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Courtesy: Jessica Glaser

Jessica Glaser

PHC Students Share Writing Skills

by Bruce Truax

The Writing Mentorship Program employs PHC students and alumni to provide high school and middle school students with tutoring that improves their writing skills.

"The goal is to instill a love of writing in the students... [and give] a lot of positive reinforcement," said senior Jessica Glaser, program administrator.

The process is simple. Glaser tries to match the needs of the high school student with a mentor that will best fulfill the student's needs. Parents email Glaser if they want a writing tutor or "mentor" to improve their child's writing. Once she gets the email, Glaser sends an email out to all

Campaigns Focus on Mental Health

Student Body President Race Concentrates on Campus Mental Health Policy

by Hailey Kilgo

The PHC student body presidential race is in full swing, and raising mental health awareness is a prominent theme across the candidates' platforms. Presidential candidate William Bock and his running mate Josh Webb helped compile a mental health survey and released the results last week.

As someone who has experienced depression before, Webb wants people to realize that not being okay is okay.

"I don't think we need to change the ethos of PHC as a whole, but we want to refine it," Webb said. "We want to make sure people know that you don't have to be perfect to come here, you don't have to be planning on going to law school or being a perfect student to be a success story here at our school."

Some notable statistics from the non-random survey include that 60 percent of 150 respondents have personally dealt with mental health issues while on campus; the most common are depression and

anxiety. Thirty-one percent of respondents said they had attempted to see a campus counselor. Twenty-eight percent of students say that mental health issues caused them to question their faith, and over half missed classes due to mental health issues.

For Bock and Webb, mental health has been a core issue from the start. Their policies include the introduction of mental health week, policies for people diagnosed with depression getting academic

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studentgovernment

Moving forward, Student Senate is going to take steps to reduce and consolidate the number of emails that you are receiving on a regular basis. To that end, in the future we will consolidate most of student government's emails with minutes to a single weekly email, rather than an email for every meeting. However, minutes will still be posted online within 24 hours and can be accessed through the Student Government portion of the PHC website at any time.

We are also taking new steps to further improve our communication with the student body. Please take our communication survey that was emailed out last night so that we can further improve what information we communicate and what mediums we use to communicate that information to you.

~ Tim Kocher, Speaker of the Senate

Depression Still an Issue on Christian Campuses

continued from cover

help, and more flexibility in counseling hours.

Presidential candidate Daniel Thetford and running mate Matt Hoke want to go beyond raising awareness and include practical solutions.

Through their mentorship program, Christian study groups, and service-minded vision for the campus, they plan to improve the mental health of PHC by creating an environment where students feel comfortable enough to share their struggles.

“At the end of the day we just want to cultivate a heart for students to love each other, and then hopefully those people will come out of the wood-works to serve each other,” Thetford said. “We’re focused on the solutions part, not just the awareness.”

Thetford wants to see the campus become more service-minded.

“Mental health has been on the agenda for a long time, but we don’t want to just put it on the agenda to create awareness,” he said. “We want to get down to our deep community problem and learn how to fix that.”

Presidential candidate Christian McGuire has advocated for mental health reform as a student senator, and his running mate Sarah Geesaman, a resident assistant, has helped guide students through all kinds of crises. Both view the discussion of

mental health as an important conversation to have, one that they plan to expand and implement actions for, if they win.

“We have two prongs to what we’re trying to do here,” Geesaman said. “One is increase awareness, and the other is to



Courtesy: Pixabay

destigmatize the idea of mental health issues because there is a negative stigma that often people from conservative backgrounds have attached to mental health.

It’s important to recognize that it doesn’t mean you’re in some kind of un-repent sin or something. We plan to use a mental health week and a plan to fundraise so that it’s not only on the administration to help this issue.”

McGuire and Geesaman plan on crafting and sending out a comprehensive mental health survey of their own if elected.

“We’d use that survey to create a report that helps up put resources where they’re

most helpful,” Geesaman said.

Tracy Carter is one of two campus counselors who spend part of their week on campus.

“People with depression feel like they want to or should isolate themselves,” she

said. “However, we’re created to connect with others and come together as a community. The thought to isolate is a lie and can lead to more depressed feelings. Connecting with others in a safe and loving community allows people feeling depressed to see an alternative reality than what their depression is leading them to think, and it provides a support system on which to lean while recovery is occurring.”

Carter pointed to Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 to show the importance of community in helping those struggling with feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness, and helplessness.

“Two are better than one, because they have good reward for their labor.

For if they fall, one will lift up his companion.

But woe to him, who is alone when he falls. For he has no one to help him up.

Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; but how is can one be warm alone?

Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.” ♦

“Connecting with others in a safe and loving community allows people feeling depressed to see an alternative reality than what their depression is leading them to think, and it provides a support system on which to lean while recovery is occurring.”

