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AMANDA FLOYD | The Bison

Students came together across campus on April 10-14 to show solidarity and to raise awareness for those impacted by sexual crimes. "We desperately want people to know that not only are they not alone, but that there is hope," director of Academic Resources Stephanie O'Brian said about the campaign.



KAZU FUJISAWA | The Petit Jean

Directors of "Chicken Fillet: The Moo-sical" seniors Kimberly Chambers and Caroline Nelson and sophomore Jackson Eldridge claim their trophy and their \$2,000 check for Hope Cottage on Saturday, April 15.

Spring Sing: Curtain down

Omega Phi, DGR take the Ryan Sweepstakes

NATALIE E. SMITH
asst. web editor

With the close of the curtain last Saturday night, another year of Spring Sing has come to an end. The John H. Ryan Sweepstakes Award went to "Chicken Fillet: The Moo-sical," the show performed by women's social club Delta Gamma Rho and men's social club Omega Phi. This is the first win in 20 years for Delta Gamma Rho and the first win in the history for Omega Phi.

"Dr. (Steven) Frye called out our show and the tears just came," senior Delta Gamma Rho director Caroline Nelson said. "I didn't expect myself to be so emotional, but in that moment, I just felt so grateful that our hard work was noted and liked. Coming

from a background in theater, I've learned to be very humble. That way, when you get rewarded, you know you've done good work. That's what happened here."

Nelson said she was confident in the show she and her fellow directors had created throughout the Spring Sing process, but she maintained a naive humility, unwilling to let herself believe their show could win.

"Typically, I like to keep my hopes low so that if something doesn't turn out the way I wanted, I'm not too disappointed," Nelson said. "Towards the end of the process, when we started showing the product to others, I truly realized that we had something really special."

see CURTAIN DOWN, 2A

Supreme Court steps in, pushes back executions

Lethal injection drug, Midazolam, projected to expire in two weeks

JOSIAH ABNEY
student writer

On April 17, the Supreme Court prevented the state from carrying out seven executions in 11 days by ruling not to lift the court order placed by a federal appeals court, according to CNN. According to the Washington Post, the high court's decision was released 15 minutes before the execution warrant expired.

Midazolam, a sedative that Arkansas has never used before, is one of three drugs used in Arkansas' lethal injection cocktail, along with vecuronium bromide and potassium chloride. Arkansas' supply of Midazolam expires on April 30, and the drug supplier refuses to sell more to Arkansas.

The ethical practice and carryout of the decision has been debated and the court system is dealing with the unique nature of the executions and plans to act quickly, as the expiration date for the drugs approaches.

"If a stay is granted, then the drugs are going to expire at the end of the month, and the state may not be able to go through with the executions at all," professor of criminal justice Matthew Swindle said. "Depending on its ability to find a replacement source of Midazolam."

To further complicate matters, a duo of pharmaceutical companies, Fresenius Kabi USA and West-Ward Pharmaceuticals Corp., are seeking to block the executions on the grounds that both likely manufactured Arkansas' supply of potassium chloride and

Midazolam respectively, according to THV11.

"The use of the medicines in lethal injections runs counter to the manufacturers' mission to save and enhance patients' lives, and carries with it not only a public health risk, but also reputational, fiscal and legal risks," both companies said in their filing to the court.

Arkansas' law prevents any public knowledge of the source of the drugs. U.S. District Court Judge Kristine Baker ruled in the men's request to halt the executions on April 14. Although Judge Baker decided to halt the executions, Gov. Asa Hutchinson has remained firm on his position to continue the scheduling of the executions, expressing his opinion that the issue is timing, not the trial.

"But if you think about that, if I had chosen to spread it out over four months or six months, would that have made any difference to the death penalty opponents who are coming in protesting this?" Hutchinson said in a news conference on April 13 at the Governor's Mansion. "Would it have changed any of the circumstances or their views on this or made it any more acceptable to them? I don't think so."

While both state and federal rulings have now blocked the state's execution plans, Hutchinson vowed to continue efforts, according to CNN. The executions would have been the first in Arkansas since 2005, and it would have been the most executions performed by a state in 11 days in modern history.

Softball just keeps winning, 1B



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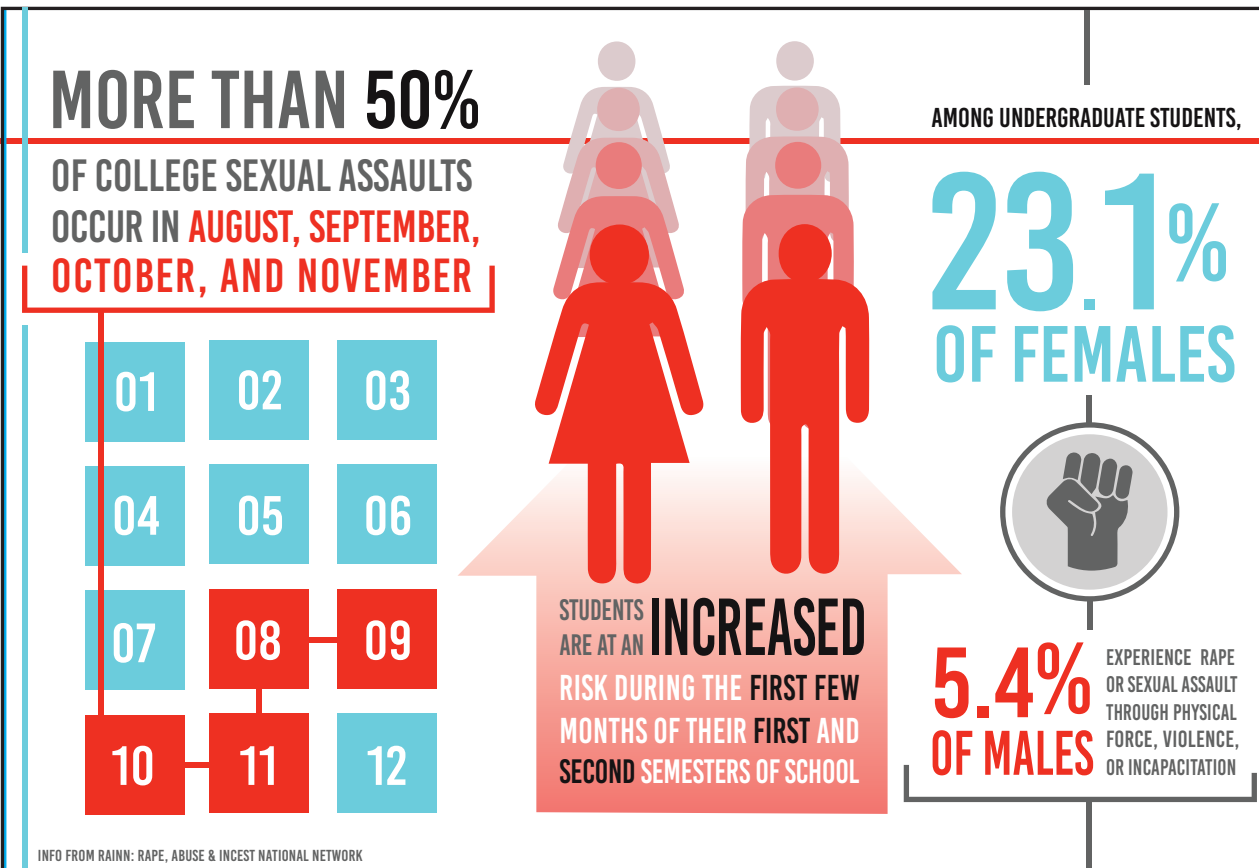
Tennis player grabs national attention, 1B



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Graphic by CECILIA NUTT

‘Silence is violent sometimes’ Student forms campaign to support sexual assault awareness

ABIGAIL COOPER
student writer
SARAH DIXON
head copy editor

On April 10-14, teal ribbons and posters featuring slogans like “Rape: Consent is not a blurred line” filled Harding’s campus in support of Sexual Assault Awareness Week. Along with discussion in chapel, students, faculty and staff members also observed the week by wearing teal shirts or ribbons and signing a Sexual Assault Awareness pledge.

