federal law enforcement special agent, has experience with the U.S. Secret Service, White House and Foreign Mission Division.

He said he is in constant contact with several government agencies for international safety such as the U.S. Department of State, Overseas Advisory Council and Diplomatic Security Service for Threat Intelligence. He also uses information from western European government alerts and his personal network of former agents to evaluate international program locations and travel plans for safety.

“My concerns are as they were before the incident: we should expect terror cell actions as ISIS and others have told us they would do,” Tully said. “This is a worldwide threat and while no one should live in fear, we should all not be in denial and be prepared to protect ourselves.”

Hopper said all international students are required to undergo safety training before leaving, including watching videos and taking a test over safety and security material, of which a perfect score is required to spend the semester abroad.

“While we need to live our lives fully and with confidence, we cannot be in denial of not only terrorists, but common criminals who, as we know, are also about,” Tully said.

Sophomore Jenny Delgado will

attend HIP this spring. She said she first heard of the attacks on Paris from social media and stayed attentive for more information without making conclusions regarding plans for HIP.

“I was okay with whatever happened in terms of the study abroad trip (because) to me it was of secondary importance,” Delgado said. “Safety is important, but that was not the first concern for myself because I wasn’t there in the moment.”

Delgado said she is still excited to study abroad, and she is curious to learn how the attacks have affected Paris.

“I try not to think about all the little details about what could and could not happen; I just want to go,” Delgado said. “I don’t want to worry about things I don’t know or can’t really control.”

Tully advised students to be alert in all situations.

“Look out for each other and think like it is similar to defensive driving: you need to be aware and be prepared to react best to steer clear of danger,” Tully said. “Be a citizen of the world; read the news, be curious and observant. Please be confident and above all, refuse to be a victim.”

Check out thelink.harding.edu for exclusive web content including:

Chi Omega Pi vs. Zeta Rho Large Club A Team Basketball Game.

New American Sign Language class coming this spring.

Final column from international beat reporter Zach Burgan.

Faculty to ‘spin yarn’ tonight

Professors participate in storytelling event for senior capstone project

By Joshua Johnson
Opinions Editor

Tonight, Dec. 4, the Harding Department of Theatre will host an improvisational night of storytelling in the Freeman Center on the second floor of the Swaid and Christy Swaid Center for Health Sciences from 7-8 p.m. Created and organized by senior Jesse Hixson as a senior seminar capstone project for the Honors College, the event will feature communication professors Jim Miller, Jack Shock, Katie Ramirez and Steven Fry, English professor Michael Claxton, Dean of the College of Allied Health Bechie Weaver, and dean of the College of Pharmacy Julie Hixson-Wallace.

Hixson said that inspiration for the project came from this past winter when he was at his grandparents’ 50th wedding anniversary celebration, where

the entire family spent the day telling stories and enjoying each other’s company.

“I just remember it as being a really good day,” Hixson said. “It made me want to capture that feeling of sitting around a fire, telling stories, spending time together in a really simple way.”

According to Hixson, he chose the hosts for their likeable personalities and their reputations for being able to “spin a good yarn.”

“It will be an hour and 15 minutes of your favorite professors telling funny and emotional stories,” Hixson said.

Shock said he loves to tell stories and immediately said yes when Hixson asked him to be part of the event.

“After talking with (Hixson), I share his passion for reviving this art (of storytelling),” Shock said. “In the case of families

and other social units, it helps keep people alive, those we’ve lost — to tell their stories, to keep them a part of the family.”

Shock said that he is eager to see what memories his fellow storytellers and friends have in their “bag of tricks.”

“These are some very lively people,” Shock said, in regard to the group Hixson has assembled. “It will for sure add up to be an entertaining evening.”

The theme for the event is “Winter.” Hixson said this theme helps capture the mood of the event, which he hopes will be familial and cozy.

“It’s free of charge, you don’t have to wear an ugly Christmas sweater or anything, just come to the Freeman Center and enjoy a night of storytelling,” Hixson said. “You can even expect hot chocolate and maybe cider, too.”

Courtesy of Jesse Hixson

Thankfulness in the wake of terror

kaitlin plachy

guest
writer



from my home in Bourg-en-Bresse (250 miles south of Paris), I received a text from a friend that simply said, “Hey. There are shootings in Paris.” Over the next few hours, France and the world watched as the tragic details emerged surrounding the horrific “attentat” (attack) that had just shaken the whole country.

Within 24 hours, the world responded with powerful symbols of solidarity. Dozens of monuments around the world projected stunning displays of the colors of the French flag. Facebook feeds were covered with the iconic stripes of “bleu, blanc et rouge.” I showed a French colleague my Facebook friend list and she gasped at the huge number of profile pictures overlaid with the French flag. She couldn’t believe people so far away cared so much about the hurt that France felt.

My lesson prepared on the history and traditions of Thanksgiving was indeed put on hold as my students asked what I thought about Friday’s attacks. I told them what I remembered of Sept. 11th when I was 8 years old. A small boy sitting in the back raised his hand and sheepishly asked in French, “But will it happen again?” I showed the class a few pictures of cities around the world who

had illuminated monuments to show their support — including one of the bridges in downtown Little Rock. We talked about how our fears for the future cannot stop us from seeing the good all around us.

As we moved into our Thanksgiving lesson, I gave the students maple leaves to decorate and write what they were thankful for on. Many created multi-colored leaves and wrote that they were thankful for their friends, families and pets, but others chose to color their leaves to match the French flag and wrote things like “freedom,” “safety” and “French police.”

In this season of thankfulness, the support of the world brings hope and resolve to a country in mourning. While hand turkeys and candy corn may not assuage my students’ fears about the future, cultivating hearts of thankfulness can go a long way.

KAITLIN PLACHY is a Harding alumna and a guest writer for the Bison. She may be contacted at kplachy@harding.edu.

joshua johnson



don't mind me...

Science meets Adele

“Hello. It’s me.”

By now you’ve surely heard Adele’s hit single “Hello,” either on the radio or in the mall or through the speakers of the UFOs flying low over the Arkansas plains at night. It’s an inescapable part of being alive in 2015.

Adele is back. And her surgically repaired vocal chords are stronger and more vibrant than ever. “I’m in California dreaming about who we used to be.”

“Hello” is a heart-wrenching ballad that, for me, has the colloquial effect of sending “shivers down my spine.” An every day sensation, this feeling can also be referred to as “striking a nerve,” or simply getting “the chills.” Many of us have experienced it. But as I listened to Adele and felt the thousands of tiny insect feet shinnying down my back in an exotic massage evoked by only the most dramatic measures, I began to wonder what causes this neurological phenomenon.

