



Student Life

student life

"Enclosed in the parentheses of student life is the energy of God.
His energy forms the basis of what brings students together."

LAURA BROWN/////STUDENT LIFE EDITOR



WATER SPLASHES OFF SENIOR ANDREW DUNCAN
as senior Lindsey Webster hoses mud off of him Aug. 22 at the Student Impact Silly Olympics. Student Impact workers participated in the orientation events alongside the incoming freshmen and transfers. **•A. BEENE**

FRESH

Young group creates new 'Beginnings'

Freshman Shawn Frazier walked to his chapel seat one day in the fall of 2003 heavy with anticipation.

This was the day when he would find out if all the hours of practice and preparation paid off; he would find out if he would be one of the 2004 Spring Sing hosts.

"They decided to make the announcement for the host and hostesses during chapel," Frazier said. "It was horrible."

Frazier said he could hardly believe it when he was announced as a host.

"I heard my dad [Al Frazier, assistant professor of business] scream from somewhere in the balcony — that was funny," Frazier said. "I just sat there in shock. I felt honored and excited."

For Frazier, that day was just the beginning of his experiences as a host and with the close friendships he would later develop with the other host and hostesses, sophomore Abby Chandler, junior Melissa Ward and senior Sam Peters.

The 31st annual Spring Sing, titled "Beginnings," not only unified the hosts and hostesses as friends, but also represented all four classifications on one stage.

"It was neat to be a part of that kind of experience," Chandler said. "None of us had been a host or hostess before, so our experience coming into it was pretty much the same."

Having a freshman host was a "beginning" in itself for Spring Sing, according to Dr. Steve Frye, director.

"There had not been [a freshman host] recently," Frye said. "At least not in the 10 years I've been doing it."

Ju Go Ju, Ko Jo Kai and friends won the John H. Ryan Sweepstakes Award for their show, "Scoutin' for Badges."

The show featured Girl Scouts completing many different tasks, from rowing to recycling, in order to earn their badges.

Complete with a visit from Smokey the Bear, the show placed first in the costume and choreography categories, and second in music.

The 2004 Spring Sing production left those who worked hard to make it a reality pleased.

"It was a great show and the clubs were all outstanding," Frye said. "The theme developed well, and the audience enjoyed it, which makes the show overall very gratifying."

—ERIN COOK AND MEGHAN MICHAELSON

IN THE CLOSING NUMBER, freshman Shawn Frazier and sophomore Abby Chandler sing the traditional song, "United We Stand," in the April 10, 2004, show. Since 1973, the hosts and hostesses have performed the song to spread Spring Sing's message of unity. —J. MONTGOMERY

JUNIOR KATIE BARKER,

Spring Sing director for Zeta Rho, performs with sophomore Daniel Wade during their club act, "I Spy Private Eye" April 10, 2004.

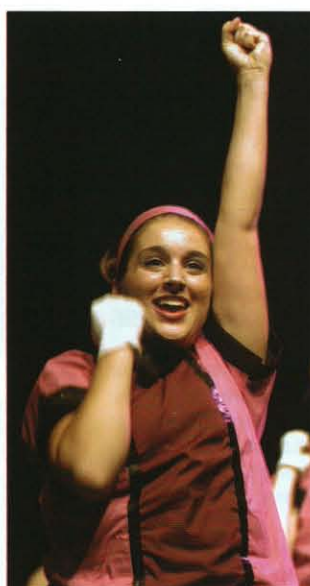
The show, which included the clubs TNT, Zeta Rho and Gamma Sigma Phi, tied for second place overall with the Kappa Gamma Epsilon, Tri Kappa, Delta Chi Delta and friends show, "Rags to Riches." —J. MONTGOMERY





SOPHOMORES ERIN NEAL, CLAIRE COSTOLO AND YISHUO LI, members of the Ju Go Ju and Ko Jo Kai social clubs' act, "Scoutin' for Badges," march with faces of pride in their opening number April 8, 2004. The group of Brownies, Juniors and Cadets sang about camping, cookie sales and fire safety.

•J. MONTGOMERY



IN THE SHOW, "LET THE GOOD TIMES BOWL," sophomore Kathryn Stewart pumps her arms while singing "Hit Them with Your Best Shot" during the April 10, 2004, performance. Stewart, along with Shantih, GATA and friends, presented the theme with a cosmic bowling atmosphere and oversized ball and pins.



SINGING "BE OUR GUEST," sophomore Amy Page invites prospective parents to visit her in the orphanage during the April 8, 2004, performance. Tri Kappa, Delta Chi Delta, Kappa Gamma Epsilon, and Friends chose the theme "Rags to Riches" and integrated brooms and trash cans as musical instruments.

•J. MONTGOMERY

DESIRE

Servanthood motivates Student Impact leaders

Student Impact was a one-week event three months in the making, and probably no one knew that better than Student Impact co-directors Karen Baur and John E. Sullivan, who both spent the summer in Searcy making preparations for this year's freshman and transfer orientation program.

Baur, a senior from St. Paul, Minn., said it was difficult to be away from home for so long.

"It was hard to give up my whole summer because I live so far away that holidays [and summers] are the only time I ever get to see my family," Baur said. "It was hard, but in the end it was worth being in Impact."

While planning a week of events may have seemed easy at first, Baur said she and Sullivan needed every minute of the summer.

"If you think about all that happens at Impact, you realize it's a lot," she said. "Planning theme dinners, finding people to speak at devos, arranging food plans with Aramark, setting up two nights of entertainment ... it's really incredible all we had to do. Everything you could think of, we had to do."

Sullivan, a senior, said the constant planning was the most difficult part of the job.

"It was always tough deciding what to do next, finding the appropriate time to do the next thing ... that was the hardest part," Sullivan said.

Baur said they could not have pulled the orientation program together without the help of the Student Impact Steering Committee, and Sullivan agreed.

"The steering committee [members] and their work ethics are what made Impact," Sullivan said. "They worked beyond our expectations."

Baur, a child and family sciences major, and Sullivan, a youth and family ministry major, were both paid and given internship credits for their time spent as directors.

While Sullivan said those were convenient perks, his real motivation as a director was his desire to help others.

"We worked every day, but I saw it as more of a service opportunity," he said.

Sullivan also said the people he was trying to serve — the freshmen and transfers — ended up being an inspiration to him.

"They are awesome," Sullivan said. "They could be the best class of all at Harding. I see a lot of desire to serve God and to get out of their comfort zones."

A December graduate, Baur said she felt confident she was leaving the future of Harding in good hands.

"I have so much hope for Harding because we have a great freshman class," she said. "We have so many leaders from them."

→ MEGHAN MICHAELSON



REACTING TO SUBCONSCIOUS SUGGESTIONS, senior John E. Sullivan and freshman Penny Cronk drive their "buses" Aug. 21 after entertainer Stephen Wood hypnotized them. Student Impact sponsored the "Woodytism" show for freshmen and transfers, but the performance drew a crowd of around 2,000 from all classifications. •A. INGRAM

CAKED IN MUD, sophomore Ann Winkler pulls her hair back to keep it out of her face Aug. 22 at the Student Impact Silly Olympics. Students involved in the orientation program enjoyed activities including a slip-n-slide and mud fight at Silly Olympics.

•A. INGRAM





JUNIOR NATE COPELAND uses sidewalk chalk Aug. 18 to inform freshmen and transfers of the Student Impact registration location. Copeland and other Steering Committee members collaborated to organize the activities of Student Impact, Harding's new-student orientation program. •**A. INGRAM**

FRESHMAN SARA MOON SCRUBS the window of a truck used by the Searcy Fire Department Aug. 21. Student Impact energy groups spent time serving the community on the Saturday before classes began. •**COURTESY OF B. GARDNER**



CLOVERDALE CHURCH OF CHRIST
EVANGELIST FRANK MILLS speaks to an audience of freshmen and transfers Aug. 21 from the Benson stage as part of Student Impact, the university's orientation program. Mills spoke words of encouragement from the book of Esther to assure new students they were at Harding "for such a time as this." •**R. KECK**

SENIOR SCOTT DUTILE RUSHES through Delta State's line of scrimmage during the Homecoming game Oct. 23 at First Security Stadium. Although the Bisons lost 48-14, Dutile contributed eight tackles during the game and 86 for the season. •**A. BEENE**



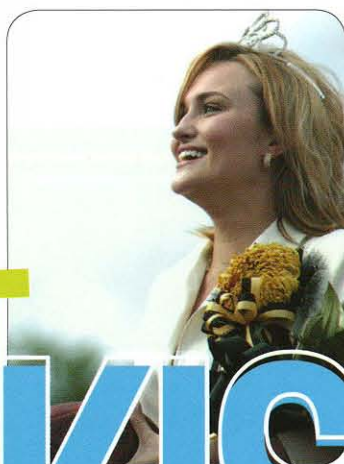
T.C. THORNSTENSON rides Harvey the bison during the Homecoming football game Oct. 23 at First Security Stadium. "[The bison] is a good tradition because he is good entertainment, and it isn't every day you get to see a bison run track," sophomore Logan Hunter said. •**A. BEENE**

BELTING OUT "WAS I WAZIR," junior Jeremy Painter plays the part of the Wazir during the Homecoming musical, "Kismet," Oct. 18. Painter said his role was self-satisfying because he had the chance to represent an evil character that the audience despised but he loved. •**R. KECK**



AT THE BLACK AND GOLD BANQUET, Don McLaughlin, evangelist at the N. Atlanta Church of Christ, accepts the Outstanding Graduate from the College of Bible and Religion award from Dr. Tom Alexander, dean of the College of Bible and Religion, Oct. 22. The award, which was presented by alumni of the college, recognized McLaughlin's service to the Lord's kingdom.

•J. MONTGOMERY



JUNIOR COURTNEY DANIELS SMILES at the crowd after being crowned Homecoming queen Oct. 23 during halftime of the football game. Daniels said her father, Greg Fenske, who escorted her, told her he knew she would win. •A. BEENE

KISMET

Music professor lassos director reigns

After three decades of waiting, Dr. Cliff Ganus, professor of music, finally got the chance to see one of his favorite musicals performed on stage.

"For the last 25 to 30 years I have been on [Professor of Communication Robin Miller's] case to do 'Kismet,'" Ganus said. "Finally in January he told me that he was going to be overseas in the fall and said, 'If you want to do it ['Kismet'], you do it.'"

Ganus did just that, despite changes on the musical roster. With both Miller, the usual Homecoming musical director, and Cindy Stockstill, musical producer, overseas, and Laura Eads, adjunct voice teacher, working on her doctorate, others had to be recruited to fill their shoes.

Ganus, who admitted to being a novice at directing musicals, said he was impressed with both the cast and crew.

"I was excited at the talent we worked with and the depth of involvement from the staff and crew," he said.

Ganus said senior Natalie Graham, stage manager, helped make a difference. Graham, who had worked on every Homecoming musical since she was a freshman, said she was not quite prepared for the load she had this year.

"I've had a little more responsibility than I thought I would have," Graham said.