Students, faculty and alumni also began sharing their stories of sexual assault through HUBrave, a social media campaign on Facebook and Instagram which serves as an avenue to raise awareness about sexual assault in the Harding community. Senior Caitlyn Denison, with the support of director of Academic Resources Stephanie O’Brian and Dean of Students Zach Neal, was the catalyst behind starting the campaign.

“I feel like this is a platform that God has given me to use. ... He didn’t want this to happen to me, but he’s giving me a way to overcome and to be an example for others. It’s hard and it’s a very exhausting job, but I see nothing but amazing things coming from it.”

- Senior Caitlyn Denison

“This is something that will not only help me but will also help other people so I just took the plunge,” Denison said. “It’s awkward at first to put something so personal about yourself out there, but it’s also very freeing and empowering at the same time.”

Denison was the first to share her story on the platforms and has been interviewing others to help share their stories with the help of O’Brian.

“I was sexually assaulted and raped by my best friend from high school, and I know for me it was a really trying time,” Denison said. “I remember walking the halls going to class one day, and I just kind of looked around and something just touched my heart. I didn’t see anything about sexual assault on campus, so I started doing my own research about it...I made an appointment with Dr. (Bruce) McLarty and went in there and told him this was a problem.”

From there, Denison was directed to Neal who listened to her story and told her to also reach out to O’Brian. Over the past few months, the three have managed to organize events for the week and the entire month of April to bring attention to sexual assault.

“We want people to see that it happens to us, not in an effort to scare them, but to let survivors know they are not alone,” O’Brian said. “Something that I think has

plagued society, and Christian communities especially, is the isolation and shame associated with sexual assault. We desperately want people to know that not only are they not alone, but that there is hope.”

Last spring, O’Brian decided to start Sexual Assault Surviving Sisters You-nited, or SASSY, a support group that meets once a week for students who are survivors of sexual assault. In October, O’Brian spoke in chapel about her own rape as her group continued to grow. She said she found that the SASSY women were upset at the lack of discussion of rape and sexual assault on campus and knew that more needed to be done.

“It took me years of being quiet to realize that the only way I could overcome was to share it,” O’Brian said. “When I got to share it during chapel last October, it was one of the most awe-inspiring moments in my life because I knew God was taking what Satan intended for evil and using it for the glory of his kingdom, and I was truly delighted to be a vessel for that. And I still am.”

Denison and O’Brian said the feedback they have received has been overwhelmingly positive. Denison said she has been contacted by alumni who wished there had been this sort of outlet when they were students.

“That alone lets me know that coming forward was right, because we are calling out the problems,” Denison said. “You just can’t keep silent. Silence is violent sometimes.”

Denison said she will continue working with the deans to create a larger network of advocates for safety and awareness. She hopes to expand HUBrave into a campus-wide organization by next semester.

“The whole purpose last week really was to start the conversation,” O’Brian said. “It wasn’t a checklist. It was simply a catalyst for conversation.”

Denison said she was encouraged by the success of the week, but she also has huge goals for the campaign’s future.

“I feel like this is a platform that God has given me to use,” Denison said. “He didn’t want this to happen to me, but he’s giving me a way to overcome and to be an example for others. It’s hard and it’s a very exhausting job, but I see nothing but amazing things coming from it.”



RYANN HEIM | The Bison

Students, faculty and staff participated in the campaign to support Sexual Assault Awareness Week April 10-14 by wearing teal and signing a pledge.

CURTAIN DOWN, from 1A

Nelson said she is grateful for every person who worked on “Chicken Fillet: The Moo-sical”; from the performers to the choreographers to the composers, but she said that the most important thing is that they were able to help people with the prize.

“We raised \$2,000 for Hope Cottage,” Nelson said. “Knowing that people’s lives will benefit from what we did is the most rewarding part of it all. That’s honestly the most beautiful thing about Spring Sing: someone somewhere will benefit from the hard work we put into entertaining people. We get to have fun while also raising money for notable causes. How can it get any better than that?”

In addition to the excitement of a winning show, a heartfelt dedication was made to Blake Hunter, a former Spring Sing director and host who passed away last year. Director of Spring Sing and professor of theater Steven Frye announced the creation of a new scholarship for theater students in memory of Hunter. Junior Katt Stinnett was the first recipient of this scholarship.

Stinnett says that she feels undeserving of the honor

but is grateful to be part of this long-term legacy.

“I very much understand that this was a gift given to me by a family that did not have to turn the passing of their son and brother into a legacy that will benefit many, many, many students in the future,” Stinnett said. “Being in the Benson that night and just hearing about Blake again, seeing his parents walk onto the stage — my heart was heavy with the reminder that my friend is no longer here in person, but I could not help but feel overwhelmed with love by the Hunter family and the Department of Theatre.”

All in attendance were invited to come back next year for the 45th year of Spring Sing with a new and exciting theme: “Heroes and Villains.” Frye said the theme provides music and visual opportunities.

“We wanted something that would give us playfulness and aspiration,” Frye said. “One of the most fun things about ‘Heroes and Villains’ is that not only does it give you the characters that you love to love, it gives you the ones you love to hate.”

Harding teams participate in business plan competition

Team Vitele beats 36 teams to win Innovation Award

JAISA HOGUE
news editor

After five teams of Harding students submitted business plans to the Donald W. Reynolds Governor’s Cup business plan competition, one of those teams went on to compete in the final round for the Innovation Award on March 30. On April 11, it was announced that Team Vitele had won first place out of approximately 36 undergraduate teams competing for the Innovation Award.

Kenneth Olree, associate professor of business and the team’s sponsor, said Team Vitele consisted of senior College of Business Administration (COBA) students Manuel Barrantes, Kyle Hoyer and Brandon Beghtol and senior engineering students Adam Baker, Tyler Arrington, and Terah Smith. The team won a \$5,000 prize for their first place finish in the Innovation Award.

According to their website, The Governor’s Cup is a competition in which competitors create a business idea for a new product or service that is then taken through a real-world process of business planning. Arkansas business and community leaders then judge those plans in both written and oral rounds of the competition.

“I, personally, never really thought about the fact that we would be submitting a business plan along with 36 other undergraduate teams in the state of Arkansas,” Smith said. “But it’s cool to think about now, and it makes winning that much more rewarding.”

According to Smith, the team started when Baker, Arrington and Smith were put in the same group in their senior design class for engineering students. In this class, groups of students are asked to conceptualize, design, build and test a product. Hoyer, Beghtol and Barrantes joined later to help with the business side of the competition.

Smith said that after talking with professors and exploring the topic of telemedical devices, the group came up with the idea of a biometric harness. According to Baker, who served as the team leader, their product, Vitele, is a biometric harness that will measure and record six key biometrics, including blood pressure, heart rate, core body temperature, galvanic skin response and heart and lung audio. The harness would then send the data to a computer via Bluetooth to a healthcare provider who is far from the patient. Smith said they began to realize the need for this kind of medical device after contacting a family physician in Alaska.

“This device could be very useful,” Olree said. “Especially in rural settings where it may take a lot of time — and thus lost work time — to travel in to a medical center to have these measurements taken one at a time in a clinic or physician’s office.”

According to Olree, the information could be uploaded and sent to the physician in an encrypted format to comply with HIPPA laws and no medical training would be needed to operate the vest.

Two of the other teams that entered into the Donald W. Reynolds Governor’s Cup business plan competition, team InCapsa and BikeBolt, advanced to the semifinals, but did not advance to the finals round.

Olree said the team filed a provisional patent application with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in February, and their biometric harness is currently patent pending. He also said that this is the first patent application on student work to ever come out of Harding.

“When they called our team’s name as the winners, we were ecstatic,” Smith said. “I remember getting back to the table after receiving our award and looking at my teammates thinking, ‘We did it.’ It was a great moment and an incredible way to finish up my senior year here at Harding.”