So I did some research. Turns out that, back in 2008, a musicologist and professor at Ohio State University named David Huron did an extensive study on this very subject. Ultimately, his research led him to coin the term “music-evoked frisson” for the sensation of chills and gooseflesh, according to an article by Arielle Lasky, a writer for the Stanford News Service at Stanford University, where much of the research took place. However, Huron notes that music is not the only thing that produces this feeling, as a similar sensation can be evoked when someone runs fingernails on a chalkboard or pauses at the top of a roller coaster. This begs the question: how can feelings of discomfort and terror be so closely related to feelings of contentment and pleasure?

“Huron theorized that frisson, and other pleasurable feelings like it, are caused by ‘cortical inhibition of the amygdala,’ an area of the brain involved in fright,” Lasky said. “According to Huron, researchers have discovered that several of the frisson’s acoustic correlates — things that seem to induce the sensation in listeners — are fear-related. These correlates include rapidly large increases in the loudness of music, abrupt changes in tempo and rhythm, a broadening of frequencies and an increase in the number of sound sources, among other factors.”

Essentially, Huron’s research led him to believe that when we experience “the chills,” we are actually experiencing a fearful reaction to something unexpected, which then gives way to a pleasurable wash of relief, if you will, as the brain and heart rate relax into their equilibrium states. The instinctual “fight or flight” response subsides, leaving behind only the icy remnants of fear and anticipation.

So there you have it. Our beloved soul-pop singer/songwriter is back, and she is scaring us from the other side with her elicitation of “music-evoked frisson” in our auditory nerves.

Welcome back, Adele. And hello, science. How are you? It’s so typical of me to talk about myself, I’m sorry.

JOSHUA JOHNSON is the opinions editor for the Bison. He may be contacted at jjohnson4@harding.edu. Twitter: @joshjohnson146

FACES IN THE CROWD

“WHAT GETS YOU THROUGH FINALS WEEK?”

Stephen Carr
Sophomore

Joseph Berryman
Freshman

Hayden Nooner
Senior

Emily Peterson
Senior



“Priorities. It’s about keeping everything in order of importance.”

“Sleep.”

“I binge watch ‘Friends’ and wallow in self-pity.”

“Chocolate.”

What’s in a major?

meredith wood

guest
writer



to them. Bible major? You must be holier-than-thou and judgmental. Business major? Oh you must be power hungry and in it for the money. Education major? Do you even do anything besides color in class? Science major? You do know that lab work is pretty much the only kind of job you can get, right? As for me, I am a child life major. Someone once actually said to me, “Is that even a real major?” Regardless of your major, I am almost positive that you have gotten similar responses.

I plead us to stop. Stop guessing or assuming or labeling majors. Stop making these put-downs. Stop telling people their classes are a joke. In these situations, we need to embrace the differences. If there weren’t differences in people, we would all have the same job, and our society would fail. We need to acknowledge other people and the talents they possess. Every major has very difficult classes. Every major has something unique that others do not. Instead of tearing down these differences, we should support each other in the difficult days. We should lift others up and respect that they have special talents that we do not have. A community of support can withstand so much more than a community of scrutiny. God made us all different so we could

do His will according to our individual, unique set of skills.

Bible majors will help heal the broken and show them the truth of God. Business majors will help our families during financial crises. Education majors teach our children to become incredible adults who will change the world. Science majors help develop cures and medicines and help us understand why God made this intricate world the way He did. And as for child life majors? We are here to hold the hand of children and their families as they go through difficult illnesses and losses. Each major, each job, each person, can do incredible things for the kingdom, no matter where we are placed.

You can judge other majors by what you think you see on the outside, but I just hope that you stop and take the time to truly see why each person is dedicating his or her life to that field of study. Many times, you will hear a beautiful reason and an immovable passion comes through. With each unique person is a special plan set into this world by our God. So, why not just ask?

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zach hailey

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More than a gift giver

We are all getting ready for the holidays as Christmas shopping and present wrapping ensues. Everyone knows the robust man with the red coat and the beard. But is there a back story to our jolly friend?

Saint Nicholas was born March 15, 270, and was a fourth-century Christian in Myra — a city in Asia Minor. He is depicted in multiple ways, some showing him with a long flowing beard — others with a more trimmed beard. Either way, from what legends and folklore tell us about this man, we know he did a lot more than just deliver presents.

Nicholas was known to be a man of powerful prayer and humility, as he always credited God with any glory. One particular story says that during a famine, a butcher lured three young boys into his shop, chopped them up into pieces and put the children in a barrel to cure. The butcher planned to sell them off as ham. Nicholas, who saw the whole thing, ran over to the barrel and began to pray over the children's remains. Miraculously, the three boys came back to life through the power of Nicholas' prayer. (He then allegedly reached in his sack and gave each one a new video game.)

Another story tells of three young women who were too poor to have dowries, meaning they would most likely be forced into prostitution, or at the very best, be single for the rest of their lives. Nicholas took pity on them, but still wanted to allow them to keep their dignity — for it wasn't honorable to accept handouts. In the middle of the night, while not a creature was stirring, our crimson Christian tossed three bags of gold into their window, providing enough for them to have bright futures.

One more story is a little more biblical in nature. During the same famine mentioned in the earlier story, Nicholas stopped a ship delivering grain to a nearby port. Nicholas asked the men on the boat to unload a portion of the grain to give to the needy folk in the area. The sailors on the ship, probably raising an unbelieving eyebrow at the rosy-cheeked man, were not thrilled at the idea, for the boats were weighed to make sure the voyage from port to port were fair. Nicholas then presumably let out a belly laugh and then said that no weight would be changed. So reluctantly, the men agreed — sure enough, although they had unloaded a significant amount of grain, not a pound was decreased from the boat when weighed.

Our man Saint Nicholas was a giver, but was also a short-tempered old elf. Legend says that during a debate between Nicholas and Arius at the Counsel of Nicaea, Arius, a local dummy, said that Jesus was a created being, quoting John 1, where the Gospel speaks of the Word becoming flesh. Nicholas, probably sick and tired of arguing with a counsel member walked over to Arius and simply punched him to the ground. (All other counsel members then bought T-shirts after the match and asked for Nicholas signature.)

I love stories — and they very well may be just stories — of individuals who stood up for the weak and helpless, but always chose to give the glory back to God. Nowadays, it seems that a good deed that is done for glory isn't necessarily a good deed. Nicholas lived in a way that brought glory to only God, not for himself. There is nothing more powerful than a God-fearing saint with a strong right-hook.

ZACH HAILEY is the editor-in-chief for the Bison. He may be contacted at zhailey@harding.edu. Twitter: @zach_hailey

At the Bison, it is our goal to serve the Harding University student body with integrity, truth and open ears. However, we believe that meeting that goal is a two-way street between our staff and the public it serves. We pledge to keep our eyes and ears open to what our community has to say and hope that, in return, that community will be an interactive audience, sharing its stories with us. We also pledge to do the basics: Report accurate and relevant information, check our facts, and share them in a professional, timely manner. If you have any story ideas, questions, comments or concerns for the Bison staff, please email Zach Hailey, the editor-in-chief, at zhailey@harding.edu. "The Bison" (USPS 577-660) is published weekly (except vacations, exams and summer sessions), 20 issues per year, by Harding University. Periodicals postage paid at Searcy, Arkansas 72143. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Bison, Harding University 11192, SEARCY, AR 72149-0001." BYLINE POLICY: The Bison provides an opportunity for class writers to contribute work under the byline "guest writers." Due to this arrangement, staff writers may rewrite a portion of the guest writers' stories as they deem necessary, while still identifying the work as the guest writers' own.

