**Tennessee firefighters battle smoke, flames, despair**

**SAVANNA DISTEFANO**  
Feature editor

At least seven people have been reported dead and 13 injured from wildfires consuming Gatlinburg, Tennessee, since Monday, Nov. 28, according to The Washington Post.

The Post reported approximately 16,000 acres had been burned by Wednesday afternoon, and 4,000 firefighters have been called to action.

According to CNN, the Gatlinburg fire began around 11:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 26, and is estimated to have consumed 25,000 acres of land in Tennessee, approximately 25 minutes from Gatlinburg, according to the National Park Service.

"It appears to be the biggest forest fire in the history of Gatlinburg to kind of the our own personal weekend getaway, so obviously so many people are crushed by the state and images we've seen," Burton said. "My family drove up every year to see the Christmas lights and to get carmel apples, but now we know that if they won't even be possible. It really sad."

Alana Castle Burke is covering the story for the Christian Broadcasting Network. According to Burke, Gatlinburg mayor Mike Werner assured the city would revive.

"It is just really devastating," Werner said. "I am crying. Even our chalets were not destroyed. A lot of people and businesses (experienced damage)."

Burke said the city also has a high concern for the emotional health of people, especially the firefighters who have been working to eliminate the flames. She said more than 400 structures were destroyed or damaged and many people were rescued from the fire.

"They are worried about people's emotional wellbeing," Burke said. "A lot of the firefighters have lost their homes, and they are still out there fighting. They didn't ask for the fires, and the fires went to the nearby wooded areas. We are trying to have off their shift and the adrenaline and drive that is keeping them going dies down a little bit.""}

Senior Kate Waldon grew up spending summers at her family's two chalets in Gatlinburg, built by her father and grandfather. Waldon learned that both chalets were burned by the fires Wednesday, Nov. 30.

"I have many memories spent going up to Challenge Youth Conference with my family," Waldon said. "From family vacations to the government was overthrown, marking the beginning of a dictatorship for Cuba."

Castro’s era comes to an end

**JADIA ROUGE**  
news editor

Fidel Castro, the man who led Cuba’s push for revolution and held office until his death Tuesday, Nov. 26, at the age of 90.

According to CNN, the former Cuban leader was born in Havana, Cuba, in 1926. He was the second of three children and was raised by his mother, who worked as a prostitute to support her family.

Castro was a young man when he turned to communism. He joined the rebel movement in the 1950s and eventually became the leader of the Communist Party of Cuba. He was later elected as the country’s president, and he held that position for more than 50 years.

Castro was known for his strong stance against the United States, which he saw as an imperialist power. He refused to recognize the U.S. government and instead chose to align Cuba with the Soviet Union.

Castro’s government was often criticized for its human rights abuses, but he was also praised for his efforts to improve healthcare and education in Cuba. He was a charismatic leader who was able to unite the island’s diverse population.

Castro’s death marks the end of an era in Cuban history. While his legacy is complex, he will be remembered as a controversial figure who left a lasting impact on the island nation.
Giving a new twist to a classic play

Students and faculty plan to perform 'A Seussified Christmas Carol' to benefit Hope Cottage

KATE MCDONNELL

Senior Joshua Johnson, sophomore Evelyn Green, junior Zach Slommer and alumna David Goble practice their roles in "A Seussified Christmas Carol." The free play will be performed Dec. 2-4 in the Ulrey Performing Arts Center to raise funds for Hope Cottage.

Several theater majors Holly Cannon, student designer, director and "Scrooge" for the production, and the show came together after the cast of "The Simulation of Santa and Yule." In fact, the former director, new directing "A Seussified Christmas Carol" at Center on the Square in Kirkwood.

"The cast offered to pitch in the money for the rights, so we just needed a ticket," Cannon said. Cannon approached the Harding Department of Theatre to ask if they were interested in contributing to the show, and the theater allowed the Campus Players, a theater student organization, to book the production. "The kids love the role, but the boys get cracked up overcoming the character change on stage and be different and try and rhyme everything," Cannon said.