CHRISTIAN RESEARCH HOSPITAL
1st Annual 2017 Convention

Merciful African Supper for the Poorest with HIV/AIDS

<p>FRI. APRIL 21 6:00 – 09:00 P.M. ST. JAMES CATHOLIC CHURCH 1102 PIONEER ROAD, SEARCY PARISH HALL</p> <p>AFRICAN DANCE FASHION SHOW DINNER \$30 HIV/AIDS MISSION</p>	<p>SAT. APRIL 22 09:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. HARDING UNIVERSITY 915 E. MARKET AVENUE, SEARCY ADMINISTRATIVE AUDITORIUM</p> <p>AFRICAN DANCE FASHION SHOW SNACK/COFFEE \$10 DEBATE/POVERTY</p>
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Reconsider your plantation wedding

olivia cook



guest
writer

Spring at Harding means that the season of engagements and weddings is upon us. As you know, we are in the heart of the South, which is full of plantations. Before you plan your “romantic plantation wedding,” I encourage you to keep these things in mind:

Growing up in Charleston, South Carolina, I always dreamed of having a large, glamorous wedding at, you guessed it, a plantation. But the more I think about it, the more I find this wedding trend disturbing. Plantations and their history should not be romanticized. People were raped, killed and beaten there.

I read an article from Affinity Magazine written by Kaliane Faye that summed up the issue perfectly.

“Unsurprisingly, the racist history of slave

plantations has been unfairly normalized and white washed,” Faye said. “Because unlike other countries who are ashamed of their bigotry and have turned places of suffering into sacred monuments and grieving sites, the United States chooses to erase the history of ours and use them as places of merriment and celebration. We choose to dance on graves instead of respecting and mourning them.”

As white people, and as people in general, we need to do better and be more sensitive towards these topics. When people suggested plantations for my wedding venue, I constantly had to say, “Well, my fiancé is African-American, and I feel like that is not appropriate.” Then they would say something along the lines of, “Oh my goodness, I didn’t even think about that.” That is exactly the problem. People simply do not think about it. We all need to practice becoming more aware and intentional about these types of things.

Last week, I heard D’Andre Jones, chairman of the Fayetteville Civil Rights Commission, speak at Harding’s Black Student Association meeting, and he said something that really stuck with me.

“We cannot change the world, but we can change part of it,” Jones said.

This relates to becoming socially conscious, because we cannot change the world without being aware of people’s culture and history.

One way to raise social awareness is to first put yourself in someone else’s shoes. Empathy can help you understand someone else’s perspective. When you are conscious of what’s going on around you, it will make you realize that not everyone thinks like you. Another thing you can do is educate yourself. Do not rely solely on what you learn in history class. Reach out and surround yourself with people who do not look like you, and listen to their stories and feelings.

Now, I know that most college-aged-women have had their weddings planned since they were little girls. But if yours incorporates an old slave plantation, I ask that you reconsider.

OLIVIA COOK is a guest writer for the Bison.
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it’s
complicated

Awareness is ...

Last Wednesday morning, I was handed a white piece of paper in the Student Center while I was eating my French toast bagel with honey almond schmear (I still hate the word schmear). I initially wasn’t very pleased that some woman had interrupted my “class was canceled so I’m eating breakfast” solitude, but I listened and agreed to take one. It read, “I stand with survivors because,” and offered some free space for you to write a response. This was part of the social media campaign HU Brave conducted concerning Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Quite frankly, I find these kinds of things rather hokey and pointless, but something brought me to reconsider. I don’t really know how or why, but I felt compelled to instead write my column about the topic.

You’ve seen the statistics about the frequency of sexual assault, specifically on college campuses. They are appalling, but this crime is also severely under-reported. Victims (and I hesitate to use this word because it implies some type of weakness) are never at fault for crime committed against them, yet reporting sexual assault is still stigmatized. We blame it on the clothing they were wearing, we interject that they may be lying or we just simply don’t care or listen. Some don’t want to go through the trouble dealing with law enforcement system and others don’t want to relive the pain and trauma of the experience.

But sometimes reliving these experiences is necessary for others to conceptualize the reality of sexual assault, to put a familiar human face on a nebulous statistic.

In middle school and early high school, an older football player would make sexually aggressive comments to me, most of which I don’t remember (or have blocked out). I would set my backpack next to me on the seat so no one would sit there, yet he continued to take my bag and sit himself down so close to me that I sat with my body pressed up against the cold, hard window. One day he said to me, “Let’s play a game. I’m going to put my hand on your knee and see how far I can move it up your leg without you flinching.” I kept on telling him to stop, but after a while, I just let him continue because I was too small to physically retaliate. That wasn’t the only time something like this happened to me.

My sophomore year of high school, I was in a relationship with a guy who threatened to break up with me if I didn’t engage in certain acts with him. Being the vulnerable 15-year-old that I was, I always did whatever he asked of me, even though I didn’t feel comfortable doing so. There were several smaller occasions, but these two always stand out in my mind.

I’ve written articles about sexual assault on campus and won awards for them too. None of these experiences I just described were my fault, and mentally I know that. Yet I carry this burden around with me every day, the feeling that I am only a sexual item at the disposal of those who have the social or physical force to take it. I’ve never reported any of these instances mainly because I didn’t know that any of them could have been considered criminal, and I didn’t want them to threaten me even further. I try not to feel sorry for myself, but these experiences have really affected my mental health. I’m uncomfortable when people casually touch me on the shoulder or arm, which makes being here, at the touchiest campus on the face of the planet, really difficult.

I’ve never shared these stories in such a public forum before, maybe because I never thought my experiences were novel or serious enough to share. But it’s still a story, and by sharing it, I still create awareness. Awareness is necessary because some don’t know what sexual assault is or that it is a crime. Awareness is necessary because we need to teach our young men (and women) about consent and what it looks like to violate it. Awareness is necessary because people need our support, and this crime must be stopped.

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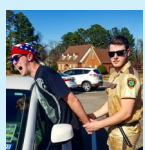
IN CASE YOU MISSED IT... SPRING SING EDITION PT. 2



William Wilberforce @sillyforwilly·4/16/17
God has set before me two great objects, the suppression of the slave trade (cows) & the reformation of manners (chickens). -WW #FREETHECOWS



Did TNT/ZP Win Again @HUSpringSing·4/15/17
No.



Aaron Clements @aaronclmnts·4/14/17
my favorite spring sing show was the one where the two very unlike factions put aside their differences for the sake of peace and unity



Graphic by **HANNAH J. MOORE**

‘Remember those who are in prison’

william jackson



guest
writer

Most of you have probably heard about Likewise College on campus. If you have not, Likewise College is a non-profit organization started by Harding alumni Dr. Jeff Kreh that is working to provide a Christian liberal arts college education to our incarcerated neighbors in Arkansas. To some, it may go without saying that this is a worthwhile endeavor, but for those who might think otherwise, I would like to make a case that it is. I would like to illustrate that providing prisoners an education is a significant virtue in a Christian worldview, will increase quality of life in communities and is far more cost-efficient for society.

Those who have served prison sentences are some of the most stigmatized members of society. Hebrews 13:3 says

to “remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them.” In what is likely Jesus’ clearest teaching on the characteristics of those who will inherit the kingdom, Matthew 25:36 says, among other things, “... I was in prison and you came to me.” Christians cannot argue that the amount of love shown to a person should be measured by our evaluation of their character, and the informed should know statistics tell us that other groups of marginalized people, like the under-educated, unemployed, mentally ill and poor, are more likely to be incarcerated. The imprisoned “least of these” often have the least means of receiving an education, step one in the uphill battle that they will face for the rest of their lives. Christians should be involved in fixing this problem.

For many, the most pressing issue with prisoners is re-entrance into society. If you cannot find any compassion for these people, you have to at least concede that educating them will reduce recidivism, that is, the rate at which they are re-incarcerated. Jobs tend to be helpful in reducing crime. Life in our communities would be better with less crime and would lift some of the burden on our justice system, which

brings me to my last argument.

It has generally been found that for every dollar invested in prison education programs that \$4-5 will be saved in incarceration costs. That does not even include the costs saved in the justice system, welfare programs, economic growth from prisoners becoming productive again and the personal finances of crime victims. Perhaps some of that money could be used to also educate those who some might consider more deserving.

I once thought that investing more in people would teach them not to invest in themselves. However, I have come to realize that we are not all starting on an even playing field. There surely are many law-abiding citizens in dire need of an education. As Jeff has said, “Maybe someone should do something about that; and maybe, out of gratitude for what we’re doing, it’ll be one of the incarcerated men or women that get a Likewise education.”