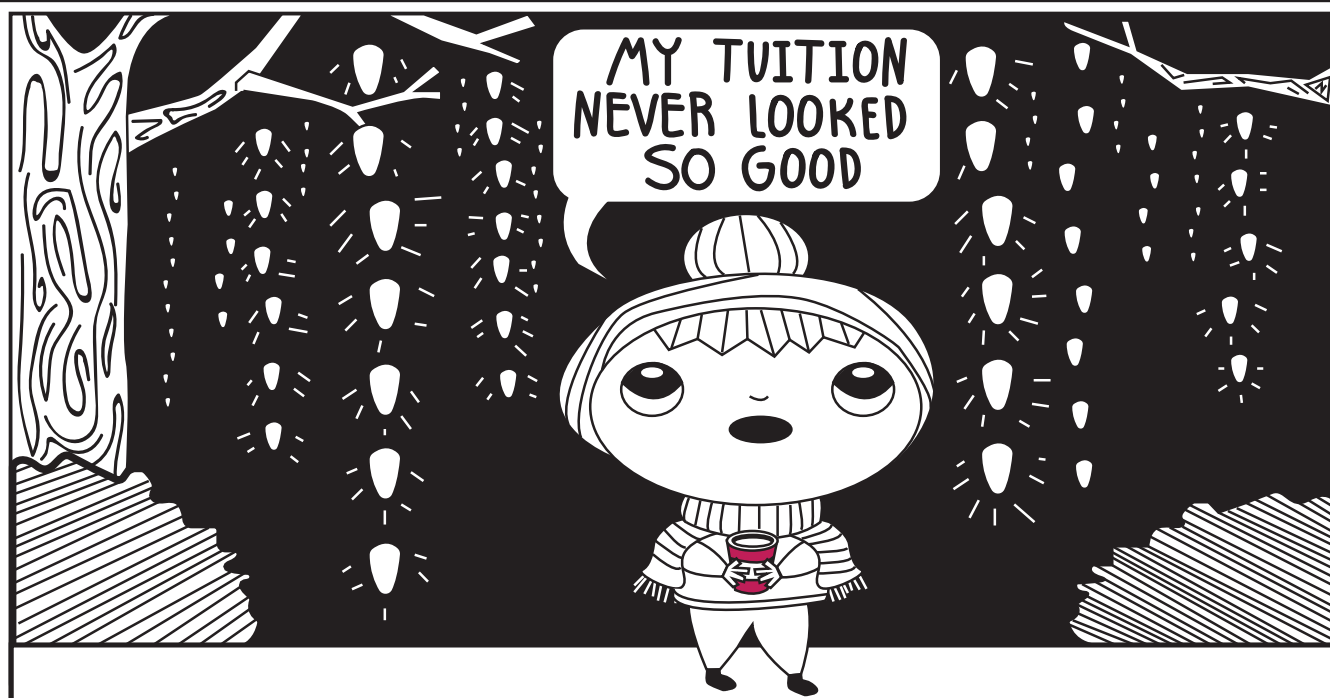


Illustration by RACHEL GIBSON

The most wonderful finals week of the year

dane roper

guest writer



It's the most wonderful time of the year. The front lawn glistens with thousands of lights, and buildings around campus gleam with decorations that spread holiday cheer. While holiday decorations plaster campus with Christmas spirit, my fear is that Harding's student body faces a much darker mental state than the decorations suggest.

The days following Thanksgiving break are filled with due dates, exams and final presentations. If you're anything like me, you spent Thanksgiving break grasping for a true moment of rest that eluded you because of your constant anxiety about the deadlines that would inevitably come when you returned to school. One thing I've learned after four years of Thanksgiving breaks: true rest does not exist during Thanksgiving break.

So, while campus certainly boasts an impressive holiday atmosphere, I probably won't be enjoying it much before the close of the

semester. I believe this is only one of the many signs of the toll that college life takes on the mental wellness of college students.

In April 2014, USA Today published an article titled "Students flood college counseling offices." This article suggested a reality that scholastic research is backing up: college campus counselors are facing record highs in their number of clients, and these students come with more serious problems than ever before. The conclusion that I draw from this article: college students are messed up.

We're messed up, but no one seems to be talking about it. Stress, anxiety and depression are leaders in mental health disorders among college students, and these disorders make their way into the classroom in one way or another. In a presentation published by the counseling center at the University of South Florida, for example, the counseling center concluded that eight of the top 10 academic impediments are mental health related.

Clearly, there is something about the college atmosphere that stifles our efforts to live a mentally healthy lifestyle. Students and professors alike will admit to the tangible drop in motivation and energy as the burdens of each semester press on, particularly after Thanksgiving break. Project deadlines mixed with the pressure of performance and its effect on our futures certainly doesn't help put us in

a mentally healthy state.

I'm not suggesting that we need to rethink the educational system — deadlines and exams are inevitable. I do think, however, that the minefield of mental hardships that the college experience fosters is worth bringing to light.

What can be done about these mental hardships? The most important thing is that we talk about them. We, as students, must overcome our fear of sharing our struggles with others. Harding offers a counseling center that is filled with faith-driven counselors waiting to walk you through the stress and anxiety that are so common to the college experience.

Not only that, but we have the incredible opportunity to be in community with other Christians at every turn on campus. Whether it's your roommate or a faculty mentor, find other people that can step into your hardships with you and speak truth and encouragement into your life.

With a community that is ready to surround you in your times of struggle, perhaps you can walk through these last couple weeks with a bit more Christmas cheer in your heart. After all, it is the most wonderful time of the year.

DANE ROPER is a student writer for the Bison. He may be contacted at droper3@harding.edu.

Interested in writing a guest column?
Contact Joshua Johnson at jjohnson4@harding.edu.

Just the Clax

Last week an alert reader sent me a link to some breaking news from "The Onion," that peerless source of fake journalism that has given us such headlines as "CIA Realizes It's Been Using Black Highlighters All These Years," "Winner Didn't Even Know It Was a Pie-Eating Contest" and "Rural Nebraskan Not Sure He Can Handle Frantic Pace of Omaha." Famed for its pseudo stories and dead-on parodies of newspaper jargon, "The Onion" has been cracking wise for over 25 years.

But sometimes the mockery hits a little too close to home. A link was sent to me last week by someone who may be spending too much time messing around on the Internet. Anyway, here's the headline: "Toyota Recalls 1993 Camry Due to the Fact that Owners Really Should Have Bought Something New by Now." The article quotes a Toyota spokesperson explaining the recall: "We understand that the 1993 Camry was tremendously dependable, but honestly, there's no excuse for driving a 22-year-old car at this point."