Besides the stage manager role, Graham took on any role that was without direction. In addition to being in charge of the technical aspects of "Kismet," Graham was responsible for the show's costumes. Because of the musical's Middle-East setting, the women's costumes that were available to rent were immodest, and, therefore, Graham made all the women's costumes for Harding's show.

"Making all the girl costumes—that's been an adventure," Graham said.

Embarking on a new adventure herself was sophomore Jenna Aldridge, the musical's choreographer. Aldridge said she had to be open-minded and use as much stage space as possible.

"I have to see the big picture in my mind when I'm thinking about where to put the 35 bodies on stage," she said.

That was not her only challenge, however.

"Who knows how they dance in the Middle East?" Aldridge said.

By researching on the Internet and watching a dance class at a Middle-Eastern dance school, Aldridge was able to gain some helpful information before choreographing the musical.

Ganus said his directing experience helped him realize the amount of time and energy the participants put into producing the musical.

"It brought a new appreciation for the work the kids, professors and staff do in the drama department," he said.

—STACEY CONDOLORA

SOPHOMORE JON ROSS paints a depiction of Jesus at the final Harbin devotional of the fall semester in the McInteer rotunda Dec. 8. The Harbin devotional, which began in the fall of 1999, was held every Wednesday throughout the year either on the Benson steps or in the rotunda. •C. ROBERSON

LEADING STUDENTS IN WORSHIP, senior Jonathan Schallert directs singing Aug. 27 at the All-School Retreat held at the White County Fair Grounds. Mark Moore, former missionary to Africa and the featured speaker at the retreat, kicked off the event in chapel by reading Dr. Seuss' "On Beyond Zebra" and encouraging students to stretch their spiritual lives beyond their expectations. •A. BEENE



SENIOR LAUREN CREWS, junior Jonathan Haak, freshman Samantha Hinds, and juniors Amy Inman and Eli Clem sing with their peers Sept. 15 in the Shores Hall lobby. The Wednesday night Shores devotional brought students together at an on-campus location to worship in the middle of the week. • **R. KECK**



SOPHOMORE CHRIS FULKS attends the Wednesday night Bible study for Outreach America, a group focused on domestic missions, Sept. 15. With a double major in accounting and vocational ministry, Fulks said he liked the idea of domestic missions, but his destination after graduation "is really up to where God wants me to go." • **A. INGRAM**

VISION

Mission yearns to reach America

The living room was packed one Wednesday night in late August as 147 students sang, prayed and fellowshiped at a student-led Outreach America Bible study in the home of Marvin Crowson, domestic missionary in residence.

Formerly titled Domestic Vocational Missions, Crowson directed Outreach America, which sought to form and prepare teams and individuals who, by sharing the Gospel, would plant and help churches grow in major cities in the United States.

Since Outreach America's birth in 2001, the program has helped send four teams to plant new churches, and three teams were preparing to leave once members graduated.

Carl Williamson, a 2002 graduate, decided with his former roommate to enter the domestic mission field before they heard of Outreach America, but Williamson attributed to Crowson much of the encouragement they received to pursue that option.

"He helped get some fire under our vision," Williamson said. "It was, in a way, Marvin's idea that we get a bunch of our friends

together and tell them about what we wanted to do. That got us the rest of our team."

Williamson and his wife, Alicia, left Searcy in June 2004 to work with their team of eight in New Brunswick, N.J. The team focused on the students of Rutgers University.

Junior Rachel Hudgens, Crowson's student assistant, joined the program in March 2004.

While she was not yet committed to a team, Hudgens had set her sights on Washington, D.C. Hudgens said she recognized the value the Outreach America had for Harding's students and for the kingdom of God in the United States.

"I think a lot of people don't realize that they can do [mission work] in the United States as well," Hudgens said. "This program allows you to get a job and do God's work without being a Bible major. This is what God calls us to do."

Regardless of where in the country a team or individual wished to spread the Gospel, Crowson said Outreach America was committed to help them begin that work.

"Wherever you have a holy heartburn, I'll help you go," he said.

→ **AARON MILLER**

RELAX

Leaving the familiar, students enjoy outdoors

Whether it was the chance to rent boats, go tubing, or jump off cliffs into Greers Ferry Lake, or the chance to go climbing at Sugar Loaf Mountain, there were many opportunities for students to enjoy the outdoors at Heber Springs, Ark.

Senior Chris Jackson said he remembered the first time he rented boats with the soccer teams at Greers Ferry Lake. He said it was a great way for the teams to get to know the new members.

"Going out and renting boats was one of the highlights of my Harding career," Jackson said. "We would take about 20 people from both the men's and women's teams and go out on our days off and enjoy the company and get to know each other better."

Jackson also said that going out to the lake was a chance to get away from soccer just for a few hours and relax.

"We would have such a good time tubing out on the lake," Jackson said. "One time I remember that we tried to get three people on the tube at the same time and take the boat at about 30 m.p.h. That was without a doubt the most painful moment when we flipped the tube and all three of us landed on top of each other. It hurt pretty bad, but it sure was fun."

Other students found Heber Springs to be a good place to jump off the cliffs, which ranged from 20 to 50 feet above the water. Freshman Lynsey Clissold said she enjoyed cliff jumping for the experience of falling.

"Jumping off the cliffs is definitely one of the high points of school thus far," Clissold said. "I have never had the chance to jump off cliffs that large because back home we do not have anything like that at our lake. So being able to go out there with my friends and enjoy each others' friendship is what it is all about."

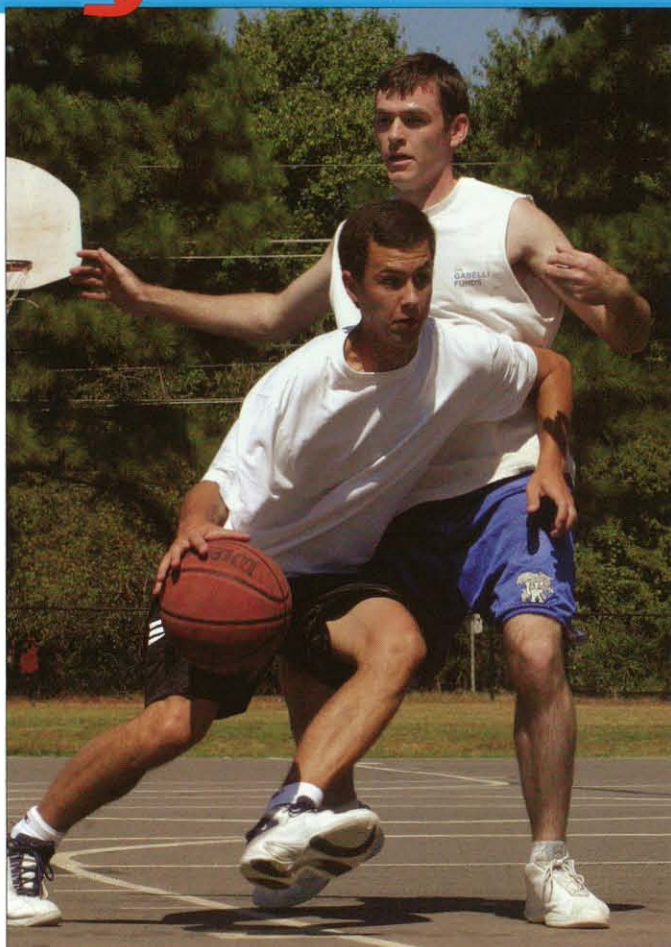
Senior Cody Kiser said he traveled to Heber Springs to go rock climbing on Sugar Loaf Mountain. Kiser said he also enjoyed going to the mountain on weekends to get away from the pressures of school.

"I used to go climbing in Dallas where I'm from, and I was afraid that I was not going to be able to continue my hobby when I came [to Harding]," Kiser said. "But luckily my freshman year some guys on my hall took me out there to go rock climbing. I am so grateful that they did, because now I go out there to get away from things."

Senior Zach Johnson was another hiking enthusiast. He said he liked to go to Sugar Loaf Mountain and spend time reconnecting with God.

"Sometimes when things are just not going well for me spiritually, I like to go out there because I feel I can get closer to God," Johnson said. "When I tore my MCL, I did not think that I would ever be able to go out there and hike the trail again. But since then, I am able to go out there and enjoy God's creation."

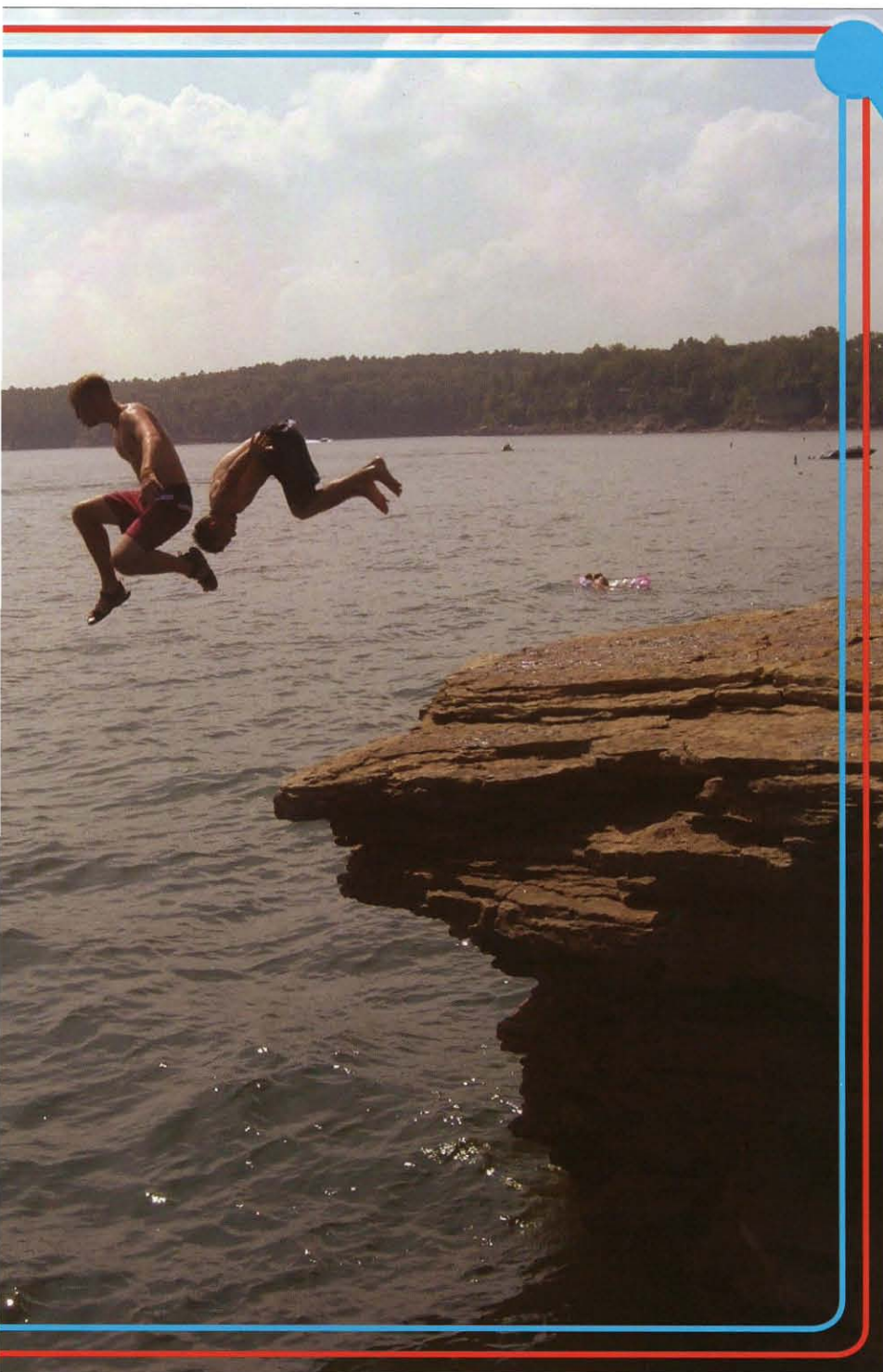
→MICHAEL ALLEN



SENIORS MARK LEONARD AND NATHAN SWAIN play a game of basketball at the Harding Academy court Sept. 19. They said they enjoyed playing on a regular basis to escape from schoolwork. •C. ROBERSON