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joshua johnson



same song,
second verse

Blue collar of Spring Sing

My vantage point for “Spring Sing: Curtain Up!” was not a great one. In fact, I never saw the show from the front. The only vocals I heard were the echoes of voices bouncing off the Benson walls.

I was a backstage “techie,” and my job was not glamorous. The only admittedly fun part was shooting rainbow confetti with a specialized confetti gun from the catwalk during the finale. But other than that, I helped sweep the stage of nails and other hazards. I held the door open as the club shows entered and exited. I provided light for the ensemble performers as they blindly assumed their places in the blackness. And at the end of every show, my colleagues and I scoured the seats for abandoned programs, ticket stubs, candy wrappers and other treasures (my cumulative booty consisted of an unopened pink Starburst candy, a size XS woman’s sweatshirt and an entire bottle of Acetaminophen).

Earlier this year, I also served as a “techie” for the Homecoming musical. Specifically, I was hired as a dresser for the leading man (my good friend Thomas Williams) who had more costumes than Neil Patrick Harris hosting the Oscars. Every night, I tied his ties, buttoned his shirts and carefully lined up his hats and shoes in such a way to best accommodate a 30-second quick change.

This was my senior year. My last Homecoming. My last Spring Sing. It was supposed to be my time to shine.

It’s safe to say I did not expect to contribute by pulling up someone else’s pants and picking up trash in the audience.

All this to say: you might be surprised to hear that, in retrospect, I would not trade my experiences this year for any substitute role.

Last Saturday evening, we finished cleaning the Benson around midnight. Seth Fish, assistant technical director and my boss, gathered us on stage for one final debriefing. After forcing us to participate in a cinnamon roll group hug (don’t ask), he gently told us all to shut up and listen for a second.

That night, Seth went on to talk about work ethic, perseverance and the importance of what we had spent the week doing: making sure others were able to succeed. In every performance, he said, there are those who are seen. There are those who represent. There are those who shine.

There are also those who make sure people don’t trip backstage.

This was my senior year, and this year, I was blessed to be able to help my friends shine. So shut up and listen for a second: there is more than one way to make a difference in something as big as Homecoming or Spring Sing. Directors, producers, performers — you all did a spectacular job. It was an incredible year.

Just don’t forget about the minority dozen who changed people’s clothes and picked up trash. This was their moment, too.

To next year’s Homecoming “techie”: I hope your leading man isn’t a profuse sweater. Make sure you keep a towel handy — you’ll want something to wipe your hands with every now and then.

To next year’s Spring Sing backstage crew, a word from the wise: keep painkillers handy, because going back and forth from light to dark will make your head ache. If you want Acetaminophen, I got you covered.

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

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 Joshua Johnson, the editor-in-chief, at jjohnson4@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

Nothing to lose and everything to gain

braden bowman



guest
writer

Harding University is a big place with so many different avenues and ways to get involved in extracurricular groups. For as small as our university is, in comparison to state colleges, our student body is heavily involved in clubs and other organizations across all spectrums of academia. But for many students here, we come to college and stick to the things we know. If you were a part of the band in high school, then odds are you are still a part of the band. If football was your life in high school, then it is easier for you to maintain that identity in college. But college is a different beast. We are no longer confined to the image that we created for ourselves, or that our environment created for us. We don’t try to branch out and do something that we have never done before because we are either scared of change or do not believe that we have what it takes, but believing either

of those is wrong.

If you stick with the same people all the time then you’re stopping yourself from growing. There are talents that you have that you are unaware of, and there is no better time in your life to explore that untapped potential than in college. I am not saying that if you have never played guitar, then you are magically going to learn by picking one up, but it would not hurt to take a music theory class or “introduction to guitar.” If you have never played sports in high school, we offer intramurals to anyone of any skill level. You are always paired against someone or some team of equal caliber, and it’s a great way to meet new people and make friends.

But ball is not always life. The field and court are not the only places to have great experiences here. Have you ever felt called to perform on the stage? There is a place to showcase your artistic abilities. The Benson stage is home to some of our most well-attended events, our very own theatrical productions. Spring Sing and the Homecoming musical are two of the biggest weekends in the school year. Spring Sing is a time when students and faculty members come together across multiple departments to produce something magical for the supporters of our great school and it is inspiring. But Spring Sing would not happen

without the participation of our student body. With all of these opportunities presented to us, we are robbing ourselves of an impactful experience if we convince ourselves not to take a chance on something new.

If you were to ask me last year, “Braden, could you ever see yourself as a part of the ensemble cast?” I would have said, “no way, I can’t dance.” I still cannot dance, but I was able to learn a little. Last December, I took a chance on myself and auditioned for ensemble. I made callbacks and after further auditioning I was accepted into the ensemble cast. I may never be a part of ensemble again after this year, but the memories I have from that experience will remain a part of me forever.

Most of us do this college thing only once. Do not waste the opportunities you are given here. Give your Netflix-binge marathon a break. Learn to broaden your horizons. Become a better you by getting out and being a part of something bigger than yourself. We were not made to live sedentary lifestyles. Find your people and grow together with them.

BRADEN BOWMAN is a guest writer for the Bison. He may be contacted at bbowman@harding.edu.

Interested in writing a guest column?
Contact Hannah J. Moore at hmoore@harding.edu.

Just the
Clax

No more than Ken, but never less than kind

I used to do this gag in my British Lit course. The class always met MWF at 2 p.m., and several times per semester, the English Department has its Senior Symposium on Fridays at 3 p.m. Since English majors are encouraged to attend these events, I would write the following announcement on the dry-erase board at the beginning of class:

“Senior Symposium in one hour. British Lit essay due in 336 hours. Final exam in 840 hours. My retirement in 214,368 hours.” This bit of whimsy would elicit minor smirks, which of course is all it deserved. But by the time you read this on Friday, you can cross off another 96 hours, as I take the final, quarter-century-long victory lap in my professional life.

I’ve been training for retirement for years. Each week, I try to set aside as much time as possible to do as little as possible. One of my retired friends once sent me an essay called “The Fine Art of Piddling,” which describes my favorite hobby. Piddling is any activity where the time spent and the sense of accomplishment are out of proportion with what actually gets done.

Every time I reorganize my neckties, I am officially piddling. And hey, the hour I’ve spent writing these last four paragraphs puts me 60 minutes closer to the full-time Piddle-Palooza that will occupy my twilight years. Some of my retired friends claim to be busier than ever — huffing and puffing from one activity to the next. I think they must be doing it wrong.

At the annual Harding Faculty and Staff dinner in April, we celebrate milestones with the awarding of service pins and the



michael
claxton

recognition of retirements. This year, quite a few long-time fixtures at our school are punching their final time cards and resetting their alarm clocks.

Among them is my English Department colleague, mentor and close friend, who will circle his last official punctuation error next week. Dr. Ken Hammes came to Harding in 1989. His previous experience included time in the US Navy and several memorable decades (or so it seemed) at a Community College in Cisco, Texas. If you ever want to feel better about where you live, ask Dr. Hammes to recount tales from Cisco.

His contributions to the English Department have been many. He teaches classes in Romantic poetry, composition and film. He directs the Writing Center and trains tutors. He maintains the department website and lends his technical expertise to many a hapless colleague. He hosts daily lunch meetings in his office, where we talk literature, religion, politics and the latest fluff from YouTube.

We have been told we are too loud. Our repentance is always both swift and short-lived.

Dr. Hammes loves the play of language and never seems happier than when reading aloud an ingenious passage, listening to an

outrageous pun or admiring a marvelously executed bon mot. And he turns clever phrases himself: at a short-lived restaurant in town, he coined the term “corn bricks” to describe what passed for bread. At a pizza place, he walked past the pile of debris left over from a large dinner party and called it a “cheese tsunami.”

But Dr. Hammes is most beloved for running a shuttle service every Thursday to Mi Pueblito, taking starving English faculty to “burst joy’s chip against our palates,” to paraphrase Keats.

As a church elder and Bible class teacher, Dr. Hammes is admired for his wisdom. As a professor, he’s appreciated for his patience in guiding students through the writing process. As a colleague, he’s loved for the fact that he never seems put out by requests for help.