I drive a 1997 Toyota Camry, though I want to be clear that I have only owned this particular vehicle since 1999. So it will be at least another eight years before I can in any way be implicated in the satire of this spurious recall. Just because my car takes a little extra time to warm up even in the summer, and just because a wise guy once rolled down his window at a stop light and asked how I was enjoying my Model T — does not mean that my car is out of date.

I still remember the day my 1986 Oldsmobile Cutlass Ciera finally gave up the ghost. It had been more-or-less reliable through my college days, even though the interior ceiling fabric was drooping onto my head, and despite the fact that it once

Let's go places

michael claxton



left a 300-foot trail of transmission fluid on the campus of Oglethorpe University that is still visible to this day. But when my Ciera finally handed in her notice in the spring of '99 at the corner of Franklin Street and Columbia in Chapel Hill, a tow truck took us both straight to Toyota of Durham.

The salesman's name was Ian. I know this because I still have the letter he sent me after I bought my two-year-old Camry from him. He was an Englishman, and since I was working on my Ph.D. in English literature, no doubt his accent helped close the deal. I wonder what he would think if he knew I was still driving the car he sold me during the Clinton years. Somehow, I suspect his sentiments would be rather close to those expressed in the "Onion" article.

But my Camry and I have been through a lot together. We've traveled all over the country, from Atlanta to Dallas to Los Angeles to Chicago to Detroit. We've been to the Grand Canyon, the Blue Ridge Mountains and to almost 200 Cracker Barrel restaurants.

We survived a timing belt that split in half on Interstate 85 in Greensboro. We made it through a broken ignition switch in Birmingham. We blew a tire on the way to Yackinville. We caused a slight dent to a parked vehicle at UNC, but we left a nice

note with hardly any misspellings.

The paint on her hood may be peeling, her cassette deck may no longer play and she may still be rusty in spots (by the way, we're still talking about my car). She may have over 265,000 miles to her credit, but I have no plans for trading in my Toyota anytime soon. I read once that the average age of U.S. cars is 11.5 years, so I look at my vehicle as just one of many ways in which I'm beating the national average.

I'm sure the 2015 Toyota Camry is a sleek model. I'm sure it's loaded with impressive features and horsepower and whatnot. But does it have a driver's-side floor-mat worn to just my foot shape? Does it have the remnants of a UNC parking sticker that peels off another centimeter each year? Does it have the quirky turn signal that sounds like an old typewriter? I think not.

My friend Shane Fullerton loves to tell the story about his first Toyota. He said he bought it when he was a teenager and couldn't wait to tell his grandmother about it. "Hey Granny," he shouted when he called her on the phone, "I got me a new Camry!"

"Well, bless your heart," she said. "Does it take good pitchers?"

I'm keeping my car as long as possible, even if I get my own "Onion" headline: "Cheapskate Professor Ignores Recall, Keeps Driving Clunker, Blames Smoke from Hood on Arkansas Humidity." Incidentally, as this article was going to press, the door handle came off.

MICHAEL CLAXTON is a guest writer for the Bison. He may be contacted at mclaxto1@harding.edu.

david salley

Salley
Says

Lady Bisons start strong away from home

By Kaleb Turner
Editorial Asst.

With a winning record of 3-2 so far this season, head coach Tim Kirby said the Lady Bison basketball team has had a great start to the season, with two of its three wins against conference teams on the road.

"We're excited about how our conference got started," Kirby said. "Anytime you win games on the road, you're very pleased with that. We went to Oklahoma with a really good mindset and saw some very positive things."

Kirby said the two losses they took came against two teams who will easily make an appearance in the NCAA

tournament. One loss was a buzzer-beater, and the other a tight game with a couple of missed plays that could have sealed the victory for the Lady Bisons, according to Kirby.

Junior guard Andi Haney echoed Kirby's thoughts that although the team has faced two losses thus far, they have been two winnable games. Haney said it is important for the team to focus on learning from those games to improve as the season progresses.

"We are a young team, so sometimes it's easy to just get away with mistakes when you win," Haney said. "The girls have responded

well to the losses and we have grown in our game. I really like how well the team is growing together in chemistry to work the kinks out, which is encouraging for the rest of the season."

Sophomore guard Landon Williams said that becoming better each day is one step in continuing to improve and preparing for the coming games.

"Our goal everyday is to build on the positive things that occurred the previous day," Williams said. "We focus on preparing our mind and body to be in the best condition possible each day. Never being satisfied is a big factor, and realizing

there is always room for improvement is important."

Kirby said that with the season still in its early stages, the young team, with nine out of the 12 players being underclassmen, has to focus on developing depth. He commended the players on their competition level, especially the upperclassmen that Kirby said know how to compete and deal with tough situations on and off the court.

"Our individual skills and mentality need to get better, but if you just look at our needs right now, it's the need to develop some depth," Kirby said. "We've got to develop depth that

will allow us to deal with adversity during our games."

With two games left in 2015 and two weeks before the players head to winter break, Kirby said another big focus of the team will be to stay conditioned over the break and use the two weeks to accomplish some of the short term goals set out for the team.

The Lady Bisons took on Southern Nazarene University on Thursday, Dec. 3. Scores were not available at the time of print. The Lady Bisons play Oklahoma Baptist University on Saturday, Dec. 5, at 1 p.m. in the Rhodes-Reaves Fieldhouse.

Timeline of an FCS loss

Noon— I turn on the radio as my family, my girlfriend and I drive to Gatlinburg, Tennessee, for Thanksgiving. The signal is strong. This is a good sign, but after all, South Carolina is playing the Citadel and we aren't going to lose.

12:05 p.m. — We go three-and-out immediately. Swell. The Citadel scores on its second play. 7-0, them. I remind everyone in the car that we are terrible. Dad does the same.

12:20 p.m. — We settle for a field goal. 7-3. I am annoyed. The signal on the radio goes out. We switch stations. It's the Citadel station. Fantastic.

12:45 p.m. — They score another touchdown. 14-3. Dad remarks that he thinks their tailback (who just scored) played against me in our tiny, private high school league back in the day. I check their web page. He's right. Cool.

1:10 p.m. — We kick another two field goals (because of course we do) and trail 14-9 at the half. I try to laugh off the situation, but everyone in the car senses by the tone of my voice that I don't think it is funny.

1:55 p.m. — We finally score, mainly from sheer dumb luck, but we all agree that we will take it. We lead 16-14. Radio signal ceases to exist as we enter the mountains. Twitter becomes our main informant.

2:15 p.m. — It is officially the fourth quarter. The game is too close for my liking. Twitter is spotty, which matches our offense.

2:30 p.m. — They kick a field goal and lead 17-16. I ask everyone in the car if this garbage is a joke. Tension is palpable. I am officially worried.