Tracy Carter

PHC Women’s Counselor

Writing Mentors Reach Out to Students

continued from cover

her mentors or talks to a mentor directly. Mentors then tell Glaser which students they can tutor.

After speaking with parents initially, Glaser leaves the communication, which is mostly done online, up to the parents and the mentors. The parents discuss how they want the mentor to teach the high school student, and then the mentor will usually have the student send them a writing piece that he or she will edit and send back the student. This continues until the mentorship is finished. The flexibility of this process allows for mentors to teach students at the pace that is best for them and choose a curriculum that works best for them.

"We make sure they are aware what's going on with their writing, like how to improve the editing process," mentor Jared Midwood, a junior, said. "A lot of times that's the problem for kids. They don't edit properly."

Mentors enjoy the program as well.

"Helping people write is a super high

calling, especially in today's society where everything is [about the] sound bite, writing is a lost art," Midwood said.

"You're teaching students the basics of writing," Glaser said. "You're teaching the grammar and trying to instill a love for writing. If you give a strong foundation for them then it will help them in high school and going on to college."

"My student takes constructive criticism really well, which is a major benefit when you're proofing and editing someone's writing. It's been no less than a pleasure," said mentor Elizabeth Wilk, a senior.

Glaser is very proud that the program reaches across the entire country. Even a student in China benefited from the program.

"I think it's cool to see how we here at PHC can connect with people all over the country and even all over the world through this program," Glaser said.

Mentors build skills collaborating and editing that will benefit them later in life.

"It's valuable experience in general to be helping people," Midwood said.

Glaser wants to become a teacher.

"I really do love elementary school, that's where my heart is," she said.

Wilk wants to use the experience to go into writing professionally.

"It's helped solidify how much I love writing and editing and proofreading," she said. "I love making my and other people's writing the best it can be."

Glaser said that the program needs more student mentors. There have been difficulties matching students with mentors.

"We have quite a bit of demand," Glaser said.

To fill out the application form on the PHC website or contact Glaser at mentorshipcoordinator@phc.edu. Mentors are paid \$12 an hour.

"Students and parents alike are really appreciative of the mentors," she said. "They seem to be impressed by how the mentors help them not only with the mechanics of writing, but also how mentors help them think critically about their ideas and how they share them with others through writing." ♦

New Pipes Fix Mount Vernon Odor

by Marjorie Pratt

The mysterious odor in Mount Vernon's lobby has been solved, said Director of Facilities Service John Terryberry.

John Terryberry, director of facilities, said that the smell does indeed come from the antifreeze protecting the waterpipes in the attic. The antifreeze hub is in the sprinkler room right off the lobby, which is where most of the leaks happen, causing the smell to localize in the entryway. The system was installed in 2001. Terryberry said that the pipes deteriorate over time which can result in leaks.

Over the past 16 years, the corrosion steadily became worse, and leaks more frequent. Because of the regular dripping in the sprinkler room, maintenance placed

buckets to catch the leakage, and while they emptied the buckets daily, the aroma was still able to spread.

"Over spring break, we did replace the whole system," Terryberry said. He expects that this will result in fewer leaks and odor issues at least until the system once more meets the end of its life.

Though the odor stemming from the sprinkler room did not reach the wings, the sprinklers in the dorm rooms would occasionally spring leaks, spreading the smell. The sprinkler in junior Danielle Fife's closet burst last semester, forcing her wing mates to arm themselves with room spray and deodorizers to mask the stench.

The drip buckets and the minor mends were, of course, temporary solutions. In

fact, many students had resigned themselves to the odor.

At the beginning of this semester, Dean Sandra Corbitt sent an email to the Mount Vernon residents, alerting them that the maintenance team had been working toward a solution and custodial would set out air fresheners to cover the smell until contractors could resolve the issue. The smell, was reportedly coming from the liquid, which Corbitt described as "not regular water" leaking from the pipes. Though this email brought hope, many students still understood little about the problem. Some students, including D1 frequenter Heather Faison, were under the impression that the "not regular water" was sewage. ♦

BP Competitors Race Snowstorm Back to Campus

by Danielle Fife

Five students spent their break in Los Angeles representing Patrick Henry College at a debate tournament.

Sophomore Christopher Baldacci, junior William Bock, junior Claire Atwood, senior Johanna Christophel, and senior Blaire Bayliss left for the Pan-American Championship for British Parliamentary Debate on Mar. 9.

The debaters did well, but they missed breaking by one point. According to William Bock, they needed 11 points to move on, they only received 10 points.

While they may not have broken, the team is still very proud of their success and is looking forward to the rest of the season.

"We all did really amazingly, considering the strength of the competition at the tournament," Bayliss said. "How well we all did bodes well for our chances at nationals!"

Six countries, including Canada, Mexico, and Jamaica were represented at the

tournament.