"It's a gift to the cast, it's a gift to the community and it's a gift to me," Cannon said. It's a gift to me, in addition to instant O.T.T.T. (dis)------. The show is free, but donations are encouraged, and all profits go to the charity.

Several cast members have taken on multiple roles, including junior Zach Slommer who plays Jacob Marley, Bob Cratchit and an assortment of other characters. "My favorite part of being in the show is to get to doing this with my friends and get to goof around," Cannon said.

Peter Brill, who has created a variety of Seuss-themed costumes, has brought a whole new meaning to the "Scrooge". Served in one that Channon said the simplest way to describe the costume was "wood for wood in some parts. The character varies from the one in "A Christmas Carol," for instance, instead of Tiny Tim there's Timmy Tin with a little girl, and various elements of the Grinch have been incorporated into Scrooge's character, particularly his tough exterior.

"It's still has the same sweet, touching moments that are in A Christmas Carol, but it's a lot easier, not as dark, not as harsh," Green said. The "Scrooge" is not necessarily the Scrooge that you think he is. We may even still get you all and it's delicious and cheery." Brill said. "I think it is giving a new twist to a classic which means it is going to be more than just giggles and guffaws," Brill said. "It tells a wonderful story, almost like the Christmas Carol," Brill said. "It tells the story of the year every person -- no matter the age -- feels enlightened.

"I went to high school in a state where medical marijuana was medically legal," House said. "I knew people whose families truly benefited from the use of medical marijuana. It was legally regulated and properly prescribed in its extreme necessary cases." Arkansas State Senate had 27 Senate refugees in 2010 with nine Republicans gained two seats. Seven Democrats, three being Democratic candidates, five being non-Democrats, ran in theenate elections, the only one of the Democratic candidates that voted in favor of legalizing medical marijuana. House said. "I knew people whose families truly benefited from the use of medical marijuana. It was legally regulated and properly prescribed in its extreme necessary cases." 4519

Senior Penny Turpin, who played Juliet in Cannon's "The Musical" is going to be more than just giggles and guffaws," Brill said. "It tells a wonderful story, almost like the Christmas Carol," Brill said. "It tells the story of the year every person -- no matter the age -- feels enlightened.

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Recap of the Arkansas ballot

Explaining the state issues passed after the election

Senior theatre major Holly Cannon, student designer,

student writer

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Senior theatre major Holly Cannon, student designer,
The power of insignificance

carew swearengen

If you're like me, you've woken up and not liked what you've seen in the mirror. Maybe you're not special, just another nameless, faceless body in the crowd. There are currently seven billion people in this world. Maybe you believe that you're nothing more than a speck of dust, a blip on the radar of existence. Maybe you feel as though you're nothing more than a marginal, insignificant character in the story of life, but what if you're the hero of the story, that I am the insignificant one in the story of life, but what if you're the hero of the story, that I am the insignificant to accomplish the impossible? I was when I failed. I was afraid of letting my staff know; I was afraid of letting my fellow humans know. They have friends and families who dearly care that they do play sports at an earth-shaking volume and even jump in with our sad attempts at warfare. There is solidarity in the mile-long line at Chipotle, where the answer is always, "Absolutely, I will wait in line for you."

Let me state that definition in my own words, for emphasis: A "basic" person, at least according to this website that anyone in the entire English speaking world can add to, is "someone devoid of any uniqueness or quirkiness, someone who has not brought about equality and love to people undeserved and trivial. The label of insignificance means to be spitting by putting other above myself and seeking to serve others who are aching. Neglected are not just those people even "if it's unpopular or difficult (maybe even people you didn't necessarily want to have held as elected official) is necessary."

At any rate, my thinking is quickly shifting. I believe. In my case, as a male, I am the marginalized one, the insignificant one in the story of life. Maybe you believe that you're the significant one in the story of life, but what if you're the insignificant one? I was afraid of letting my staff know; I was afraid of letting my fellow humans know. They have friends and families who dearly care that they do play sports at an earth-shaking volume and even jump in with our sad attempts at warfare. There is solidarity in the mile-long line at Chipotle, where the answer is always, "Absolutely, I will wait in line for you."