2:43 p.m. — We score again. I thank God several times. We then miss the two-point conversion. 22-17, us. I'm annoyed again, but they'll fade now.

2:45 p.m. — They don't fade, they score. 23-22, Citadel. I remind everyone that I don't care anymore and that I hate my life. I go back to madly refreshing Twitter (because secretly I do care).

3:00 p.m. — 4th and 1. We go for it. We don't get it. Is this really happening? The realization begins to set in. We're going to lose to the Citadel. I'm frightening the other passengers.

3:12 p.m. — We somehow get the ball back. Maybe we won't lose, I tell the car.

3:15 p.m. — It's already fourth down. I tell the car that we are, in fact, going to lose.

3:15 p.m. — We score a miracle 90-yard touchdown.

3:15 p.m. — It gets called back for holding. Dad laughs. I bury my face in my pillow. My life moves in slow motion momentarily as colors fade and time stops. We are going to lose to the Citadel.

3:16 p.m. — We lose to the Citadel.

DAVID SALLEY is the sports editor for the 2015 Bison. He may be contacted at dsalley@harding.edu. Twitter: @dsalley24

Bisons split first road games



GRANT SCHOL | THE BISON

Junior guard Will Francis sizes up a defender during the Bisons 86-70 win over the University of Arkansas-Monticello on January 24, 2015. The Bisons' next home game is tomorrow against Ouachita Baptist University at 3 p.m. in the Rhodes-Reaves Fieldhouse.

By Caleb Rowan
Asst. Sports Editor

The men's basketball team split its first two conference games over the break, defeating Northwestern Oklahoma State University (NWOSU) 82-63 on Nov. 19, in Alva, Oklahoma, and falling to Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU) 81-76 on Nov. 21, in Weatherford, Oklahoma.

Head coach Jeff Morgan said he was proud of the way the team played, despite losing one of two.

"Obviously you love to go get two wins on the road, but getting the split was good

for our team," Morgan said. "I think we showed a great spirit of togetherness and to get that first conference game on the road was huge."

The Bisons were led in both games by senior forward Andraz Kavas, who is averaging 26.4 points per game this season, but Morgan stressed the importance of getting outside shooters involved offensively.

"(Kavas) carries a big load for us scoring and he's shot the ball great to start the year," Morgan said.

"He knows he's going to be the focus of other teams' defensive strategies and

that's why it's going to be really important for the rest of our team to knock down open shots when they get the opportunity."

Senior guard Blake McNair was 5-9 from the three-point line against NWOSU, the most three-pointers made by a Harding player this year. He, along with senior guard John Hudson and junior guard Will Francis, led the Bisons' three-point attack last season, each shooting over .400 from behind the arc.

According to senior guard Jacob Gibson, the team's second leading scorer in 2013-14, each player's role

is important, especially on the road.

"I think we get a lot of different contributions from different people making plays," Gibson said. "We want to keep improving and be at the top of our game, and the rest will take care of itself."

The Bisons, sitting at 1-1 in Great American Conference play, will next host back-to-back home conference games against Southern Nazarene University (SNU) and Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU). Morgan said the team is excited to be back at home

but understands the challenge it will face.

"When we talk about putting ourselves in position to win a conference championship, we always talk about how we have to win at home," Morgan said. "We have a great appreciation for how tough this league is, so it'll be a great challenge."

Harding took on SNU on Thursday, Dec. 3, in its first home conference game. The score was not available by press time. The Bisons will battle OBU on Saturday, Dec. 5, at 3 p.m. at the Rhodes-Reaves Fieldhouse.

Jon Ireland hired as men's soccer coach

By David Salley
Sports Editor

The men's soccer team has a new head man.

Following the resignation of former head coach Odie Guzman after the conclusion of the fall season, the Bisons needed a new head coach. They found their man in alumnus and former York College head coach, Jon Ireland.

"It is hard to put into words how excited I am to be coming home," Ireland said. "Being able to have the opportunity to come back and coach 15 years after playing on the first Harding team is special. I

come from a family with seven kids and six of us played here at Harding, so it means a lot."

Ireland was a member of the first men's soccer team at Harding from 2000-02. An All-Gulf South Conference selection in 2002, Ireland said that he has fond memories of the positive energy around the program at that time and hopes to recapture that passion as he takes the reins.

"I just remember the excitement when we first started the program and how we had an awesome atmosphere at games," Ireland said. "We had a lot

of community and student support, and I hope to continue to create a buzz about Harding men's soccer again."

Creating buzz and excitement is something that Ireland certainly knows about. Ireland has been successful in his previous head coaching stops at Faulkner University, Lipscomb University and York College. He led Faulkner's women's team to its first winning season and postseason berth in 2006-07, left Lipscomb's women's program as the all-time leader in wins in 2011, and then resurrected York's men's team, leading them to the postseason the

last two years, including its first winning season in 13 years.

The success of its new coach is a welcome sign for the men's team, which has yet to have a winning season in its 15-year history. Despite the lack of winning tradition, Ireland said he feels well-equipped to change the culture of the program, but will ultimately put his trust in God.

"Everywhere I've been the soccer program has been at the bottom when I first arrived," Ireland said. "I have been very blessed, because I know that God has been with me every

step of the way. I work very hard at building successful programs, but I understand first and foremost God has done it all. My formula is very simple: work hard and leave the rest to Him."

Ireland said he knows that it will not be an easy path to the top, but that his message to the team from the beginning will be to believe they can win and to always aim for the top.

"The team slogan we will use this year will be 'dream big,'" Ireland said. "Everything starts with a dream or vision and that is key in creating hope for the program."



Screenshot of "Fallout 4"

The "Fallout 4" character creator is one of the most extensive to date. It is simple to recreate anyone, even Michael Claxton.

Adele brings variety in '25'

By Phoebe Cunningham
Asst. Copy Editor

Our girl Adele is at it again with the release of her album titled "25." Adele has reportedly referred to her newest work as a "make-up record" as opposed to previous albums with mostly breakup-style songs. The 11-song album includes positive reflections of past relationships as well as songs of sweet declarations of love and devotion.

The album begins with "Hello," the song that broke the Internet in late October as the first single debut of Adele's comeback album. "Hello" is a beautiful ballad that we have all heard and love already.

"Send My Love (To Your New Lover)" is an upbeat pop song that serves as a way to say goodbye to an old flame. She says "treat her better/ We gotta let go of all of our ghosts/ We both know we ain't kids no more" as if she is giving permission for the relationship to be over.

"I Miss You" encompasses the longing for a person she loves deeply. The opening stanza "I want every single piece of you/ I want your heaven and your oceans too" is a confession of true devotion and desire.

My favorite songs on the album are conveniently back-to-back tracks titled "Remedy" and "Water Under the Bridge." "Remedy" is a beautiful ballad to a loved one — significant other, family member or friend — telling that person when everything goes wrong, Adele will be there to fix what's broken. To hear Adele passionately sing "when the pain cuts you deep/ when the night keeps you from sleeping/ just look and you will see/ that I will be your remedy" gives hope to a struggling soul.