Ken Hammes is far too fine a person to piddle the hours away after he retires, but I’m hoping that the respite from grading and committee meetings will free up time for reading, model-ship-building, and, as Dr. Johnson might say, “general hilarity.” I told him recently I envied his retirement. He replied that he envied my youth. The truth is that I have mostly wasted my youth in premature old age, while he seems to be getting younger at heart by the day.

So happy retirement, Dr. Hammes. I’ll join you soon — in just 214, 272 hours.

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



Rub of the Green

MVP without a doubt

It goes without saying that Russell Westbrook, point guard for the Oklahoma City Thunder, should win the Most Valuable Player award in the NBA.

First of all, he averaged a triple-double for the season. This hasn't been done since the great Oscar Robertson did it in his second year in the league (1961-62). He also broke Robertson's record for triple-doubles in a season with 43, and he did all of this while winning the scoring title, averaging 31.6 points per game.

These statistics, while incredible, are not the biggest reason he deserves this award. Westbrook should win the Most Valuable Player award because he is the most VALUABLE player for his team, more so than any of the other candidates.

While LeBron James has had arguably the best season of his career and has been very efficient on both sides of the floor, I still believe the Cavaliers would be a playoff team without him. The same can be said about Kawhi Leonard of the San Antonio Spurs. Even though he has definitely had a season worthy of the award, the Spurs would still be a playoff contender without him. James Harden, who is probably Westbrook's closest competitor for the award, has had an unbelievable season. He has been an offensive juggernaut and even averaged more assists per game than Westbrook. But he is about as one-dimensional as it gets as he is completely non-existent on the defensive side of the ball.

Without Westbrook, I do not believe the Thunder would even be in the playoffs. Not only did he have the best regular season statistically of all time, but he had to have that kind of season for his team to be in the position they are in. The Thunder will not win the championship. No player is good enough to single-handedly carry his team to a title (just look at LeBron James and the 2007 Cavaliers). But Westbrook took on the extra load that Kevin Durant left behind when he departed for Golden State, and he carried his team all the way to the playoffs.

The award is called the Most VALUABLE player award for a reason. It has nothing to do with who is the best. LeBron would win it every year if that were the case. The award should be given to the player who is more valuable to his team than any other player is to theirs. And Russell Westbrook, without a doubt, fits that description perfectly.

TAYLOR HODGES is the head sports editor for the Bison. He may be contacted at thodges@harding.edu. Twitter: @thodges_2

Passion, promotion, working with Wilson

MICALEIGH ENGLISH
student writer

Senior tennis player Neto Cacace is heading north for the summer to Wilson's marketing department in Chicago, Illinois. Cacace has been captain of the men's tennis team at Harding for three years and is constantly promoting the team. This involvement led Cacace to win the Wilson/Intercollegiate Tennis Association Promoter of the Year Award, an honor given only to one male and one female across the country.

"I want to continue work in the tennis industry, so what I like most about this internship is that it is broad," Cacace said. "I'm not going to be focused on just one thing. I will be doing a lot of things, and I will see what I'm really passionate about in the industry. It might be being with customers or working with the rackets and prototypes or some other aspect."

Redshirt sophomore outfielder Jack Thomas, president of Harding's Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC), is a close friend of Cacace and only had great things to say about him. Cacace is also a member of the SAAC as a representative for the tennis team. The SAAC works with the Searcy community to provide lessons and raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Thomas said Cacace is always

thinking of ways to promote.

"He's the perfect blend of culturally diverse, extremely intelligent and sports savvy to fit into a job like that," Thomas said. "He will be a perfect fit. It seems like everything he does turns to gold, and I'm sure this will be no exception."

Scott Goode, sports information director at Harding, said he is thankful for players like Cacace who increase involvement and attendance at sporting events.

"He even encourages the team to get pizzas for the crowd," Goode said. "Since we don't have a concession stand at the tennis courts, anyone that comes down there can have some pizza. He really just gets people excited about tennis."

After Cacace returns from Wilson in the fall, he will be working as an assistant coach for the men's tennis team at Harding. Coach David Redding is pleased Cacace was selected and said it will be worth the wait to have his help next season.

"He is very deserving of it. In fact, to know that Wilson had their pick of all the top talent around the country, and for him to get selected is just a reflection of him as a person," Redding said. "It is going to be a great opening for his career. He is a friend to everybody, a great leader, has great PR skills, and I just can't say enough good things about him."



RYANN HEIM | The Bison

Senior Neto Cacace is a three-year captain of the men's tennis team. He will spend his summer in Chicago working in the marketing department for Wilson Athletics.

Bisons softball climbs to No. 2 in nation

The Lady Bisons softball team sweeps No. 14 Southern Arkansas and moves to No. 2 in the NFCA Coaches Poll

ANNA HOLLAND
student writer
TAYLOR HODGES
sports editor

The Lady Bisons softball team swept in a double header against East Central University (ECU) on Saturday, April 8.

The two doubleheaders for the Lady Bisons resulted in three wins and one loss — their first loss since their game against Southwestern Oklahoma on Feb. 24.

The wins resulted in the solidification of the GAC winning-streak record at 27 games, beating the previous record, held by Arkansas Tech, by eight games. The streak set a new GAC record previously held by Arkansas Tech who won 19 straight last season.

The GAC record is not the only reason why the game might be memorable for some players. Freshman catcher Briley Feringa remembers the game from a different perspective.

Feringa's pinch hit with bases loaded in the fifth inning of the first game on Saturday and hit a single up the middle that scored three runs.

According to the GAC website, freshman pitcher Autumn Humes received pitcher of the week after improving 19-1 from the East Central game. She set the second-best record for a freshman in Division II.

Sophomore shortstop Alexis Lawellin was one of GAC's notable nominees for scoring five runs and going 7-16 in the four-game series against East Central.

Though it has only been around for four years, Harding's softball program continues to grow. The farthest it has ever gone is placing second in the GAC against Southern Arkansas



EVAN SWEARINGEN | The Bison

Sophomore infielder Alexis Lawellin lays down a bunt against Southern Arkansas University. The Lady Bisons swept SAU, and are now ranked No. 2 in the Coaches Poll.

in 2016.

"We're almost done with conference," Feringa said. "We already sealed our spot for the conference tournament. Then if we do good in the conference tournament then we head on to regionals, and if we do good in regionals, if we do good in that — super-regionals, we do good in that, then we go on to the world series."

Harding played against Southern Arkansas on Friday, April 14 and Saturday, April 15 in a double header both days. The Lady Bisons

swept the four-games series with a 4-0 and 2-1 win on Friday, and a 3-1 and 1-0 win on Saturday. They later played another double header on Tuesday, April 18 against Arkansas Tech, losing the first game 2-1 and winning the second game 2-1. The Lady Bisons are now ranked No. 1 in the first regional ranking of the year. This is the program's first time being regionally ranked. They are also ranked No. 2 in the nation by the National Fast Pitch Coaches Association Poll.

Banger's back-nine 30 puts Bisons in second

TAYLOR HODGES
sports editor

On April 17-18, the Harding men's golf team finished second place with a total score of 579, three strokes behind first-place finisher Arkansas Tech. Junior Mason Banger led the way for the Bisons with a two-under 140 for the tournament, the second-best 36-hole score in the history of the golf program.

Banger started the tournament with an even-par round of 71, three shots behind Arkansas Tech's Austin Smith. He then came back with a two-under round of 69 on day two, shooting a 5-under score of 30 on the

back nine.

"I felt great going into it," Banger said. "I was hitting the ball really well, and was eager to get started. I played some very good golf. I still have some work to do, but I am very excited about my performance."

There were 12 teams in the tournament, and Harding had two teams participating. The "B" team finished in seventh place with a team score of 595. Freshman Cooper Dunn was the top scorer for the "B" team with an overall score of 146, which tied him at 15th as an individual.

"I just want to keep the momentum going," Dunn said. "I want my focus to

remain on the process and not the result. If I can do that, I will be OK. As for the team, we just need to keep pushing and encouraging one another. We know that our games are ready for the moment. We just need to trust our practice and let it go."

With top finishes and low scores coming from both teams this week, it is safe to say that the future of the men's golf program is bright.

"I think the 'B' team had some good rounds this week," Banger said. "It's good to see some guys putting in some good rounds. Experience is everything, and the more they get, the easier it will

be in the future. Harding golf has a strong future."