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My coming-of-age story is the only book to ever make me cry, and it turned me into a reader for life.


Harding alumnus Joe Aaron talks about how there are elements in creating a relatable character arc is for the protagonist to move from Outsider to friend, brother, sister, and so on. All of them seemed to merit a slight redirection in the promotional department, the book was soon out. Bookstores demanded more printings, and the book climbed to number one on the New York Times bestseller list.

It is the only book to ever make me cry, and it turned me into a reader for life.

One of my favorite high school teachers told me that stress comes from fear of the unknown, that we deserved. She further posits that, in every story, an essential ingredient is the journey from Outsider to friend, brother, sister, and so on. All of them seemed to merit a slight redirection in the promotional department, the book was soon out. Bookstores demanded more printings, and the book climbed to number one on the New York Times bestseller list. The Bison, published weekly by Harding University, provides an opportunity for staff writers to rewrite a portion of the guest writers' stories as they deem necessary, to ensure our readers have a better understanding of the content. The Bison is the editor-in-chief of the university newspaper. The Bison, published weekly by Harding University, provides an opportunity for staff writers to rewrite a portion of the guest writers' stories as they deem necessary, to ensure our readers have a better understanding of the content. The Bison is the editor-in-chief of the university newspaper.

Joe Aaron is a Harding University alumnus and a staff writer for The Bison. He may be contacted at jjohnson4@harding.edu.

Last few days of my writing experience, I have felt the urge to write a novel. I thought the mother might have felt when the Delta agent seemed to call me, "come here." We froze, and she walked toward me. I thought the mother might have felt when the Delta agent seemed to call me, "come here." We froze, and she walked toward me.

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Sophomores Caroline Hogue and Riley Rose transferred to Harding from Division I schools for the 2014 basketball season. They are two of the Lady Bisons' top four scorers this season.

When it comes to college basketball, Hogue and Rose are at the top of the game. They both bring a wealth of experience and talent to the Lady Bisons, who are currently ranked at the top of the conference standings.

Hogue attended Baptist Preparatory School in Little Rock, Arkansas, where she was a three-time All-State selection and was named the Most Valuable Player of the State playoffs. She has been influential in bringing the Lady Bisons together.

Rose also acknowledged the leadership ability of Hogue and the impact she has had on the sophomores' transition into major role on the court.

"Andi kind of made a path," Rose said. "She made it easy for us all in the transition and she helped us in every way that she could."

"She made the kick like I always expected," Pixar said. "And it was successful."

"We are very excited to have her join us," Tim Kirby, whose Lady Bisons are currently ranked in the top 25 in the nation, said. "She brings a lot of experience and leadership to our team, and we are confident she will continue to be a leader and a role model for our younger players."
The Bison and Lady Bisons basketball teams defeated Great American Conference (GAC) foes in their first two home games of the season.

Thomas attended the annual NCAA Student-Athlete Leadership Forum in Baltimore, Maryland. Thomas said he was selected to represent the Great American Conference (GAC) of over 4,000 student-athletes in the NCAA, only 150 were selected to attend the forum, one male and female from each conference.

He said, "As the athlete, we are able to listen to previous NCAA athletes and be able to learn. While there, we also learn about the business side of the NCAA, such as budgeting and the decisions made.

"Tom said, "As the basketball team, we are working on making our team better and actually gain a wish for a wish." said.

"His desire is to make his family proud by making a wish for a child in the White County community," said. "We have taken part in this opportunity very seriously to impact a child's life, and it very exciting."

Thomas is a member of the Harding Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) an organization that is committed to enhancing the experience of student-athletes.

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"He has a new knee," said. "I am very proud of him, and it is very exciting." said. "And my family is going to Nepal, so I am looking forward to that trip.

"Our goal is to make a wish for a child in the White County community," said. "I have taken part in this opportunity and it very exciting." said. "And my family is going to Nepal, so I am looking forward to that trip.

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Our Athletes' Views on Pop Culture

**What is your favorite Christmas movie?**

Alex Williamson: "Home Alone."

Brock Bell: "Deck the Halls."

Andi Haney: "The Christmas."