GATHERED AROUND A TABLE NEAR JAVA CITY, juniors Kyle Sullivan, Krista Lee, David Renner and Blake Beamon play spades. The student center was a popular place for groups of friends to play spades and other card games. •M. MICHAELSON

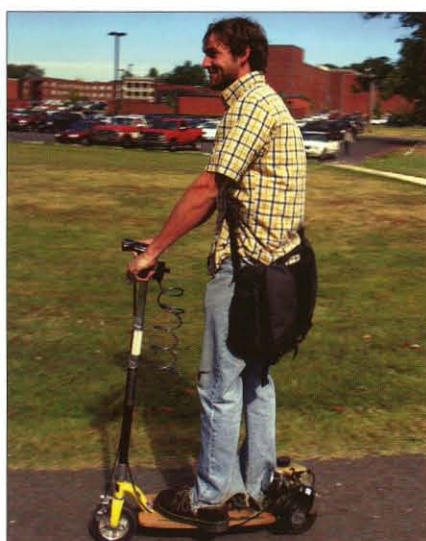




SOPHOMORE MASON BINNS and junior Jonathan Blansett jump off a 15-foot cliff Aug. 22 at Greers Ferry Lake in Heber Springs, Ark. Binns said he jumped off the cliffs because "the thrill is greater than a roller coaster." •**COURTESY OF E. DUGAN**



SETTING THE BALL FOR A FIELD GOAL, freshman Jamin Lawson prepares to attempt a field goal in the Student Association's Harding University Dorm Cup Kick Off Sept. 9. Lawson said he participated with the hopes of winning the grand prize — \$300 toward books. •**A. INGRAM**



TRAVELING ON CAMPUS, senior Jay Weaver rides his motor scooter down Park Street Sept. 28. Weaver said having the scooter allowed him to get more done between classes. •**C. ROBERSON**



VERTICAL HORIZON PERFORMS for more than 1,000 fans Oct. 2 in the Benson Auditorium. The Campus Activities Board brought the rock band in an effort to appeal to a non-country audience, according to Dustin Myers, student life coordinator. •**R. KECK**



FRESHMAN CHASE MARTIN FLOATS in the X-treme Air free-fall simulator Oct. 18 in the First Security Stadium parking lot. Around 200 students participated in the Campus Activities Board-sponsored event. •**R. KECK**

ROCK!

Vertical Horizon brings everything students want

The lights were low; the band was on stage; energy sizzled through the air; and the crowd was chanting "HU Bisons!" to the beat of the drums.

Vertical Horizon performed in the Benson Auditorium Oct. 2 and gave students like junior Geoff Banks a pleasant surprise.

"Wow," Banks said. "They rocked harder than I thought they would."

To some students, however, having a band like Vertical Horizon play at the university was not only a good show, but also an indication of where future university entertainment may be headed.

"In my four years here, the only other concert I've attended was Switchfoot [February 2004]," senior Shade Haislip said. "All the other shows were either really country or silly, both of which are styles I don't enjoy."

Haislip said he preferred bands that put on a "good 'ole rock concert." However, he did not expect he would get his kind of concert at Harding.

"I was worried that we were going to get another country act like Jo

Dee [Messina]," Haislip said.

Haislip and his fellow students got a show they thought was quite different from Messina's, who performed at Harding spring 2003.

"The show was nothing like I expected," Haislip said. "I was surprised by all the heavy guitar solos. Throughout the show they exhibited different stylistic influences and played songs by Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd and The Beatles."

Haislip said he was also pleased that Vertical Horizon encouraged audience participation.

"The lead singer asked us how the football game went that night, and suddenly everyone started chanting 'HU Bisons,'" he said. "The next thing I knew, the drummer was tapping out a rhythm with our chant, and they started playing a Zeppelin song."

Haislip said he believed the Campus Activities Board was trying to diversify the musical acts it invited in order to grab a larger college-level audience.

Junior Maggie Hlasta, a volunteer member of the CAB, was part of a student security team for the Verti-

cal Horizon show.

She was glad Harding put aside the country music this time in order to keep their concert selection eclectic.

"It's a totally different genre of music than what we usually get," Hlasta said.

Dustin Vyders, student life coordinator, said he wanted to provide concerts students would be interested in attending.

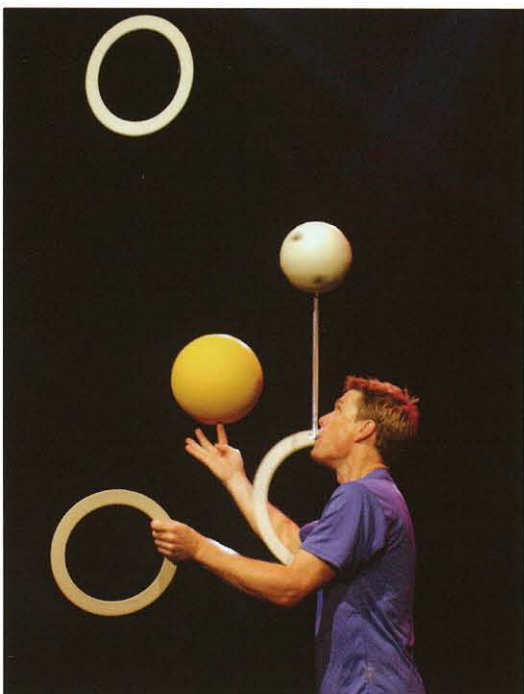
"It has been my goal to move away from country to something that most students would want," Vyders said. "When you ask the students what they want to see, many say 'more rock.'"

After researching the lyrics, personality and showmanship of Vertical Horizon, Vyders determined the group would be a good fit for the campus.

Vyders said the concert was a success and the students, as well as himself, enjoyed it maybe more than last spring's Switchfoot concert.

"I thought it was a little more happening than with Switchfoot," Vyders said. "People were jumping around and really getting into it."

→ STACEY CONDOLORA



SOPHOMORE DAVID SCRANTON SLIDES down the inflatable obstacle course at the alumni relations-sponsored tailgate party Oct. 2 during Family Weekend. The admissions office organized Bison Daze, an event for prospective students, on the same weekend, bringing thousands of visitors to campus. • C. ROBERSON

ENTERTAINER MARK NIZER juggles three rings and two balls for a crowd of more than 1,000 in the Benson Auditorium Oct. 1 during Family Weekend and Bison Daze. Nizer was also a regular performer at Student Impact, the university's new-student orientation program, and Uplift, a summer camp for high school students. • C. ROBERSON



LOCATION	FLORENCE, ITALY
POPULATION	400,000
CURRENCY	EURO
TIME	GREENWICH MEAN TIME +1



ON THEIR FIRST STINT OF FREE TRAVEL, sophomore Cassie Beagle and junior Ashley Alexander wait for a train to Cinque Terre Sept. 29. On the three-day trip, Alexander said they hiked, ate seafood and swam in the Mediterranean.

•COURTESY OF B. LAM



AT THE CASTLE PORCIANO, the summer HUF-group lounges after eating an authentic Italian lunch prepared by Martha Cosi, the owner of the castle. During their visit, the group explored the castle, which dates back to 1100, and sang to Cosi. •COURTESY OF K. EDWARDS



ON THE WAY TO CASTLE PORCIANO, juniors Kristen Edwards, Skadi Johnson, Chelsi Watson and Jonathan Aven talk with Mona Shackelford, wife of Harding University in Florence Director Robbie Shackelford, during a morning cappuccino stop June 3. While on site-seeing trips, the summer HUF group often stopped for cappuccino, a popular drink in Italy. •COURTESY OF K. EDWARDS





HUF

Parents visit thankful students over holiday

Atending school overseas during the fall semester meant students at Harding University in Florence did not have a chance to visit their families in the States during Thanksgiving break and enjoy the traditional turkey feast.

A few parents of HUF students, however, took advantage of the situation and joined their children for a Roman holiday.

Sophomore Lisa Cameron's mother, Julie, came to visit Oct. 20, and traveled with Lisa and other HUF students for seven days through Florence and Rome.

"It was neat to be able to see [my mom] over the semester and show her everything that I already got to see," Lisa said.

Lisa said some of her favorite sites in Italy were the ancient cathedrals.

"We saw a lot of artwork and visited a lot of cathedrals," she said. "I kept thinking about the people who worshipped there and the history. It was neat to see how they worshipped there."

Junior Bethany Lam said the HUF group took many day trips into the city of Rome as well as many extended trips to other parts of Italy.

Lam said the students grew close within the first two weeks of arriving

at the Florence campus.

"The whole group had great chemistry and bonded really well," Lam said. "I was really impressed."

Julie said she enjoyed the sites and meeting the other HUF students who became her daughter's friends.

"It was great," Julie said. "It was very exciting seeing her and the villa and meeting her friends. I now know who she's talking about when she talks about her friends."

Julie said seeing her daughter handle herself in a foreign country helped her to not worry about Lisa being so far away from home.

"Some of it helped," Julie said. "Some of it made it scarier."

Although Lam was not able to see her family during the fall semester, she said it was nice to have her friends' parents around.

"I think it contributed to the group," she said. "It was like having an extended family around."

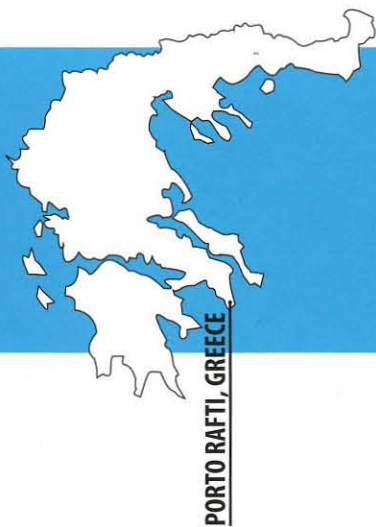
Lam said that extended family especially provided comfort during Thanksgiving break.