"Water Under the Bridge" seems to me to be a very real conversation many people have in a relationship; the lyrics ask the age-old question: "Is it meant to be?" Adele asks "and if I'm not the one for you/ you've gotta stop holding me the way you do/ why if I'm not the one for you/ why have we been through what we have been through." If the choice is made to end the relationship, Adele pleads "if you're gonna let me down, let me down gently/ don't pretend that you don't want me/ our love ain't water under the bridge."

The album includes a song titled "River Lea" about growing up near the River Lea in Tottenham, London, England. The songs "Love in the Dark" and "All I Ask" are both goodbye songs to lovers that depict two distinctly different reflections.

Adele's "25" concludes with an inspiring song for her son titled "Sweetest Devotion." The love and devotion she has for her son is so apparent in the lyrics of the final ballad. She sings that he was the only one she never looked for but now he is the only one she will eternally be devoted to. Cue the happy tears.

Adele's ability to write a powerful ballad is undeniable; she takes what we all feel and writes a catchy chorus.

Adele's album brings all the feels. Whether you have experienced a great love, a great breakup or just watched a lot of romantic movies, "25" presents all the emotions you have felt in lyrical form. Adele is our girl because she's relatable; she knows longing, heartache, desire, hope and joy. Kudos to her for the new album; the \$12 was worth it.

Once again, war never changes: 'Fallout 4' explodes

By Zach Hailey
Editor-in-Chief

It has been a long time since Bethesda Softworks decided to open up the vault holding one of the crown jewels of the company: "Fallout." In 2010, Bethesda released "Fallout: New Vegas" to help tie over players until the release of "Fallout 4" in 2015 — and boy, was it worth the wait.

Bethesda did all they could to keep the big reveal of "Fallout 4" a secret by registering the title in Europe in a foreign language. As soon as the game was announced, the company released a trailer shortly after and reported that the game was nearly finished. With more than 111,000 lines of spoken dialogue, the game took several years to create, but the company did its best to keep media off of the game. Now, "Fallout 4" is one of the hottest holiday items of the year, and for good reason.

The game begins in the year 2277. For once, we get to see the future in the Fallout universe before the rain of atomic bombs that threw the world into an apocalyptic wasteland — and it's beautiful. Although several hundred years in the future, the game portrays what the world would look like if science focused more on warfare from the 1960s instead of advancements in household technology. Instead of iPhones, a landline fills every home. However, robot butlers have been engineered to aid families in U.S.

After a brief experience in the beautiful 60s environment, news breaks over the television that bombs have been dropped in two major U.S. cities. Alarms begin to sound in the quaint neighborhood as you, the player, do your best to guide your in-game spouse and child to a "vault" — an underground living quarters built to withstand atomic warfare.

As you and your family begin the decent into the vault, you barely avoid

an atomic bomb explosion. Once inside, you are led to a "detox" chamber that — spoiler alert — isn't a detox chamber. You and your family are frozen in ice until two people arrive to unfreeze your wife and child, but leave you frozen. After your baby is stolen, you are released after being frozen by unknown causes, and you leave the vault with a drive to find your baby boy.

The mechanics of the game include everything from the previous installments, with improved fluidity. The graphics for PC, PS4 and Xbox One editions are simply stunning. The vastness of the wasteland will draw you in just like it always has. One difference that separates "Fallout 4" from the previous games is the spoken dialogue of the main character. Previous Fallouts have only provided text choices for the main character's responses, but now the player chooses a short synopsis of what could be said in conversation and then listen to the character speak a full response.

This is the only negative I saw in the game. Bethesda has always found a way to combine intense gameplay with dark humor, and from my experience playing, there is a lack of role-playing that the franchise is famous for. Some responses always lead to the same outcome, which seems unfair and takes away from the player's ability to craft his or her own character's story.

Choosing whether to brave the wasteland alone or with a companion is also a choice that players must make. Accepting help along the way would not be a bad, however, players seeking a challenge will likely dismiss all aid. The Fallout franchise has a way of bringing out the survival instinct of players, and "Fallout 4" is no exception. With hundreds of hours of play and exploration, complete side missions and the opportunity to meet thousands of in-game characters, "Fallout 4" lands a 9/10.

Top 10 Christmas songs to get you in the holiday spirit

By Nate Ramirez
Guest Writer

This holiday season is my favorite time of the year and if you are like me you may have even been listening before the Thanksgiving break. Because we are in full Christmas music swing, I thought it appropriate to give my 10 favorite holiday songs for you to enjoy.

1. "White Christmas," Bing Crosby - 1942

It was hard to choose between this song and my second choice, but this wins with a slight edge. This song was released a year after the U.S. entered World War II and was a regular request throughout the rest of the war. Bing reprised the song in the 1954 musical "White Christmas." Crosby is one of my favorite artists and his

silky smooth voice really delivers in this classic.

2. "The Christmas Song," Nat King Cole - 1946

Originally performed by Nat King Cole in 1946, the most popular and beloved version was recorded in 1961 "The Christmas Song" is a must in my musical rotation during the Christmas season. As soon as you hear the violins come in with the first note, you can settle in and prepare to sing along to one of the most beloved holiday songs of all time.

3. "Merry Christmas Darling," The Carpenters - 1978

Karen Carpenter's alto voice serenades you as she takes you on a journey wishing her darling a merry Christmas. It reminds me that after all the hustle and bustle of the holiday

season, we need to take the time to savor and enjoy the company of our friends and loved ones.

4. "It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas," Johnny Mathis - 1992

Every time I hear this song it reminds me of the scene in "Home Alone 2" where Kevin is heading out into the city of New York for the day. It makes me feel all happy inside.

5. "Angels We Have Heard on High," Josh Groban with Brian McKnight - 2007

Josh Groban and Brian McKnight do a wonderful job combining the classic version of Groban's voice with the more modern sound of McKnight's. A close second to this version is Michael W Smith's from his 1989 album "Christmas".

6. "All Is Well," Michael W. Smith featuring Carrie Underwood - 2014

I have to give my father-in-law credit with turning me onto this song. Michael W. Smith's accompaniment along with the powerful vocals of Carrie Underwood will give you chills. It is a simply-worded song but very moving in its message about the birth of Christ.

7. "Christmas Time is Here," - Vince Guaraldi Trio - 1965

Introduced during "A Charlie Brown Christmas" special that first aired in 1965, the soft melody throughout this song makes for some easy listening. If you have the time, check out the rest of the album. Guaraldi's trio does a fantastic job of bringing jazz into the holiday season.

8. "Feliz Navidad," Jose Feliciano - 1970

"Feliz Navidad" has become a staple throughout the holiday season and is enjoyed by millions all over the world.

9. "All I Want for Christmas," Mariah Carey - 1994

Despite what she sounded like last year during her live performance, Mariah Carey's original recording of "All I Want for Christmas" has now become a classic. Growing up with two sisters, this song was played a number of times during our Christmas celebrations, and I attribute this song being on this list to them.