"It is always an amazing experience getting to interact with debaters from around the world," Christophel recalls. "Everyone has unique perspectives and experiences that they bring to the sport."

While these four students were supposed to be home Monday, the unexpected snowstorm delayed them an entire day.

The snow delayed the plane from its airport of origin and left the students stranded. The next flight out of Los Angeles back to PHC was not until Thursday – four days after the group was supposed to leave California.

Fortunately, Christophel found the group a flight out of San Francisco that left at midnight. They had exactly enough time to make the six-hour drive to the only flight that could get them home. They raced the clock up the California coastline.

The four arrived at the airport exactly when their flight was scheduled to depart. Fortunately, it was delayed an hour, and they were able to board the plane to make



Stranded BP competitors

their long flight home.

"Special thanks to Johanna for being a logistics wizard and getting us back here!" Bock said. ♦

Snapchat Geofilters to Come to PHC?

This is the fifth story in the Herald's social media series

by Evie Fordham

A smiling taco, a puppy with its tongue hanging out, or a panda wearing sunglasses – these are just a few of the "Lenses" that transform Snapchat users' faces in the photos they send to friends and contribute to its popularity and newfound success as a public corporation.

Snapchat's premise is simple: users send each other disappearing photos and videos adorned with text and stickers and can post photos as "Stories" viewable for a 24-hour period by their Snapchat friends.

"There is something nice about it being a non-permanent thing," said sophomore Hallie Skansi. "People obsess about selfies

they take on their phones, but Snapchat lets you take a quick silly picture and send it off without thinking about it too much, or seeing it again in your camera roll and judging your flaws."

Snapchat's simplicity meets a need that users, mainly millennials, cannot fulfill through mainstays like Instagram and Facebook. It's silly, temporary, and no one worries about how much attention their image receives.

The social media app, founded in 2011, received major attention after its parent company Snap's \$3.4 billion initial public offering on Mar. 1. It is a topic of discussion on Patrick Henry College's campus too after the Mar. 15 introduction of "The Snapchat Competition Act," which would

award \$75 to the best student-designed Snapchat geofilter that promotes PHC. Speaker of the Senate Tim Kocher is sponsoring the Snapchat bill, which uses funds from Student Life, Admissions, and Student Senate to encourage students to design a PHC geofilter. Geofilters are graphics that can be only accessed by users at specific locations and feature the names of towns, counties, or universities. Snapchat is the latest app that companies from Taco Bell to movies like *CHiPs* are figuring out creative ways to advertise on. Its 2016 revenue was \$405 million, although it was in the red, according to *TIME*.

"I had to explain to Student Life and

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Snapchat Is the *Different* Social Media

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Admissions what I was talking about, but when I did, they both got on board,” Kocher said. “It impacts both of their worlds if prospective students have geofilters saying they’re at PHC that they can send to friends and put on their Snapchat stories. It makes us look less like a small college.”

That Snapchat geofilters influence how “legitimate” millennials think an institution is points to its status as a rival of Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. In *TIME*’s March 13 cover story “What’s It Worth to Be Yourself Online? The Genius of Snapchat,” Joel Stein discussed why Snapchat is unique.

“Its currency is the ‘streak,’ a calculation of how many days you and another person have privately communicated with each other,” Stein wrote. “It trades in intimacy, not popularity... Snapchat is aware that most of our conversations are stupid... What [Snapchat co-creator Evan] Spiegel understood is that teens wanted a safe way to express themselves.”

Users know that Snapchat’s not perfectly safe. Sexting and screenshotting others’ Snapchats to hold them accountable are issues, although Snapchat notifies users if someone screengrabs their photo.

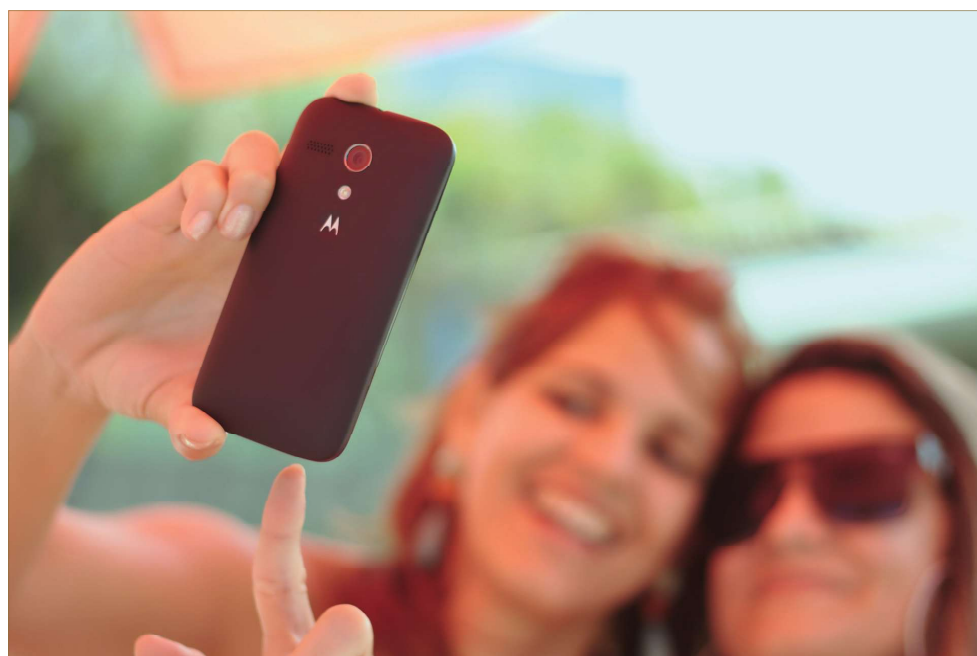
“It’s a harmless thing that can sometimes be used in bad ways,” Skansi said. “But that’s true for almost anything.”