"It was hard being away for Thanksgiving," Lam said. "I was the first grandchild on either side who was not [home for Thanksgiving] this year. [Friends' parents] helped the whole atmosphere feel more home-like."

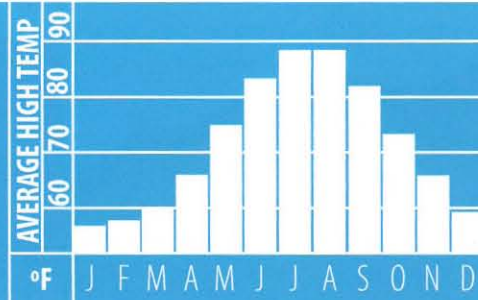
→MEGHAN MICHAELSON



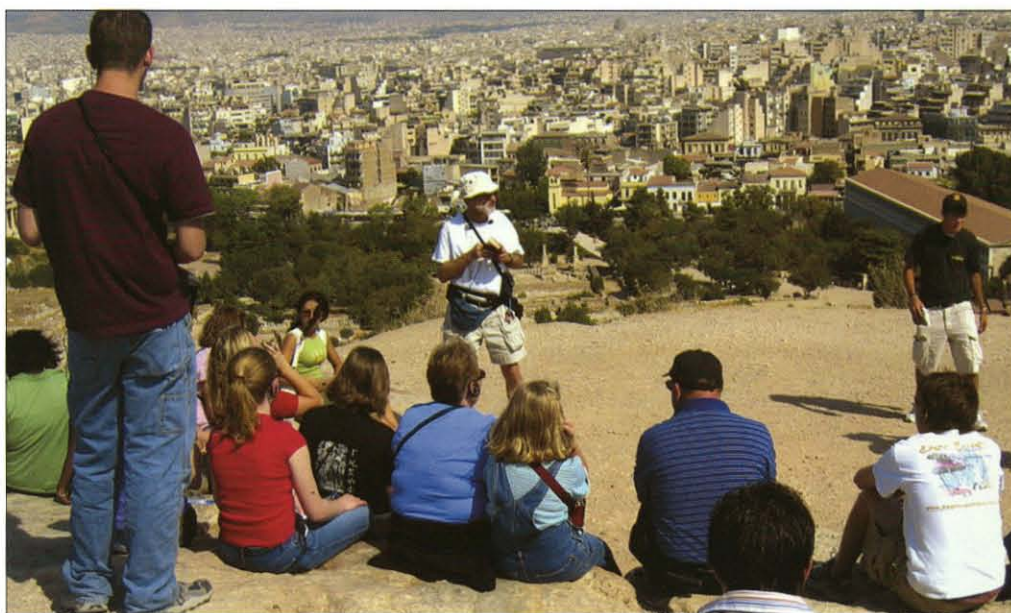
JUNIOR ABBY RODENBECK DRINKS from a lion head fountain July 7 in Rome. Rome, the City of Fountains, featured fresh water fountains throughout the city. •COURTESY OF A. RODENBECK



LOCATION	PORTO RAFTI, GREECE
POPULATION	772,072
CURRENCY	EURO
TIME	GREENWICH MEAN TIME +2



ON THE GREEK ISLAND RHODES, junior Emily Dell assists a potter in his shop Oct. 13, where he hand-makes pottery. "He didn't speak any English, but he understood my inquiry and let me try it," Dell said. "I have always been so fascinated with potters and wanted to try it for myself since I was little." •COURTESY OF E. DELL



ON MARS HILL, the fall HUG group listens to a reading from the book of Acts Sept. 18. On this hill, called the Areopagus, Paul preached the sermon found in Acts 17 about the unknown god. •COURTESY OF J. GIBONEY

IN SANTORINI, the fall HUG group travels up a mountain on the backs of mules Oct. 14. Because of a volcano, half of the Santorini island was at the bottom of the ocean, and the only ways to get to the top were by mule or cable car. •COURTESY OF E. DELL





Summer Huggers partake of Greek Olympic culture

Junior Lindsay Richardson said she was strolling through the plaka, an Athenian marketplace, absorbing the Greek culture when she came face to face with “the creatures.”

“They were the Olympic mascots, but I call them ‘the creatures’ because you couldn’t tell what they were,” said Richardson, who was part of the 2004 summer Harding University in Greece group. “I guess they were people, but they didn’t look like people.”

The 2004 Summer Olympic mascots, named Phevos and Athena, were siblings modeled after ancient Greek dolls, with elongated heads, small arms and large feet.

“I thought they were disturbing,” Richardson said. “Other people thought they were cute.”

Richardson’s encounter with Phevos and Athena were just two of many reminders that the Olympics had arrived in Greece.

Junior Carrie Witter said Olympic billboards were everywhere.

“The billboards were not only the canvas for Greek Olympians, but there were even American and many other Olympians on them as well,” Witter said. “It was pretty cool to see.”

Junior Jarod Stokes said he enjoyed the Greeks’ enthusiasm about the games returning to Greece.

“It was so cool seeing and hearing how excited they were about how the Olympics were finally returning to the ‘motherland,’ and how it was about time that they did,” Stokes said.

Along with excitement, junior Julie

Akins said the games also brought a few problems.

“There was still so much roadwork going on with scaffoldings everywhere,” Akins said. “It already took about an hour to get to Athens by bus, but now it took even longer because of all of the road work. They were still working on it up until the last minute.”

The roadwork caused fear that Greece would not be ready in time for the games.

Stokes said the Greeks he met kept apologizing that the Olympics were going to be bad because they did not have enough time to get everything done.

According to the students, the Greeks had other issues as well with the Olympics.

“Half of them were upset because the Olympics were going to occur during their vacation season,” Witter said. “They usually leave for that month, but now they had to stay around because of all the business that would be coming in.”

In spite of some of the negative aspects, Akins said experiencing the Olympics in Greece was neat.

“I enjoyed seeing [the Greeks] so pumped,” Akins said. “They just wanted everything to be ... perfect.”

Richardson said she even got into the Olympic spirit enough to get up close to one of “the creatures.”

“I saw this ‘creature’ coming toward me, and my first impulse was ‘Oh, how ugly,’” Richardson said. “But then I decided to get my picture taken with him. So I conquered my fear and took the picture.”

→AMY IRELAND



IN CORINTH, junior Ben Smith takes in the scenery of the Corinthian Gulf from the top of a castle built in the 1700s. Smith said the scenery was beautiful, from the landscapes to the ancient massive structures. •COURTESY OF B. SMITH

HUA



Visit to Korea exposes two distinct cultures

Along with the traditional pursuits of holding koalas, feeding kangaroos, sun baking on numerous beaches and photographing the Sydney Opera House, the fall 2004 Harding University in Australia group added Korean adventures such as hiking in the mountains, touring cultural temples and attending Korean performances to its itinerary.

While the additional trip to Korea came as a surprise to many in the group, sophomore Dusty Hanes said it gave him one more activity to look forward to for the semester.

"I didn't know [about the trip to Korea when I first signed up for HUA], but I was excited when I found out," Hanes said. "I knew it was going to be a chance to experience another country and continent, along with a new culture."

The group arrived in South Korea Aug. 27 and spent a week in Seoul, Seoraksan and Gyeongju. Junior Amy Jo Parker said she enjoyed the scenery in the country and the safe, but busy, atmosphere in the city.

"I loved getting to know the culture and learning the history. I loved collecting different things with Korean writing on it, and I really loved the shopping," Parker said. "The only thing that brought down the mood of the trip was the food. Some days were tolerable, but most of the weeds and dead fish we had to eat were unbearable."

When the group traveled onto Sydney, Australia, senior Barkley Terry said they were greeted with another culture.

"Australia is more for the outdoorsman and seems to be more of a laid-back culture like in the South," Terry said. "Korea was very fast paced and cluttered."

In addition to the attitude differences, Parker said she noticed how Australia's diversity compared more with the United States than Korea did.

"In Korea, all you saw were Koreans," Parker said. "We hardly saw any other races of people. In Australia, though, we see all sorts of different cultures. There is a high number of Asian people here, but also many different Europeans, and we've run into a few Americans as well. The culture here is much more diverse, and we blend in a lot better."

Once in Australia, the group traveled all over the country, down to Canberra and Tasmania and along the Great Ocean Road.

"The Great Ocean Road is the most beautiful stretch of pavement in the world," Terry said. "The sites are immaculate and breathtaking."

The group also spent time on Australian beaches, like at the Tangalooma Island beach resort. Hanes said the weekend in Tangalooma was the most exciting part of the first half of the semester.

"We had the opportunity to get away for a few days at this amazing resort," Hanes said. "It was absolute paradise. Besides relaxing on an island beach, I fed wild dolphins, snorkeled around old shipwrecks, watched the sun set twice and parasailed over the most beautiful water I've ever seen."

Parker said the best part of the trip was getting introduced to the culture and interacting with the wildlife.

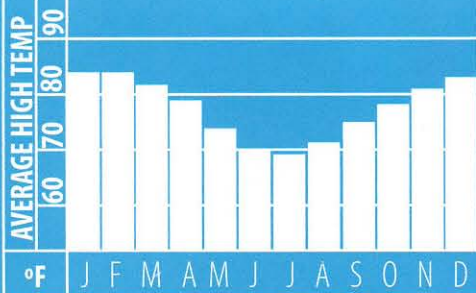
"Any time I did something really awesome, it was because I was trying to live like an Australian," Parker said. "I think feeding a kangaroo for the first time was definitely the coolest thing ever."