The team's next tournament will be the Great American Conference (GAC) tournament, beginning on Sunday, April 23 in Hot Springs, Arkansas. It is a three-day, 54-hole tournament, and the team hopes to build on a success from

their previous tournament in Heber Springs.

"We each got to work on what we struggled on this past week," senior Alex Williamson said. "If we each get a little better, then the potential is exponential in terms of dropping shots. We just got to keep it going and do what we know we can."

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AMANDA FLOYD | The Bison

Redshirt sophomore baseball player Jack Thomas holds up a teal ribbon to show his support for raising sexual assault awareness at Harding University, and nationwide.

Great American Conference takes stand on sexual assault

EMILY FAULKNER
asst. sports editor

Harding student athletes redshirt sophomore Jack Thomas and sophomore Taylor Lake participated in the Great American Conference's Student-Athlete Advisory public service campaign "It's on Us" to raise awareness of sexual assault.

April was designated as sexual awareness month in 2014 by then-President Barack Obama as a step to ending sexual assault on college campuses nationwide. The mission of "It's on Us" is for both men and women to make a personal commitment to help participate in ending sexual assault.

Student athletes from all different sports and universities within the GAC participated in making video and are also part of the Student Athlete Advisory Committees (SAAC) within their own schools.

"I am proud our student athletes partnered together to create a personalized 'It's on Us' message that resonates within our footprint," GAC Commissioner Will Prewitt said. "We have the opportunity to lead in the field of reducing sexual assaults across college campuses, and I am hopeful this effort will help foster discussion and education at each one of our member institutions."

Students on campus have been encouraged all this month to go online and take a pledge to stand against sexual assault. This pledge asks students to, "Recognize

that non-consensual sex is sexual assault, to identify situations in which sexual assault may occur, to intervene in situations where consent has not or cannot be given, and to create an environment in which sexual assault is unacceptable and survivors are supported."

"The more awareness, the better when it comes to a serious issue like sexual assault," Thomas said. "The first step on being more informed over the issue is to go to itsonus.org and take the pledge to stand against sexual assault."

The Harding chapter of SAAC strives to be the primary link between student athletes and administrators to improve the experience of all student athletes.

"My favorite part about being on the SAAC is striving to be relevant in the community," Thomas said. "Across the country, athletes have an elevated platform and using this platform to enhance the community is my favorite part."

The SAAC also strives to develop a leadership council that encourages unity and camaraderie among student athletes; to organize community service efforts to embody a "Community of Mission"; to gain student athlete perspectives on issues in athletics; to encourage academic and professional development of the student-athletes; to provide social opportunities and growth for student athletes and to encourage the Harding student body to support athletic teams.

"I think the most important thing that Harding can do to spread awareness of sexual assault is to be open to

talking about it," Lake said. "The prevalence of sexual assault will never change if people are not willing to accept that the problem affects every community and if our community is not willing to have an open, honest conversation about ways to help sexual assault victims and prevent assault from happening to others in the future."

Student athletes, coaches, athletics administrators and campus partners may visit the official website of the "It's on Us" campaign to take the pledge, watch videos, download a toolkit and learn more about the campaign's many partners.

"I think the most important thing that Harding can do to spread awareness of sexual assault is to be open to talking about it,"

- Sophomore Taylor Lake

"Creating an environment where victims can openly speak out about their experiences in a way that empowers and supports them is so important to changing the way people respond to sexual assault," Lake said. "The more love and support that can be provided to victims, the more the Harding community can make an impact on this global issue."

LOCKER TALK

Our Athletes' Views on the NBA Playoffs questions

Jordan Turney
Track



Autumn Humes
Softball



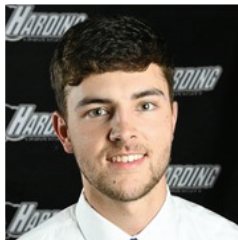
Alex Williamson
Golf



Katie Conrad
Tennis



Matt Sherry
Baseball



Favorite NBA team?

"Houston Rockets."

"Chicago Bulls."

"Detroit Pistons."

"OKC Thunder."

"OKC Thunder."

Who's going to win the playoffs?

"Whoever wins the most games out of seven."

"Golden State Warriors."

"Cleveland Cavaliers."

"I don't know."

"San Antonio Spurs."

Who will be MVP?

"I'm not sure, but I'll probably vote Bruce McLarty."

"Russell Westbrook."

"Westbrook, but LeBron the real MVP."

"Russell Westbrook."

"Kawhi Leonard."

Favorite player in the NBA?

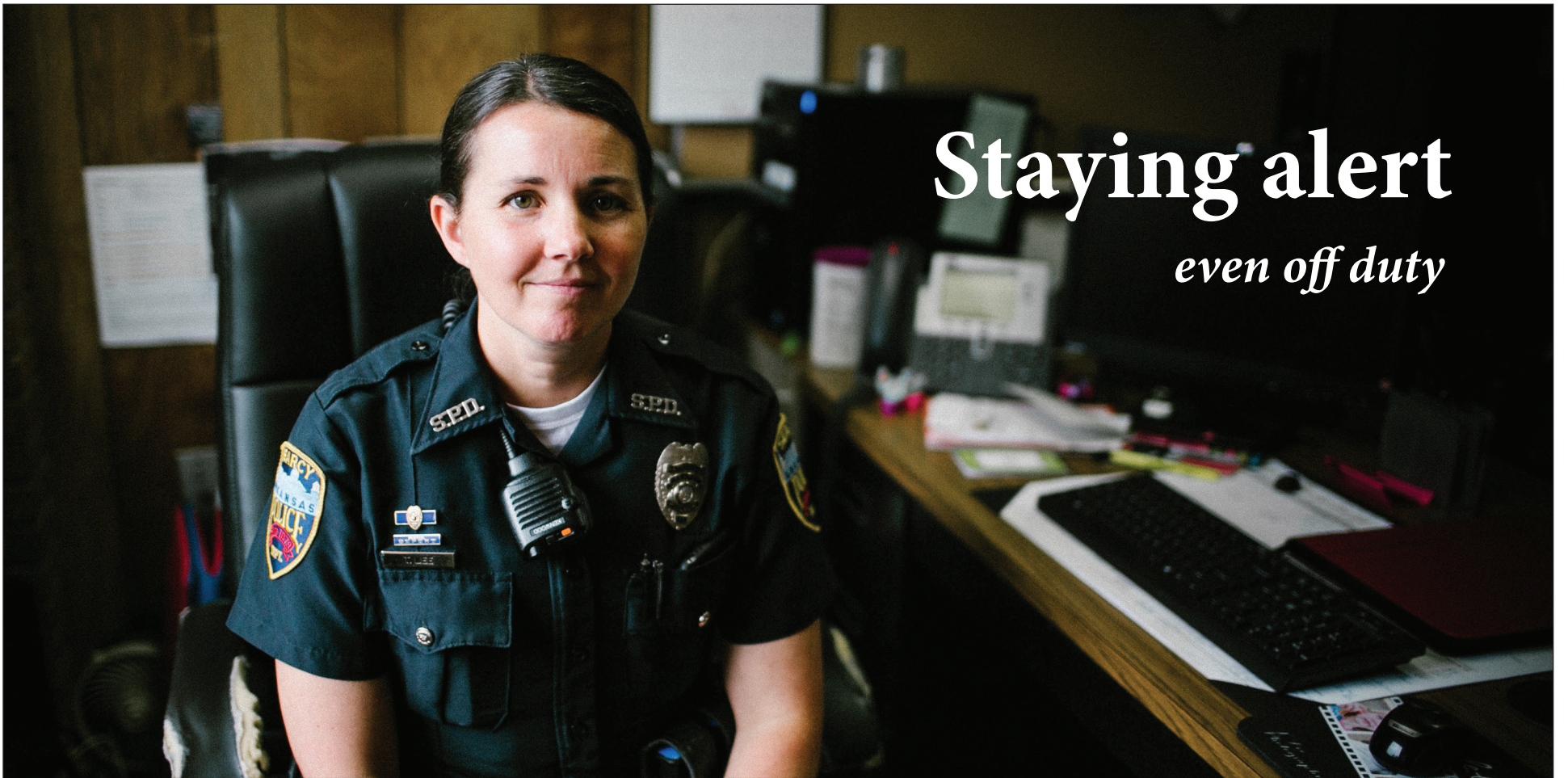
"Does Michael Jordan still play?"