10. "If Every Day Was Like Christmas," Elvis Presley - 1957

It doesn't get much smoother than Elvis' this version of "If Every Day Was Like Christmas." Starting off quiet and building to a big leading up to the chorus, this song is not one you hear to often, but it's a nice little treat when you do.

'Mockingjay - Part 2' brings stunning visuals, full resolve

By Jordan Doyle
Beat Reporter

With the release of "The Hunger Games - Mockingjay Part 2," franchise fans everywhere put three fingers to their lips and kissed the series goodbye. After four movies over the course of three and a half years, the series concluded with all loose ends tied up and no unanswered questions. Apart from some scenes that made the storyline a bit scattered, this movie had the best technical aspects of the series, which is what made it enjoyable.

The movie picks up almost right where the last one left off, with Katniss being examined by a doctor after Peeta attacks her. The rest of the movie depicts the heroine leading the rebellion against Panem's dictator, President Snow. During this time, con-

flict arises from two sources: Snow's sadistic retaliation and Peeta's conflicting thoughts about Katniss.

The random excerpts of dialogue about Peeta's thoughts on the rebellion, being brainwashed and his feelings about Katniss were the main reason the storyline was not fully satisfying. These conversations were forced into the movie during the most inconvenient times. Romantic discussions about love and life are nice; just not when characters decide to stop running away from chasing gunmen to have them.

Though talks of love in the midst of bullets and fire were distracting, at least it can be said that the fire itself was not distracting. This was the first "Hunger Games" installment in which the special effects were not noticeably fake. Whether

it was when thick, black oil started pouring into a city center, or when people were attacked by eyeless, earless, gray, slimy creatures with sharp vampire-like teeth, the special effects were top-notch. All of the realistic-looking effects in this movie made up for the overly obvious fake effects in the last three.

What is lacking in the story's structure is made up for in the technical aspects of the film, even during the credits. Jennifer Lawrence sings "Deep in the Meadow," an acapella song that has not been sung since the first movie, when Katniss comforts Prim and when Rue dies. The song reminds audience members that the end of an era has come. Just like when it was sung in the first movie, it gives listeners a quiet, melodic comfort in the midst of that knowledge.



Courtesy of Lionsgate Publicity



Operation Christmas Child shares the message of Christ through a shoebox

By Savanna DiStefano
Features Editor

In the small town of El Llano in Hidalgo, Mexico, family photos are displayed on a handmade wooden table. Senior Juan Paredes Vera scanned the pictures during one of his weekly visits to the home, and he was drawn to a photograph of a Caucasian family amidst the array of tan faces.

Vera, a Mexico City native, was then in his sophomore year at Harding and easily recognized the stairs from the lobby of the David B. Burks American Heritage Building in the backdrop of the portrait. He turned over the photograph and read a note indicating the family pictured attended The River church in Judsonia, Arkansas.

The family from Mexico received the photo in a shoebox from Operation Christmas Child (OCC), a project through the Samaritan's Purse, a Christian humanitarian organization. The project collects boxes packed with toys and necessities and distributes them for Christmas to children in more than 100 countries according to the Samaritan's Purse website.

Vera handed out boxes to the family a week prior to discovering the photograph.

"I don't think it was a coincidence, I think it was God," Vera said. "I gave that box, and I study here, and I go to that church ... And that really touched me."

Vera works with La Casa de Dios la Buena Tierra (The House of God the Good Earth), an organization in

Mexico City that ministers to families in three underdeveloped towns about two hours outside Mexico City. The group of approximately 12 people visit the towns every Saturday and tends to physical and spiritual needs. The organization receives OCC boxes and gives them to the children for Christmas.

"Every time you give a box, it's an amazing experience because those kids just live to work," Vera said. "They don't play anymore; they don't do kid stuff anymore because they have to work in order to survive ... Most of them start to cry, and it's just simple stuff that we can get easily in Wal-mart or wherever, and it's a big deal for them."

Sophomore Savannah Donnell is a member of The River church and has been packing boxes since elementary school. She provided and collected OCC boxes on campus last month to help students get involved.

"I really do believe in this ministry in that if you can change the life of a child, a door opens up to the family and (a door) opens up to the community," Donnell said. "(OCC is) giving a gift to a child you may never meet, but you can make a big difference in their life."

Sophomore Michelle Troeglen Balmaceda, a student from Guanajuato, Mexico, said she packed an OCC box this year because she received one from her church when she was 12.

"When I found out that I can do it here, it was amazing and a great way to give back, so I filled a box this

year and I really liked it," Balmaceda said. "I received one and I feel it was a blessing for me and for my family, so I wanted to do it for someone else."

Balmaceda said she remembers receiving a toothbrush, a coloring book with crayons, toys and candy. She said she also liked the plastic container it came in and believes she still has some of the items at home.

"It was cool to know that someone was thinking about me," Balmaceda said. "It was from another place in the world, and they cared about me and my church."

Vera said families understand they are cared for when receiving OCC packages and are more receptive to hearing the message of Christ. He said OCC is a pathway to teach the Bible to people in the communities La Casa de Dios la Buena Tierra ministers to.

Vera said he has developed many personal relationships through the ministry. He plans to return home after graduation and build a ranch where children can earn income and develop a mentality for achieving productive goals.

A colorful booklet in the native language is included in the boxes given to the children. The national collection date for boxes was Nov. 23, though shoeboxes can still be built virtually at samaritanspurse.org year round.

"All of that starts with one shoe box full of toys," Vera said. "That's Operation Christmas Child for me – to open up the doors for people like me who really are trying to help."



COURTESY OF SAMARITAN'S PURSE

Children in Mexico receive an Operation Christmas Child shoebox. Boxes are packed by people across the world and distributed to children in more than 100 countries. Each box includes a colorful booklet containing the message of Jesus.

Students produce short film for festival

Junior Matt Rice and Senior Ethan Sneed write, cast and direct horror video to premiere at film festival

By Garrett Howard
Student Writer

Two Harding students are producing a passion project: a short, psychological horror film, "Vestige," which they hope to premiere at a film festival.

According to junior Matt Rice, who is writing and directing the film, the idea to make a short film was conceived last year, but he did not have the resources to make it happen at the time.

"I met up with my soon-to-be director of photography, (senior) Ethan Sneed, and showed him my script," Rice said. "We are both in a screenwriting class together, and when I showed him what I had written he was on board immediately."

Sneed said he fell in love with the idea as soon as he read the script.

"What I've heard from other filmmakers is that you know a script is good if when you finish reading it, you think, 'Why didn't I think of that?'" Sneed said.

"And that is exactly what happened to me."

According to Sneed, the premise of the film is essentially Christopher Nolan's "Memento" meets Stanley Kubrick's "The Shining." A man awakens in a room with no knowledge of any previous events, save the fact that he has a wife and needs to find her. Ominous writing is sketched into the walls of the room, warning the man of a dark force pursuing him, while he struggles in the search to relocate his memories and his wife.