→DEANN THOMAS

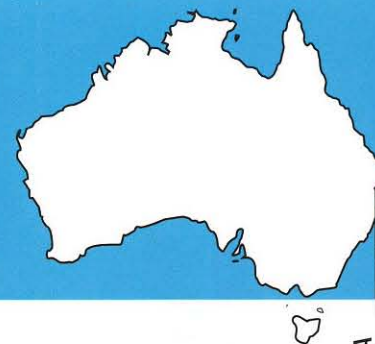


AT THE AUSTRALIAN WOOLSHED IN BRISBANE, junior Amy Jo Parker feeds a kangaroo Sept. 29 while its joey nurses beside her. "I think feeding a kangaroo for the first time was definitely the coolest thing," Parker said. •COURTESY OF A. PARKER





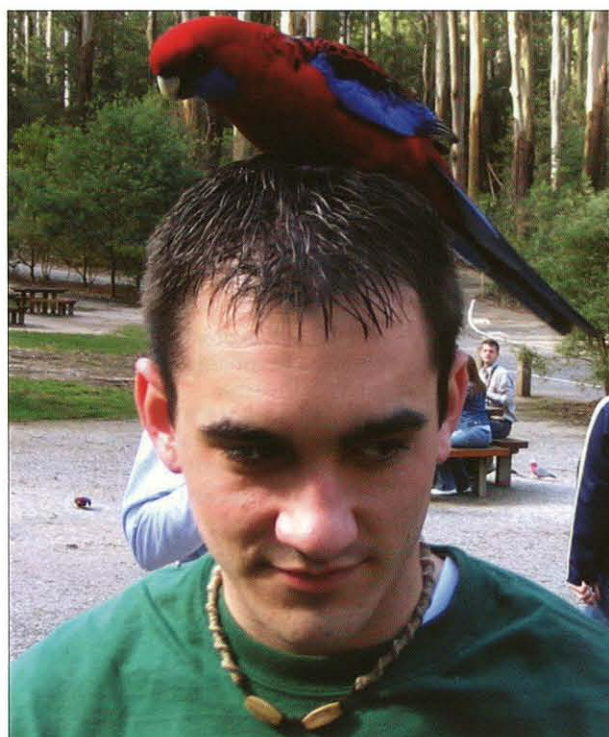
LOCATION	BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA
POPULATION	938,384
CURRENCY	AUSTRALIAN \$
TIME	GREENWICH MEAN TIME + 10



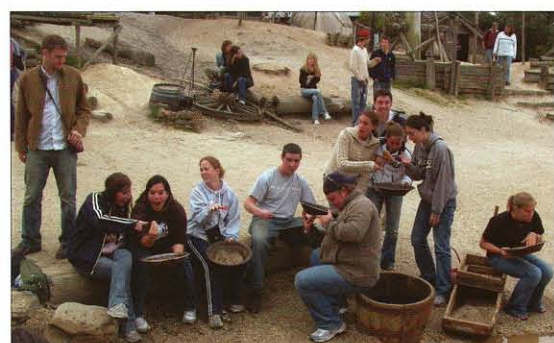
BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA



AT A KOREAN TEMPLE, juniors Ray Baxter, Luke Davis and Brittney Burcham take a drink of fresh mountain spring water. The fall HUA group members spent one week in Korea before heading to Australia, where they spent the rest of the semester. •COURTESY OF J. HOPPER

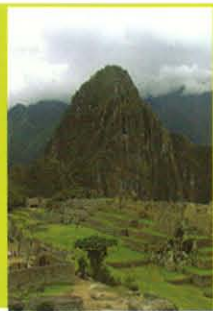


A WILD RED PARR-ROT sits on top of junior Raymond Baxter's head April 9, 2004, at O'Reilly's Rainforest in Lamington National Park outside of Brisbane. Members of the spring 2004 HUA group poured seed on Williams to attract the birds. •COURTESY OF D. HANES



AT SOVERIGN HILL MUSEUM, the fall HUA group pans for gold Sept. 22. The group gathered around \$5 worth of gold as they experienced how life was in Ballarat in 1851, when gold was discovered there. •COURTESY OF B. BURCHAM

HULA



Snowy terrain throws curves at Portillo slopes

From the moment they arrived, the students who went to Harding University in Latin America in the fall of 2004 said they knew there was something special about Portillo.

However, while students may have expected a fun week of skiing, many ended up spending the week suffering from altitude sickness.

"I've never been so sick in my entire life," said sophomore Kyle Symanowitz, who became so ill that he passed out during a campfire devotional.

Junior Nate Kearns said he was sick enough that he did not even make it to the devotional.

"Who would have thought that swimming in 30-degree weather would have made me even sicker?" Kearns said.

Sophomore Emily Smith was another student to suffer while in Portillo.

"Portillo," Smith said. "The thought of it pretty much turns me green."

Despite Smith's infirmities on the trip, she said she became good friends with Espot, the hotel's Saint Bernard.

The students who were not ill enjoyed skiing and even got the chance to meet the Italian Olympic ski team, who trained at the resort.

After an exhausting day on the slopes, students participated in the Chilean tradition of onces. Onces, served daily at 5 p.m., was the Chilean equivalent of tea time.

"I never knew that this time of day could be so enjoyable," junior Julie Fitzgerald said while enjoying her cake and coffee.

Whether they spent the week flying down a mountain or completely bedridden, most of the HULA students agreed that it was an experience through which they made a lot of new friends.

"I was so shy before this trip, but after Portillo I really trust and love this group," sophomore Laura Reeder said.

HULA Director Tom Hooks said building friendships was one of the goals of the trip.

"That's what it's all about down here in HULA," Hook said. "Experiencing new things and making friends that will last for life."

→DREW FRALICK

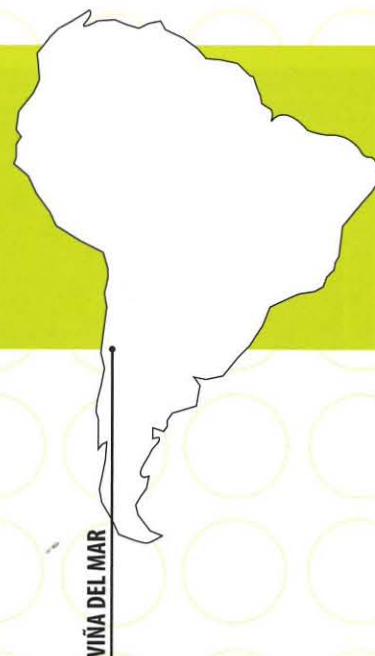


IN CUSCO, PERU, sophomore Brent Fonville visits with children dressed in traditional Quechuan costumes Sept. 26. Also on this trip, the HULA group visited Machu Picchu, Incan ruins built in the 1400s. •COURTESY OF M. WILSON





LOCATION	VIÑA DEL MAR
POPULATION	335,512
CURRENCY	CHILEAN PESO
TIME	GREENWICH MEAN TIME - 4



AT A LOCAL MARKET, sophomore Lindsey Lowe looks at a blanket she is considering buying Sept. 23. The local markets sold purses, blankets, sweaters, scarves, dishes, pots and other handmade items. •COURTESY OF T. AGEE



SOPHOMORE DEREK WILSON prepares to go off a snowboard jump Sept. 9 at Portillo. "At the beginning of the week I never thought I'd be able to snowboard," said Wilson, who attempted snowboarding for the first time while at HULA. "By the end, I was sure of it." •COURTESY OF D. WILSON



AT SKI PORTILLO, seniors Chad Nicholson, Diana Green, Trina Agee and Gwen Jackson eat lunch Sept. 9 at Tio Bob's, an eatery on one of the highest peaks at the resort. The group received an all-inclusive meal plan and rode the ski lift to eat at the top of the mountain. • COURTESY OF T. AGEE



CHILDREN IN A SMALL VILLAGE OUTSIDE JINOTEGA, NICARAGUA, listen to sophomore Todd Massey read the story of Jonah and the big fish March 16 during a 2004 spring break campaign. Other campaigners built a house in the village for a local churchwoman and her three children. •COURTESY OF D. CHERRY



CAMPAIGNERS TO KARLSRUHE, GERMANY, and Zurich, Switzerland, take a break to have a devotional on the Uetliburg, the highest point in Zurich. Led by Dr. Ken Hobby, professor of psychology, the summer campaign group of 10 students sang and distributed Gospel-meeting flyers during its five weeks overseas. •COURTESY OF C. NOAH



SENT

Scotland group thrives on predecessors' examples



In the front room of Campus Minister Dwight Smith's house sits a small, white teddy bear. It was a gift Dwight and his late wife, Barby, received from a 10-year-old girl in Scotland. The girl's was just one of the many lives the Smiths ministered to during their campaigns in Scotland.

"[Campaigns are] an incredible experience — they changed our lives," Dwight said. "It certainly changed mine. It is wonderful to be used to change the lives of young and old alike."

Since 1990, the Smiths led summer campaigns to minister to the people of Scotland. For the past three summers, however, Barby's battle with cancer left the Smiths unable to lead any campaigns.

In spite of their hopes, the 2004 group members knew the Smiths probably would not be able to make it on their trip either.

"We all kind of expected that Dwight and Barby wouldn't be able to go, but it wasn't something we liked to talk about it," sophomore Ashley Ingram said. "When we found out for sure they wouldn't be able to go, it was still a shock."

David and Allison Ellis, Harding graduates, were chosen to be the new group leaders, and shortly after the end of the spring semester, the Ellises left with seven students for their six-week campaign. After the campaign, the Ellises continued their work in Scotland as full-time missionaries.

The group worked with three churches in three different cities. In Sterling, Scotland, the group distributed hundreds of leaflets and encouraged the small church there.

While in New Castle, England, campaigners struck up conversations with people on the metro and held a "town day" and "park day" to evangelize in the city.

During the final days of the campaign in Peterhead, Scotland, the team reached out to the neighboring youth through songs and skits. Even though the campaigners stayed busy, they said they wanted to do something special to let the Smiths know they were thinking of them. Church members in Scotland that the Smiths had grown close to over the years also wanted to let them know they were loved.

As a result, senior Melissa Ward came up with the idea of making a tape of messages from brothers and sisters at the three churches.

"So many people felt a connection to Dwight and Barby, and they all had a special message to share with them," Ingram said. "We wanted them to know they were missed by everyone."

Besides the tape, the campaigners also sent notes and letters to the Smiths throughout the summer, and the children in Peterhead made cards to send to Barby. Dwight said the tapes, cards and letters were special to him and Barby.

"It meant the world to know that they knew that we wanted to be there with them," Dwight said.

When Barby died Aug. 11, she was not only mourned for in Searcy, but even as far away as Scotland. Yet in spite of his loss, Dwight said he was already making plans for another journey to Scotland.

"Lord willing, I plan to take another group," he said. "It is exciting to think about the opportunity to go back."

Dwight said focusing on a higher cause helped him cope.

"[Planning a trip back to Scotland] is a purpose; it is a reason — something to strive for," he said. "It's a focus not on me but on God's work."

→ LAURA KAISER

SOPHOMORE JESSE SHELTON leads the song "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean" for a group of children in Sterling, Scotland, May 21, 2004, during a summer campaign. When performing for children, the campaign members sang both serious and interactive songs. •COURTESY OF S. HUGGARD

DRESSED IN TINFOIL HELMETS AND GRAY ROBES, sophomores Seth Daggett and Aaron Beaird act out the story of David and Goliath March 19, 2004, during a "Kids Out" night while on a spring break campaign to Natick, Mass. In addition to "Kids Out" nights, which highlighted different heroes of faith, the campaigners distributed hot meals, sang in nursing homes, and handed out invitations to church services. •COURTESY OF S. DAGGETT



PLAY

Student workers make director's job easier

After serving as director of men's intramurals for more than nine years, Jim Gowen said he appreciated the staff members who have helped alleviate his often heavy workload. "I've had great workers, and I consider that a blessing," Gowen said. "It makes my job easy when these guys come in and do most of the work [by] setting everything up and [running] the games."

While Gowen was only able to hire one graduate assistant this year, the program was not left shorthanded thanks to the reliability and readiness of senior Josue Yanez, a student worker.

Yanez began working with the intramural program three years ago as a referee for flag football. Although he did not obtain the title of graduate assistant this year, Yanez was entrusted with similar responsibilities as one.

"He demonstrated that he was capable of doing essentially what a grad assist does," Gowen said.