"LeBron James."

"LeBron James."

"Russell Westbrook."

"Steph Curry."



Staying alert even off duty

AMANDA FLOYD | The Bison

Alumna Terri Lee, public information officer for the Searcy Police Department, sits in her office at the police station on Tuesday, April 18. She was one of the leading officers in the Malik Drummond case in 2014-15 and said her job has become a lifestyle.

The second installment of the 'Behind the Blue' series on law enforcement health

SAVANNA DISTEFANO
features editor

Alumna Terri Lee, public information officer for the Searcy Police Department (SPD), avoids mid-day shopping and dining out at restaurants. She does not easily trust others and is anxious about encountering someone in public whom she has arrested.

Lee was one of the officers involved in the case of missing 2-year-old Malik Drummond from 2014-15, which she said was one of the most emotionally and mentally trying cases the department has experienced as a whole. However, routine tasks like traffic stops and house calls form the high-alert lifestyle of law enforcement officials.

"(Because) we work in such a small town, (our job) affects our personal life," Lee said. "You don't know (when you see someone) if it's from when you saw them at the school, when you arrested them two weeks ago, (or if) their husband got arrested (and) they are angry at you, so you still have to keep your guard up even when you are not on duty."

Lee has served as a patrol officer, detective and public information officer for the SPD. She said many officers are wary of trusting others.

"In this job, we are so used to dealing

with people that are doing bad that we can get to thinking everybody is doing bad," Lee said. "When somebody asks you a question at church, at school, or at Wal-Mart, your spine stiffens, and you think, 'What is the angle? What are they wanting from me? What are they asking of me?' instead of just answering the question."

Despite a sense of insecurity and fear, Lee said she enjoys working at a job with unpredictable schedules. She said an officer is required to constantly be on alert, with adrenaline continually flowing. However, returning home after work can leave one feeling bored or uneasy when the intensity level crashes.

"When you're at home, you come down, and you get to the point where you feel like your job is the only place that you can enjoy," Lee said. "It's the only place that gives you that feeling."

Little Rock psychologist Debbie Wright has counseled law enforcement officers during her practice. She said officers are often discouraged to seek support from psychologists to maintain their rough persona.

"The (general cop) culture doesn't support seeking help within the police department, and so people in the department are generally not going to seek help for anxiety or depression

because there is a stigma also within the department about doing that," Wright said.

The effects of stress and trauma are different per officer, some cope in healthy manners, others develop unhealthy coping mechanisms, like repression, isolation, emotional callusing substance abuse or crass humor. The SPD encourages officers to seek counseling services after trauma, and officers rely on faith and humor to cope with their experiences.

"We have that dark sense of humor that people don't get," Lee said. "It helps you get through on a scene with body parts lying everywhere, and if you don't make a little light of it, you break down."

The police station is decorated with inspirational posters and cards made by local school children. According to Lee, the community and prominence of Christianity in Searcy encourages officers and prompts a sense of faith, which helps officers to manage emotions and mental processes.

"In our department, it is highly encouraged to have a system of faith, which makes a big difference as far as why bad things happen," Lee said. "You have to have some way to process, 'This is why this horrible thing happened to this completely innocent child,' and you have to have something to fall back on or it can get very depressing."

"In this job, we are so used to dealing with people that are doing bad that we can get to thinking everybody is doing bad."

**- Officer Terri Lee
Searcy Police Department**

In addition to her faith, Lee said she often talks with a friend who is a firefighter in Little Rock. She said having friends who relate to her experiences gives her a better sense of community.

"When I go home and have a bad day, and I want to talk to my friends, their bad day is that they might have gotten a paper cut or their kid threw up at school," Lee said. "Well, my bad day might have been a kid dying, and I had to go to the autopsy. You end up migrating toward the people who might have the same profession. I think it is good to have someone either here at the department, where you work, or a friend who can kind of understand what you're going through."

The next installment of the "Behind the Blue" series about law enforcement mental health will appear in the next edition of The Bison, on stands April 28.

Using art and experience to 'design happiness'

Senior Taylor O'Dell serves individuals and local businesses with her degree

SAVANNA DISTEFANO
features editor

When senior Taylor O'Dell graduated from her small-town high school in Hughes Springs, Texas, she did not anticipate exploring art beyond doodles on class notes and high school programs designed with Microsoft Word. Now, O'Dell is a freelance graphic designer and works for Mr. Postman Espresso and the Mitchell Center for Leadership and Ministry.

"My main goal is making the world a better place. I don't care how that is, I want to encourage people through my designs."

-Senior Taylor O'Dell

O'Dell graduated from Tyler Junior College with an associate's degree in graphic design. She was engaged and served as a graphic design intern for a top environmental engineering company in Louisiana that offered a full-time job, but her life did not feel satisfying. O'Dell broke off her engagement, declined the job offer and moved home.

"I felt that I was missing out on something," O'Dell said. "It was really a God thing, because I never thought that I would end up here. ... It's cool to look back in the moment when I didn't think I would make it through and now. You always work through the bad things, and you can make good out of it."

Upon returning home, O'Dell began working at a local coffee shop. A coworker encouraged her to consider continuing her

education at Harding. Though she had heard of Harding before, O'Dell never considered attending. This time, she talked with an adviser and took her coworker's advice.

O'Dell is now an advertising major expecting to graduate in December. She said she has learned about herself and grown spiritually.

"(Harding) has definitely humbled me and made me a better person, because when I first came here, I remember I was so self-centered," O'Dell said. "It just made me realize that everyone is just a human trying to get to heaven, and we are all just people that need help in life. I am more vulnerable here. I am more open. I am more me. I found who I am as a person."

Before earning her associate's, O'Dell said she was wary of the kind of future a career in graphic design would hold. She said people would question the advantage of the degree, and she sometimes wondered if graphic design was the proper career to pursue.

"I really just like to expand my mind and see what it is capable of," O'Dell said. "I like being free to do what you want, and using your imagination just to be creative, putting into view what people (want), once you get to put it all together and see their reaction, that's really cool."

During her time at Harding, O'Dell has designed apparel, logos, programs and invitations for Uplift, Bisons for Christ, women's social club Delta Gamma Rho and several individuals. She has created graphics for HU16 and Mr. Postman Coffee.

"My main goal is making the world a better place," O'Dell said. "I don't care how that is, I want to encourage people through my designs ... My slogan, if you will, is 'design happiness.'"



AMANDA FLOYD | The Bison

Senior Taylor O'Dell works on her computer at Mr. Postman Espresso on Wednesday, April 19. O'Dell is a barista and graphic designer for the store.



'The Case for Christ' Ascends

GARRETT HOWARD
lifestyle editor

Lee and Leslie Strobel's world is turned upside down when their daughter nearly loses her life. She is saved by a woman who claims she was told to be there by Jesus, much to the indifference of atheistic Lee.

Leslie, however, begins pursuing Christianity and eventually becomes a Christian, creating problems between her and her husband. Lee then begins using his journalistic skills on a quest to dismantle the Christian faith and keep his family intact, but eventually finds his own faith in the deity he set out to disprove.

Based on the autobiography of the same name, "The Case for Christ" is directed by Jon Gunn, who has directed several award-winning films within the Christian film industry. This gives "The Case for Christ" an immediate leg up on its colleagues of the genre, as many Christian-based films struggle to find positive feedback if they manage to break through the glass ceiling of mainstream viewership.

"The Case for Christ" will be reviewed within the context of its genre. Because there is no one standard to the subjective medium of film, reviewing movies by comparable terms is the preferred approach; it's what allows two drastically different films, like "The Empire Strikes Back" and "The Godfather Part II," to go down in history with the same legendary critical acclaim. So, in that regard, how does "The Case for Christ" compare to its Christian-themed contemporaries? The pseudo-biopic stands head and shoulders above the rest.