The film is currently at the end of the pre-production stage. Rice and Sneed recently held auditions for the lead role, with 16 students auditioning for the part.

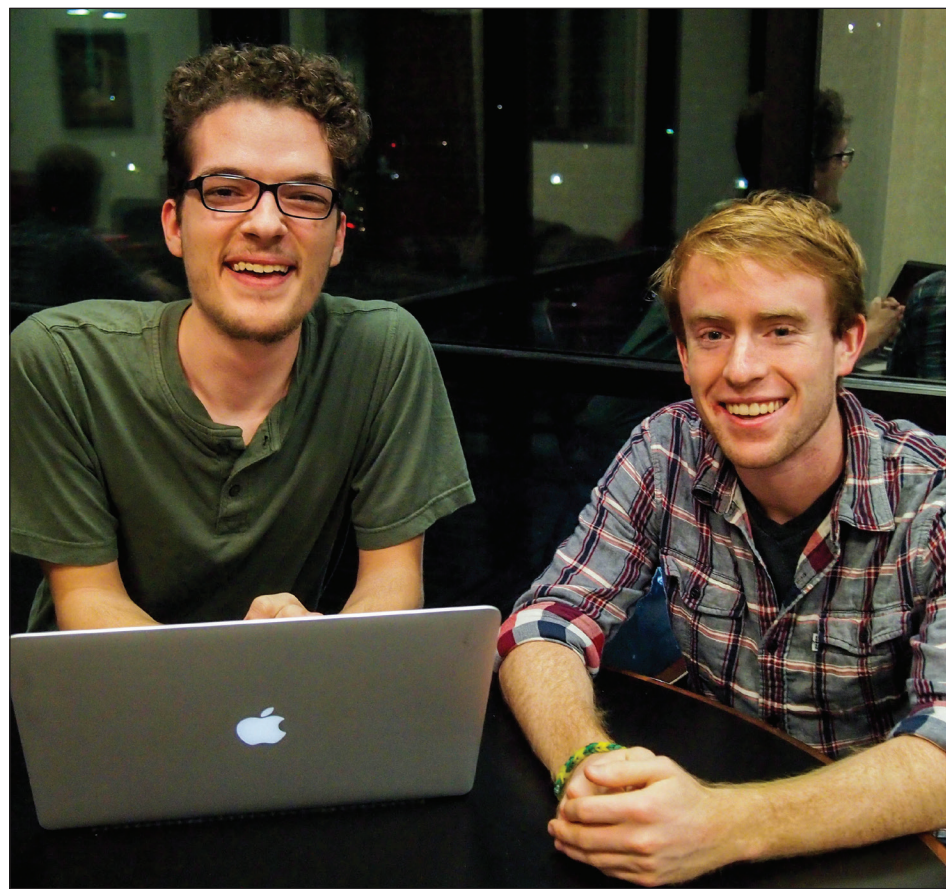
"We have told our professors about it, we made the chapel announcement and had the casting auditions, and it has kind of exploded from there," Rice said. "So it's kind of scary seeing how close we are to getting our

hands dirty and actually making this thing happen."

Throughout the pre-production process, Sneed said he has been excited and optimistic while remaining cautious about unforeseen circumstances.

"What I've learned through film projects that I've worked on in the past is that you don't want to reach a point where you do not expect major obstacles, like last-second changes, agreements that get cancelled and the like," Sneed said. "Thankfully, we have not encountered a major obstacle yet, but I'm trying to stay positive and prepared just in case."

Rice and Sneed said this is the biggest project they have been involved with, which creates a healthy combination of nervousness and excitement. The student filmmakers said that many details are still under wraps, but they will announce more as the film nears its final stages of development.



EMILY EASON | THE BISON

Senior Ethan Sneed and Junior Matt Rice work on the budget of their short film, "Vestige" in a study room of the Donald W. Reynolds Center for Musical Communication. "Vestige" is a horror film, and the duo plans to premier it at a film festival once it is completed.

Harding decorates campus for Christmas

Wreaths, swags and lights help bring the spirit of the holidays to faculty and students on campus

By Z'Ann Hardin
Volunteer Writer

The campus has a glow to it, and not just from the 100,000 plus lights that illuminate the front lawn. The semester is winding down, and though students may feel exhausted, there is a subtle feeling of excitement that mimics the first few weeks of the school year.

However, the Christmas has not always been evident at Harding. The 700 wreaths and swags – straight wreaths hung on the poles – were not something that students would see on their walk to class, according to Vice President of Parent and Alumni Relations Liz Howell. She said Christmas was not a big deal at Harding until about 2006, after the David B. Burks Building was remodeled.

Howell said the university has worked

over the years to keep each year's celebration different, keeping a consistent theme. Howell said ultimately they want students and Searcy residents to enjoy the decorated campus.

"It really started in 2006 with Dr. Burks," Howell said. "He loves Christmas and wanted to make it something special here."

According to Howell, traditions such as the lights on the front lawn, hot chocolate and carriage rides really took root on campus after Harding faculty members visited the Gaylord Opryland Hotel and Resort in Nashville, Tennessee, during Christmas time. Howell said they were inspired to bring that spirit back to the university, including the lights cascading from trees,



and the large Christmas trees that stand in the Heritage lobby.

To achieve such a feat, Physical Resources begin hanging lights the first workday after Homecoming weekend; wreaths, swags and the Heritage decorations begin going up around two weeks before Thanksgiving break.

"It is definitely a commitment from the university, but we know that the students really do appreciate it," Howell said.

Maintenance specialist and 'Head Elf' Bob Barnett heads up the Christmas decorating operations. Both he and Howell said the decorations are his baby, and they are what brought him to Harding. Barnett was asked by a friend around Christmas time many years ago to assist in hanging lights

on campus.

Barnett said he "fell in love with this place."

"There is something so special about this campus that you do not find out there in the 'real world,'" Barnett said.

Barnett said he recognizes the holiday spirit and the clear presence of God on this campus.

Sophomore Allison Slagter said the stringed lights are her favorite Christmas decorations because they remind her of her home in Michigan.

"The lights make me smile so big every time I see them," Slagter said. "I'm used to very snowy Michigan winters, and to me these lights look like snow falling from the sky, and that just brightens my heart to think that even from so far away I can get a taste of home."

A NIGHT FOR
JUSTICE
»»» & *Mercy*

DEC
5TH

\$10 PUBLIC
\$5 STUDENTS
FREE W/ THE PASS

Bob Goff:

AUTHOR OF "LOVE DOES" AND
UGANDAN CONSULATE TO THE UNITED STATES



Brad Montague:

CREATOR & DIRECTOR OF KID PRESIDENT



7:00-9:00 P.M.

*Administration
Auditorium*

Terrance Talley

& THE EAST
COAST SINGERS



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