In addition to his job as an intramural worker, Yanez also served as a resident assistant in Keller Hall, a Dormnet assistant and a chemistry lab assistant. While he was able to stay on top of his schoolwork, Yanez said holding down four jobs at once was a daunting task.

"I have to pay the bills too, and sometimes homework comes secondary to the job, unfortunately," Yanez said.

Graduate Assistant Brian Adams said Yanez's availability to fill in scheduling gaps was helpful.

"Josue works hard," Adams said. "He takes on my hours when I'm not available to go. He's been a lifesaver for me, because that way there's somebody there and [the athletes] are not just going to leave."

Adams, a 2004 graduate, also said Yanez's sense of humor made him fun to work with.

"He's a good guy to work with," Adams said. "Sometimes you can't understand him and you have to be like, 'What did you say?' But other than that, he's a good guy."

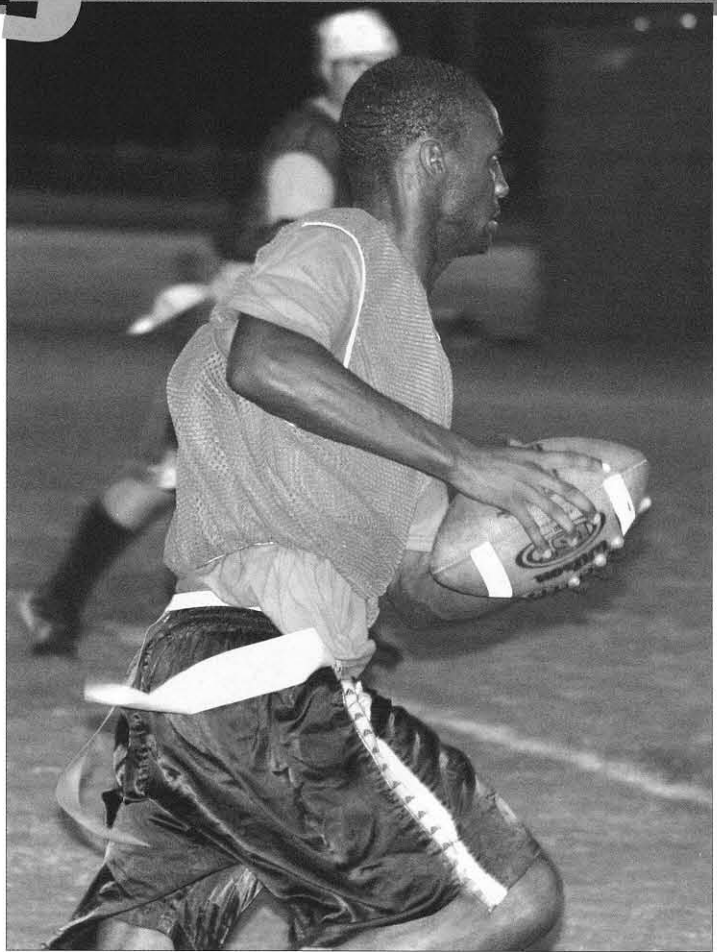
Yanez said what he cherished most about his co-workers was the passion they shared for sports.

"I enjoy it a lot," Yanez said. "Between the intramural workers and [Gowen], we have good camaraderie. I get to spend time with people that have an interest in sports as I do, and in a Christian manner."

Gowen said Yanez helped make the intramural program successful this year.

"Josue is one of the best workers I've ever had," Gowen said. "He knows sports and how to make things work. He's a great asset to the program."

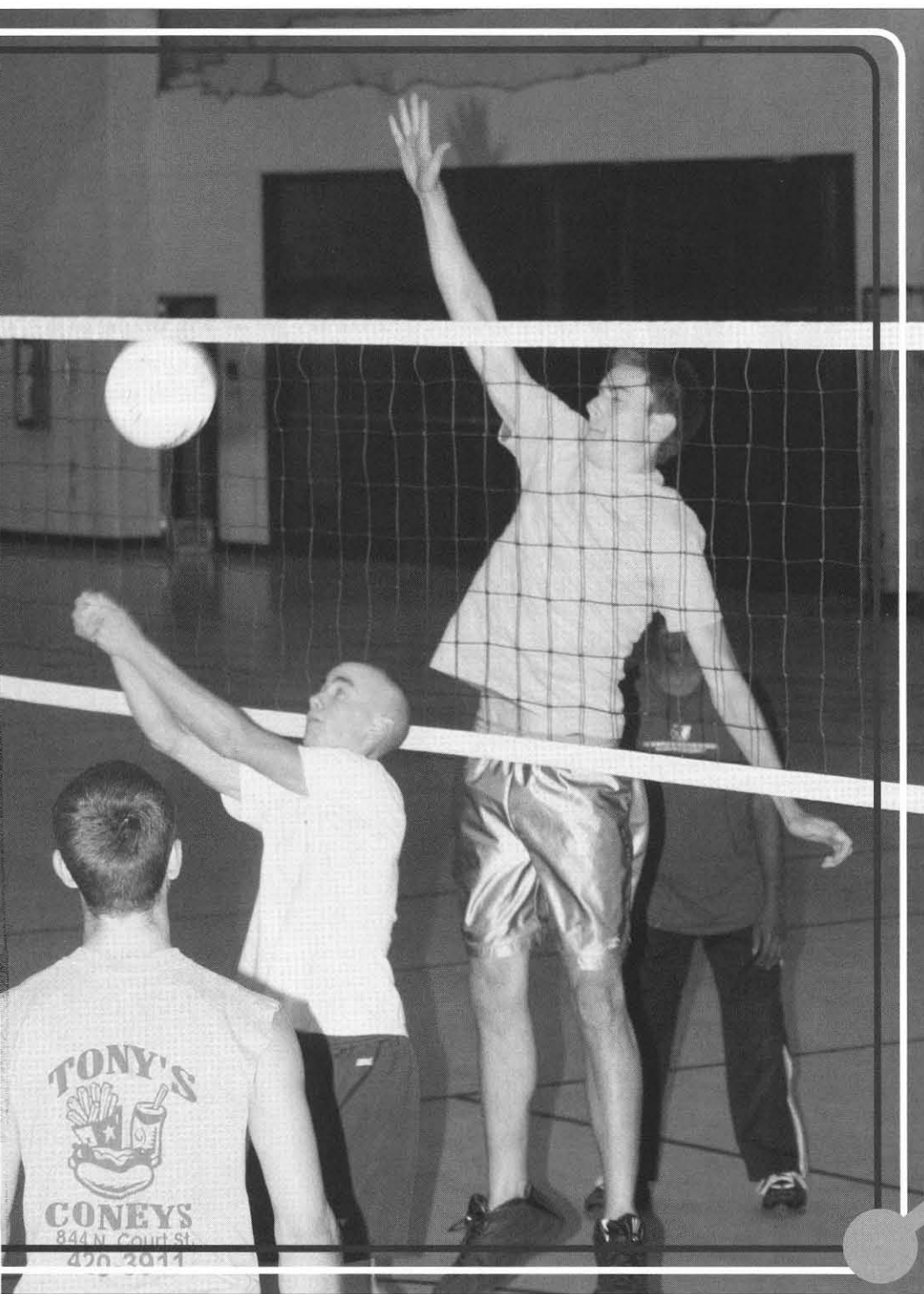
→ AARON MILLER



JUNIOR SHELVEY ARBERRY runs a quarterback sneak during an intramural football game Sept. 17. Arberry said since he ran track for the university most people did not know he could play football, and intramurals allowed him to practice that ability. •J. MONTGOMERY

IN THE RHODES FIELD HOUSE, seniors Shathar Langston and Mandy Warren tighten the net for an intramural volleyball game Nov. 17. Langston said volleyball was her favorite sport to work at because everyone seemed to enjoy it. •R. KECK





FRESHMAN TROY MARRS bumps the ball while senior Jared Burleson defends the net during a volleyball game Nov. 1 in the Ganus Athletic Center. "[Playing intramural volleyball] was a good opportunity to meet new guys," Marris said. "I still hang out with some of the guys on my team." • **C. ROBERSON**



WITH THE INTRAMURALS SPORTS SKILLS trophy next to her, Jessica Moore, director of women's intramurals, speaks during the spring intramural chapel April 27, 2004. Every spring the intramurals office awarded several trophies to students, including the sports skills trophy.

• **J. MONTGOMERY**

BREW

Coffeehouse pours out daily dose of relaxation

When other coffee shops weren't satisfying that intense longing for the rich, dark taste of coffee, a "Ditzy Blonde" might have just hit the spot. This designer latte was just one on a rather long list offered at Thanks A Latte, the coffeehouse on Main Street that greeted students in the fall.

Opened in June and located a mile from campus, Thanks A Latte provided the common coffee drinker a whole new experience with espresso.

Other drinks on the menu were "Millie Vanillie," made with espresso, cinnamon and vanilla; "Red Head," a raspberry-infused concoction; and "Dirty Blonde," with chocolate and Irish cream flavoring.

Customers enjoyed service that began at 6 a.m. and lasted until midnight, seven days a week. Rusty Nokes, owner, said he was proud to be open late.

"I wanted to create an entertaining place for people to come and have a night life," Nokes said.

Eight couches surrounded large coffee tables, letting customers relax while they sipped from one of the shop's eclectic mugs.

In addition to coffee, visitors could enjoy music playing from a jukebox, a small boom box in the middle of the room or sometimes even a live entertainer. Live music was often provided for customers on weekends.

A drive-up window was available for those who couldn't find time to sit and drink, and the coffee shop offered delivery for large orders.

This new coffeehouse offered not only convenience, but also wireless Internet access, a play room for children and an upstairs music venue.

Homemade desserts decorated the deli-style case. Dishes such as soups, salads and sandwiches were also served and were popular among afternoon guests.

Freshman Katie Owens ordered a peanut butter and chocolate milkshake after viewing the menu of Italian cream sodas, iced coffees, blenders, flavored coffee brews and espresso creations.

"The atmosphere was comfortable, and I thought they had a great array of drink choices," Owens said.

One of the most popular drinks was the "Melting Pot," Nokes' sweetest, most popular drink made up of espresso, steamed milk, chocolate, Irish cream, caramel and whipped cream.

Through a wide range of drink options and comfortable environment, Nokes said he wanted to serve a diverse group of customers.

"I hope young people as well as adults can find it a place to enjoy themselves," Nokes said. "I've been happy with the success so far."