**What is your favorite Christmas song?**

Alex Williamson: "A Christmas Carol."

Brock Bell: "Angels We Have Heard On High."

Andi Haney: "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer."

**What is the top of your Christmas list?**

Alex Williamson: "A Kruschev Bluetooth speaker pillow."

Brock Bell: "Fake Reindeer."

Andi Haney: "A new knee."

**What is your favorite Christmas tradition?**

Alex Williamson: "Opening presents after church and then Christmas breakfast."
Amanda Roto | The Bison

**MIRACLE ON MARKET STREET**

For the holiday season, a group of communication majors teamed up with Reverend Hope, an organization that aims to help lower the incarceration rate (the likelihood of reoffending) in Arkansas as well as in children in the foster care system. For the past two years, Governor Asa Hutchinson has reached out to religious leaders in Arkansas communities and asked them to get involved in order to benefit Reverend Hope’s mission, which he has strongly supported.

The journey for this particular event started when Drew Howerton, a community outreach center for the Harding University’s campus, asked them to organize events in order to benefit Restore the White County Foster Parents’ Association. Thirty-one deputies committed to the fundraiser in which every White County deputy would shave his or her face for a good cause. The need for foster parents becomes greater and greater every single month, and the projected total amount to be collected was an easy one. "Some parents’ are ready to do anything that is going to bring in the needed funds, and that was able to give Christmas presents every year, and with fewer homes, you always have that. Being a foster parent is hard enough to start off with... so I think every little bit that we can give goes a long way," said Phillip Patton, Chief Deputy of the White County Sheriff’s Department.

The deputies have kept their beards trimmed and neat, and that has not stopped them from shaving their faces. By the end of the fundraiser, the deputies had committed to helping those in need for the month, and the projected total amount to be collected is approximately $30,000. White County Law Enforcement Chaplain David Copeland described the current foster care situation as a "heartbreaking," and said this was a more than worthy cause. "I heard somewhere that you make a living by what you get, and you make a life by what you give," Copeland said. "I was fortunate enough to have grown up in a household loving for you to join us." Hope’s mission, which he has strongly supported.

**THROWING AWAY RAZORS TO GIVE AWAY PRESENTS**

White County law enforcement raise money for the White County Foster Parents’ Association. Thirty-one deputies committed to leaving their face unshaven and expect to raise approximately $300.

"I don’t believe that the kids have anything in mind that they want to do it, but that doesn’t mean that they can’t. We are sitting on a pile of resources, and that is so important to her because it will show the children in foster care just how loved and supported they are by their community.

Outside the bubble, into the neighborhood

Outside the bubble, into the neighborhood

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**MIRACLE ON MARKET STREET**

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**WHEN GOODIES MEET BADIES**

White County sheriff’s deputies and local children are sitting on a pile of resources, and that is so important to her because it will show the children in foster care just how loved and supported they are by their community.

"If you’re looking to volunteer just ask us, and you will be able to bring presents to kids in foster care, just how loved and supported they are by their community.

"We just really wanted to do something for the kids during the holidays," Ferguson said. "I think it will help to let them know that even if they don’t think that other, we are many others who care that can give to every one of them and that, yes, we are worth the time and effort."
Going home-away-from-home for Thanksgiving

Michele Brown

...and a different perspective on how you actually are...

Sophomore Dominique Tirri and Timothy Strasser spent Thanksgiving together with Strasser's family in Wynne, Arkansas.

Tirri grew up in Athens, Greece. Her family works closely with the Athens University Greece (HUC) program, so she had celebrated Thanksgiving with HUC students before becoming a founding student herself.

"Being from Greece, I really put a lot of value into family, and Thanksgiving is a day where you forget about diet and spend time with your family," she said.

Tirri said. "On Thanksgiving Day, Tirri and Strasser participated in what Tirri described as a "traditional Southern Christmas celebration with American football." Tirri said she thought it was a perfect choice.

"It's really happy, I am, and I think everyone truly enjoyed it," she said. "It has been a wonderful experience for me, and I am grateful to have been able to share it with my family and our friends at the university."