Unlike most "Christian propaganda" films, "The Case for Christ" takes time to develop all of its players as real characters. Mike Vogel and Erika Christensen play Lee and Leslie Strobel, respectively, and both are excellent. Leslie's turn from atheism to Christianity feels genuine, and the circumstances surrounding her shift in beliefs ground the film, adding real drama and stakes as opposed to the lighthearted cheese that usually plagues similar films. Much of the focus is devoted to Lee and his militant quest to unravel Christianity, and his character's motives are handled extremely well. Vogel's performance perfectly conveys the struggles of a man who believes he is losing his family to some psychotic cult.

In fact, the film proves its worth over other Christian-themed films by showcasing the stereotypically antagonistic counter to Christianity in a surprising and respectful way. Instead of portraying Lee's atheistic beliefs as villainous, the film sets him up as a relatable and sympathetic character, a man trying to save his marriage from something he doesn't understand. Gunn also sets up an interesting dynamic between Lee and Leslie's marriage, using the "church is the bride of Christ" metaphor to incite jealousy from Lee, with Lee even stating, "You are cheating on me with Christ." This is an interesting dynamic not usually showcased in on-screen relationships, and adds a new layer of motivation and vulnerability to Lee.

Even with the new concepts not usually explored in similar films, there are still plenty of traditional elements expected from Christian films to please the target audience. The evidences for and against Christ and his resurrection are explored in full, with a sympathetic perspective that keeps the film from being as preachy as others. By showing the world through Lee's eyes, his struggle is understandable. Even when heated debates arise, the film avoids bludgeoning audiences over the head with a one-sided message by allowing Lee to have his victories, even though he often questions his results soon after.

However, the film still unintentionally evokes the odd feelings usually associated with hearing God's name (and religion in general) spoken in casual conversation in film. Perhaps this speaks to modern Christianity as a whole in our hesitation to speak confidently in conversation about God without the words "Oh my" haphazardly splattered in front of it. Regardless, the uneasy vibes soon subside, and the film refrains from becoming an unrelenting religious cheese fest with carefully crafted dialogue.

Ultimately, "The Case for Christ" is about as well put together as one could ask of a religious film. The film's overall tone and message remain constant throughout, while its unique spin on many established religious tropes keep it interesting and memorable.

"The Case for Christ," surprisingly, scores a well-earned four out of five Garrett stars. With a runtime of 112 minutes, the film is rated PG for thematic elements including medical depictions of crucifixion and incidental smoking.

Raising money for missions

Christian Research Hospital to host first annual event

GARRETT HOWARD
lifestyle editor

The nonprofit Christian Research Hospital (CRH) is hosting its first annual convention on today and tomorrow, titled "Merciful African Supper for the Poorest with HIV/AIDS."

CRH wants to host the event to say, "thank you" for all the support they have received since their start in 2015, according to sophomore Kendall Carwile. Carwile, a member of the event's promotion team, said she would love for the convention to become a regular event.

"Hopefully, every year we can use this convention as a way to say, 'thank you' for the support that the contributors showed in the past year as well with the progress that has been made," Carwile said.

The convention will also serve as a final fundraising push for the CRH's mission trip to Cameroon, which will take place from June 16-28. According to Assistant Professor of Pharmaceutical Science Dr. Landry Kamdem (founder of CRH), the nonprofit is hoping to assist 5,000 patients in Cameroon by providing patients access to free blood and urine tests as well as treatment monitoring.

"As it stands... CRH will be able to adopt either 175 poor HIV patients to have access to free HIV care for one year or 700 patients to have access to free HIV care for three months," Kamdem said in a letter about the event. "This is amazing and incredible."

However, according to Kamdem, there are still over 4,000 patients that will be without care, and the upcoming event aims to raise more funds before the group's trip to Cameroon.

Kamdem's long-term goal with CRH is to establish a clinical research facility in Garoua, Cameroon. According to Arkansas Online, Kamdem said that God told him to use his pharmaceutical talents to help the

world's "poorest and sickest," which began his nonprofit organization.

After the event, Kamdem's mission trip to Cameroon will continue his study of the community's health needs. Kamdem said there is no specific plan for when the Cameroon facility will be built, but he hopes that others will become involved in the organization's efforts, and hopefully the first annual event will help.

"As it stands ... CRH will be able to adopt either 175 poor HIV patients to have access to free HIV care for one year or 700 patients to have access to free HIV care for three months."

- CRH Founder Dr. Landry Kamdem

The event will be hosted at two different locations, with the Friday event held at the St. James Catholic Church featuring an African dance performance, a fashion show displaying cultural African dress, and dinner for guests. The primary focus of the Friday event will be about the HIV virus and the AIDS mission work, and will take place from 6 to 9 p.m.

The second event will be held at Harding University in the Administration Auditorium and will feature many of the same elements as the previous night (including an African dance performance as well as the cultural fashion show), in addition to snacks and coffee for guests. The primary focus of the Saturday event will be about poverty in economically struggling areas, and will take place from 9 a.m. to noon.

The cost for Friday night is \$30 with advanced tickets only and the Saturday night event is \$10 at the door. Go to www.christianresearchhospital.org to find out more or help donate to their mission work.

FACTS & MYTHS ABOUT EATING ORGANIC

MYTH: Organic Food is Too Expensive

FACT: The Benefits Outweigh the Costs For Many

MYTH: Natural = Organic

FACT: Natural Foods can Contain GMO's & Pesticides

MYTH: Pesticides are NOT That Bad

FACT: Pesticides ARE That Bad



Information courtesy of Organic.org, Cornucopia Institute and Toxics Action Center

Graphic by DARRIAN BAGLEY

To eat or not to eat (organic)

Debunk the most prominent myths around eating organic

NATALIE E. SMITH
asst. web editor

On April 10, it was announced that a Florida couple found the remains of a Mexican free-tailed bat in their container of Fresh Express organic salad from Wal-Mart. The couple found the bat after they had already eaten some of the contaminated salad. According to the New York Times, the bat was sent off to the Center for Disease Control to be tested for rabies, but the bat was too decomposed for tests to be fruitful.

It's not uncommon for bats to hang around organic farms, as they're often used as a form of pest control for organic farmers. Since organic crops are grown without pesticides, farmers have to be creative with how they keep plant-killing insects away from their produce. Many organic farms even have bat houses on their property to keep them near, so this bat probably died doing a very important job: protecting organic crops.

Although this bat was potentially a hard-working contributor of the organic farming community, it has been making avid salad eaters increasingly conscious of what is in their packages of healthy goodness. This incident begs the question: is going organic worth it? While the organic movement has been picking up steam for several years, there are still some things that the public is unaware of. So let's debunk some rumors.

Myth: Organic food is too expensive just for the "organic" label

Fact: While organic food is generally more expensive than conventional foods, you may find that, the benefits of eating pesticide-free foods outweigh the few extra dollars you're spending. Organic.org, an online site that promotes educational reasons for eating organic, asks

consumers to consider that organic farmers, unlike conventional farmers, receive federal subsidies. This is one reason organic prices are higher. Organic farming is also much more labor intensive than conventional farming, requiring organic farmers to hand pick weeds and trap pests instead of using pesticides.

Myth: Eating organic means eating natural

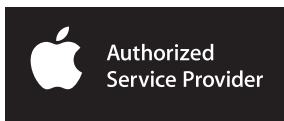
Fact: According to Cornucopia Institute, an online site that provides economic information to family farmers, federal law requires that organic food products promote ecological sustainability in production without the toxic inputs and genetically engineered ingredients common in the conventional food system. There are no such laws regulating foods labeled "natural." This means that "natural" foods may still contain ingredients that have been genetically modified or treated with pesticides.

Myth: Pesticides aren't all that bad

Fact: Pesticides are, indeed, all that bad. According to Toxics Action Center, an organization that aims to reduce pollution in the northeastern United States, pesticides have been linked to a wide range of human health hazards, ranging from short-term effects such as headaches and nausea to chronic effects like cancer, reproductive harm and endocrine disruption. According to thebalance.com, runoff from pesticides used on farms or during production is known to kill animals, plants and trees. So think about whether the risks of ingesting pesticides are worth it when buying conventional food instead of organic.

While not everyone can afford organic foods for every meal, recent studies have shown that it is a safer option due to the risks pesticides provide to the human body. So while you may have to be a little extra careful not to take a dead bat home with you in your salad bag, eating organic is still the way to go in the long run.

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