→ JACLYN ROBERTS





PRESIDENT DAVID BURKS BEGINS chapel with announcements Sept. 7. Students and faculty attended chapel at 9 a.m. in the Benson Auditorium every weekday and participated in devotionals and other programs aimed at unifying the Harding family in Christ. •**C. ROBERSON**

AFTER THEIR CLASSES, sophomore Bridget Clark, junior Rebecca Jerkins and sophomore Rachel Rucker drink coffee beside the lily pool Sept. 20. Clark, Jerkins and Rucker lived in the same suite in Pattie Cobb and occasionally enjoyed time together drinking coffee in the afternoons. •**A. BEENE**



IN HUMAN ANATOMY AND DESIGN CLASS, freshman Lauren Franz, a fine arts major, draws a skeleton Sept. 9. Attending classes was a part of every student's daily schedule. •**A. INGRAM**



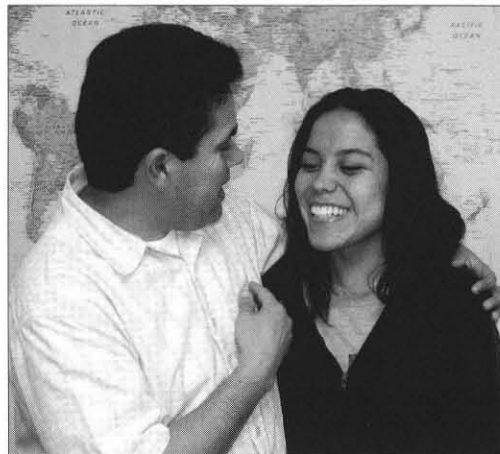
FRESHMAN BRANDON BURCHAM plays his guitar in Allen hall Aug. 31. Like Burcham, who began playing the guitar three years ago and usually played around 30 minutes a day, many students involved themselves with hobbies outside of classes. •**R. KECK**



IN HIS OFFICE, Butch Sandoval, visiting missionary, talks to his daughter, junior Denice Sandoval, Nov. 11. Butch Sandoval accepted the invitation to teach at Harding this year after serving at a Bible college in Chile for nine years. • **C. ROBERSON**

SOPHOMORES HANNAH AND LAURA VICK joke with each other in the Pattie Cobb lobby Jan. 25. The twins, who hailed from Stirling, Scotland, said the hundreds of Harding students who visited their church on international campaigns over the years influenced their decisions to come to Harding.

• **A. INGRAM**



CHRIST

Scottish twins choose faith over prestige

Juniors Hannah and Laura Vick, identical twins from Stirling, Scotland, were both accepted to the University of St. Andrews, a prestigious school in St. Andrews, Scotland, and home of England's Prince William, yet they turned it down in favor of Harding.

The two said they rejected the opportunity to attend St. Andrews because they wanted to attend a Christian school.

"There are no Christian universities in Britain at all, especially ones affiliated with the church of Christ," Laura said. "The biggest churches have about 30 members in them; ours has probably 25. The only way to study in a Christian atmosphere is to go to the States."

Hannah said it would have been difficult to attend the church of their choice if they had gone to St. Andrews, because the church of Christ was small in Scotland.

"In fact, there isn't even a church of Christ near the school," Hannah said. "It's an hour-and-a-half drive to our home church from the school."

Deciding to attend school in Arkansas over Scotland was difficult at first, but after a while Laura said she was excited about it because it would be "a new experience."

Hannah, who was older by 17 minutes, said she also had mixed feelings about her decision at first.

"It's kind of scary moving countries, but it's kind of cool breaking the mold," she said.

Laura said people sometimes said they thought it was odd that the women decided to come to America for their college education.

She said it was not all that strange to her because America was already

a part of her heritage.

"Our mom is from Scotland, but our dad is actually American," Laura said.

Hannah added that her dad had some experience with American Christian universities.

"He's an American missionary, but he didn't attend Harding," Hannah said. "He went to Abilene Christian University."

Hannah and Laura's older brother Robin also attended Harding; he graduated in December 2003.

When she arrived at Harding, Hannah said nothing about the university took her by surprise.

"I knew everything about Harding before I got here, like curfew and dress code stuff," Hannah said.

However, Hannah said she still had to do some personal adjusting during her first year.

"It was rough," Hannah said. "I didn't know anyone that well, and I didn't have my close friends. I think if Laura wasn't here too, I would have been more homesick."

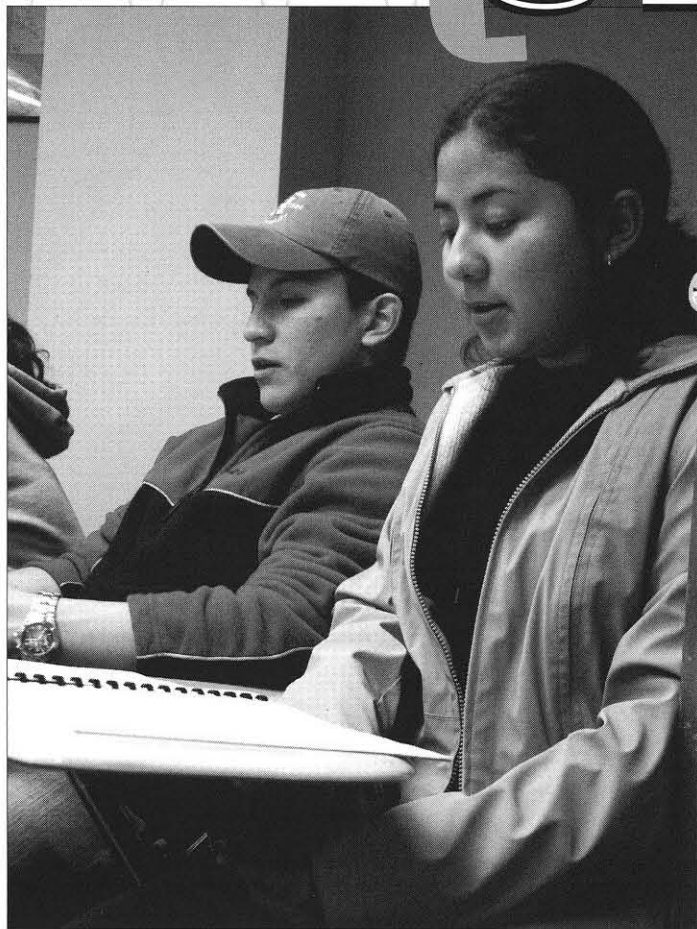
The women both said they became accustomed to Harding and eventually had their own groups of friends. Laura said that once they graduated from Harding they would have to decide in which country they would each live.

"It's hard to pick one country over the other, because they are both part of me," she said. "I don't think I could say that I would be staying in one forever and not the other."

Hannah said it was a tough decision and did not know what she would decide.

"No one knows what's going to happen in the future; it gets so complicated," she said.

→STACEY CONDOLORA

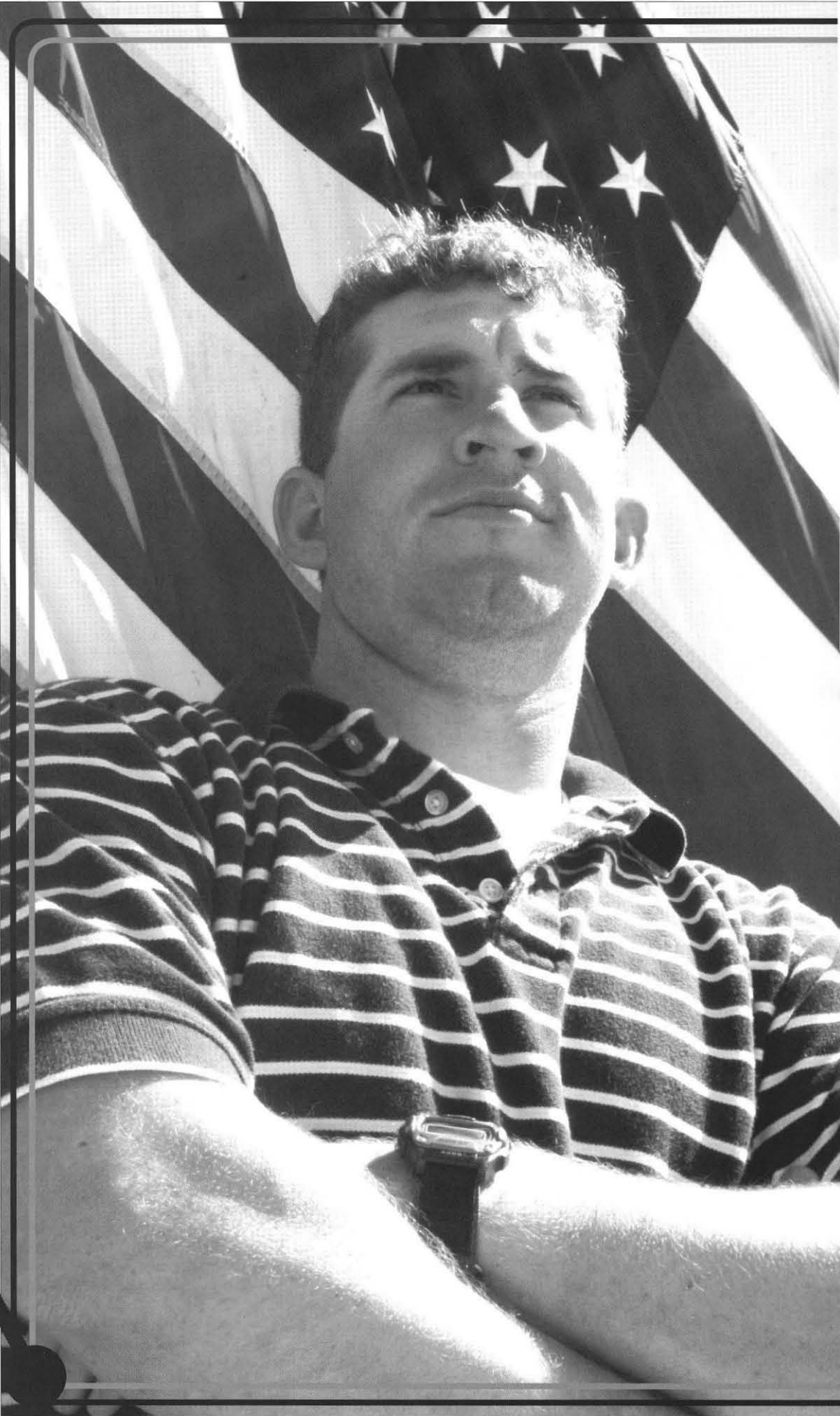


SENIOR JEFFEREY NOLASCO and freshman Wilka Guerra sing at a Spanish devotional Nov. 3. Guerra said worshipping in her native language made the experience more meaningful. •R. KECK

LIU SHICHANG FILLS HIS PLATE in the cafeteria during lunchtime Sept. 27. As part of the Sino-American Studies Institute, 16 Chinese scholars pursued master's degrees in education at Harding.

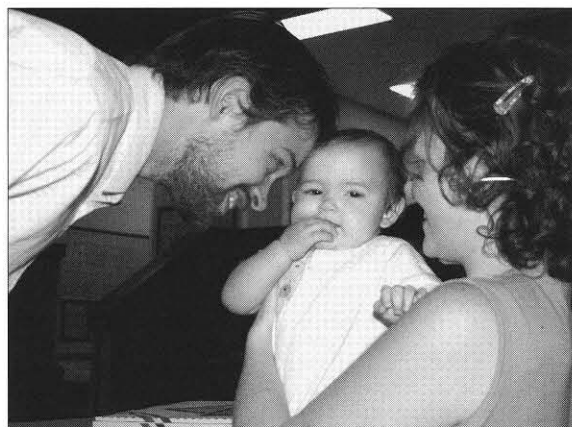
•C. ROBERSON





FRESHMAN ROBERT GROVES stands in front of the flag he fought for in Iraq. Groves, a part of Arkansas' 39th Brigade, missed three semesters of school while serving in the Middle East but returned to Harding this fall. •A. INGRAM

AFTER PICKING HER UP FROM SCHOOL, Tania Davis, Shores residence life coordinator, spends time with her daughter, Faith, outside their home Sept. 15. Davis, who was one of two RLCs pursuing a degree this fall, said she wanted to teach her daughter by example that it is never too late to accomplish goals. •**A. BEENE**



BETWEEN CLASSES, SENIORS JOE AND ABBY LETNER entertain their daughter, Kali, Sept. 10. One of only a few undergraduate couples with a child, the Letners organized their schedules around their daughter. "We wouldn't do anything if one of us wasn't with her," Abby Letner said. •**C. ROBERSON**

HOME

Iraq reveals the little things in life

At the age of 22, Robert Groves was not an ordinary freshman. In fact, he really should not have been a freshman at all.

After serving a year and a half as a military reservist in Iraq, Groves returned to school in the fall of 2004 to complete his freshman year.

In 2000, when Groves was 17, he joined the Army Reserves after graduating from high school.

Planning for a career as a federal law enforcement agent, Groves said he entered the military because he thought the experience would look good on his future resumé and help pay for college.

"It fit well into my career plan," Groves said. "At that time [the reserves] was only one weekend a month, and I figured it would mean free school."

After completing basic training in the fall of 2001, Groves moved on to advanced training in spring 2002 and enrolled at Harding that fall, two years older than most of his classmates.

Groves finished his first semester with no major incidents, but his expectations of only serving in the reserves once a month changed when he was called to duty in 2002.

Sophomore Taylor Cook, a friend of Groves since they met at Summer Experience three years ago, said she was upset when she found out he had to leave.

"I was really scared," she said. "[While he was in Iraq] I kept in touch and watched the news and talked to his

mom to make sure he was OK."

With only three days to prepare for Iraq, Groves said the realization of where he was going did not hit him until a few days after he arrived.

"It started to sink in where I was when I stepped out of my hut, looked around at all the dirt and thought, 'Man, I am in the middle of nowhere,'" Groves said.

While in Iraq, Groves said he lived in a palace formerly owned by Saddam Hussein. Groves also used his specialist training to help rebuild hospitals, schools, and police and fire academies for the Iraqi people.

"We got contracted to have a well dug for a village that didn't have clean water for 30 years," Groves said. "[The villagers] watched it get dug, the pipes put in, and the mud get pumped out for about an hour. Then the fresh water came out ... and that's when everyone went crazy."

Groves said his faith was both challenged and strengthened in Iraq.

"It was a challenge because I was away from church," he said. "I read my Bible a lot. I remember reading a lot of Psalms, and I could relate when David wrote, 'In a dry and weary land my soul thirsts for you.'"

After being away for three semesters, Groves finished his time in Iraq and returned to school this fall to finish his education.

He said it was good to be home.

"It's great," he said. "Being in Iraq has changed my perspective on a lot of things. I'm learning to treasure the little things more."

→**MEGHAN MICHAELSON**

PRESIDENT DAVID BURKS

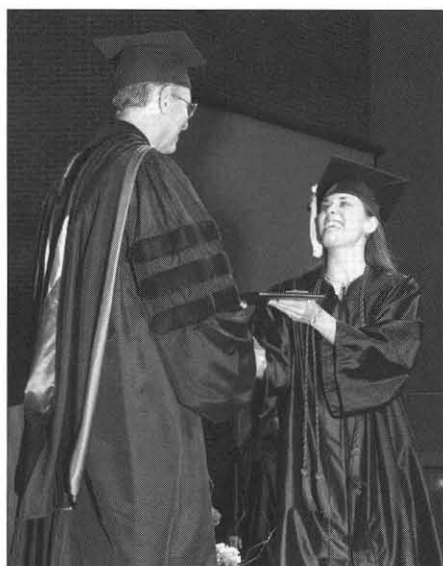
introduces Nick Hamilton, the speaker at the summer graduation ceremony July 31 in the Benson Auditorium. Hamilton, an evangelist at the Wind-song Church of Christ in Little Rock, also served on the university's select ministry committee. •J. MONTGOMERY

WITH DIPLOMAS IN HAND, the graduates of the Marriage and Family Therapy program pose for a picture after graduation July 31. The MFT program prepared students to become licensed marriage and family therapists and licensed professional counselors. •J. MONTGOMERY

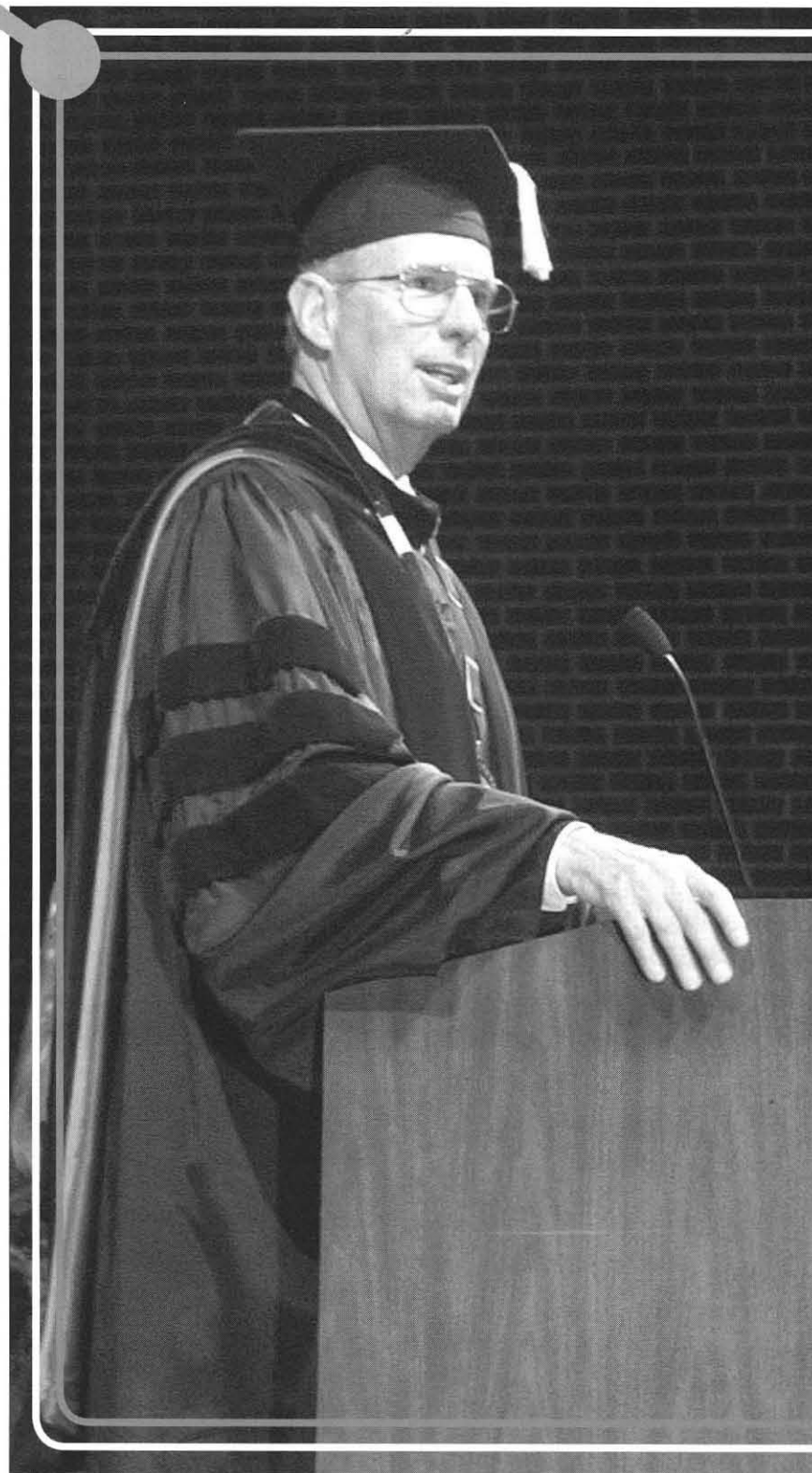


SENIOR STEFANIE COBLE

accepts her diploma from President David Burks July 31 in the Benson Auditorium during the summer graduation ceremony. Coble graduated with a degree in education and began the master's program in reading this year. •J. MONTGOMERY



DR. GARY ELLIOTT, CHAIRMAN OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, visits with senior Veronica Chandler and her sister, freshman Mary Piech, May 14 at the graduates' reception in the cafeteria after graduation. The reception allowed Chandler to introduce Piech, who enrolled at Harding in the fall, to teachers she might have in the future. •J. MONTGOMERY



SPEAK

Ceremony variety works to please

While most students probably pictured themselves graduating in May, a small minority of graduates chose, for a variety of reasons, to walk in July or December.

May graduation, which was held in the Ganus Athletic Center, was the most attended of the three, with 538 students graduating in 2004 compared to the July graduation with 215 students and the December ceremony with 278 graduates.

Graduate Mark Sullivan said even though he graduated in May 2004, he actually planned on graduating the year before.

However, Sullivan said it did not make a difference when he graduated.

"A piece of paper is a piece of paper whenever you get it," Sullivan said. "I wasn't there for the ceremony, just to get the piece of paper."

In spite of the delay, Brent Adams, a July 2004 graduate, said he preferred the summer graduation because it was more personal.

"It was short, which was excellent," Adams said.

Adams said he favored the smaller graduations because of the intimate setting.

"I would almost prefer to graduate in July or December because the May graduation is so huge you can't find your friends," he said. "But in July everyone is done and all your

friends are able to be there."

The May 2004 graduation speaker was Secretary of Education Rod Paige while the July speaker was Nick Hamilton, the evangelist of the Windsong Church of Christ in Little Rock. Dr. Don England, distinguished professor of physical science, was the December graduation speaker.

"Dr. England is a distinguished professor who is highly regarded by staff, faculty and graduates alike," President David Burks said.

Cindy Hunter, secretary in the president's office, supplied the names of the guest speakers for the July and December graduations.

"Most of the time for the July and December graduation [ceremonies] we ask someone local to speak," Hunter said. "It's usually a relative of one of the graduates, someone who has good speaking ability."

Penny McGlawn graduated with a master's degree in May 2004 and said she was glad she graduated when she did.

"I worked so hard for my degree, and I wanted to walk and to see my friends walk," McGlawn said.

However, she said she sympathized with her parents and grandparents.

"It's super-uncomfortable to sit so long in the gym," McGlawn said. "My husband, Jason, is graduating in December and we're looking forward to the comfy seats in the Benson."

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