Snapchat is the social media platform that causes her the least anxiety, she said.

“You used to be able to see other people’s top Snapchat friends, and I saw it cause anxiety with people,” Skansi said. “That feature is gone now. Snapchat just doesn’t have the same element of comparison. People are usually goofier on Snapchat, and I usually use it to connect with specific people, rather than seeing what other people are doing.

“Snapchat just doesn’t have the same element of comparison [as] Facebook and Instagram.”

Hallie Skansi
PHC Student



Courtesy: Pixabay user wilkernet

You can look at Snapchat Stories, but you don’t have to... On Facebook and Instagram, people work much harder to present a specific image, and I find myself doing a lot more comparing on those two.”

Almost 70 percent of 18 to 24-year-olds use Snapchat, according to a 2016 *Digiday.com* article. In the PHC community, the percentage is not much different -- almost 62 percent of the 120 people who answered a Facebook poll earlier this week said that they had Snapchat accounts.

“Snapchat was most meaningful when my boyfriend and I were long-distance dating for a year,” Skansi said. “It really helped us to share aspects of our lives with each other that we simply couldn’t over text. And seeing his face through the snaps was really great too.”

Kocher uses Snapchat to keep up with friends and family.

“I have friends all over the country, like people I’ve met through internships,” he said. “It’s cool to look at their stories and see what they’re up to today. Particu-

larly when people are traveling, you can tell when people are in your area and you can catch up... It also helps me know what’s going on in my sister’s life. She’s a sophomore in high school, and Snapchat’s very big in her world.”

A snap from her best friend always makes junior Becca Samelson’s day.

“My 100-plus-day streak with Brenna Bakke was something that might seem silly but actually got me through a really tough semester,” she said. “Not a lot went my way last year, but we had the mega best friend heart and the fire emojis by each other’s name for almost the whole semester. We even kept up the streak when Brenna washed her phone in her laundry by logging on to her account on my phone. It gave me a bit of consistency.”

Snapchat implicitly recognizes that God designed human beings need contact, and that contact doesn’t have to be substantive. It’s enough just to know that the other person will respond.

“I think it’s good for something like that to encourage silliness and connecting in that way,” Skansi said. “Snapchat makes it more personal, just you and another person, rather than you and the rest of the world.” ♦

Buzzfeed Names Leesburg Bakery Virginia's Best

by Evie Fordham

Cue the jokes about the freshman fifteen -- Patrick Henry College is located only 15 minutes from the best bakery in the state, Layered Cake Patisserie.

Earlier this month, BuzzFeed released its annual list of the most popular bakeries in each state according to Yelp reviews, and the Leesburg, Virginia, bakery received the honor.

"Everything in the store is awesome!" Yelp reviewer Bernie S. wrote. "For me, it's a toss-up between the Coconut Macaron or the Vanilla Bean Macaron, so I usually get both along with a great cup of fresh, locally sourced coffee."

Layered Cake Patisserie is known for its French-inspired pastries and coffee

from Catocin Coffee Company located in nearby Lovettsville. Its specialties include ham and cheese croissants, sweet eclairs, and custom cakes.

"My favorite items are the almond croissant and the earl grey tea," PHC student Morgan Conliffe said. "The tea has vanilla syrup and foamed milk. It is wonderful!"

Husband and wife Anthony and Barbara Chavez started the patisserie in 2014 after over a decade of experience in the culinary world.

"Layered Cake Patisserie's atmosphere is very nice," Conliffe said. "You can smell the sugar as you walk in, and everyone is so nice there. It's a calm environment and a perfect place to study or hang out with friends." ♦



Almond croissant and earl grey tea

Credit: Morgan Conliffe

PHCers To Bring *The Exodus* to Life in Local Play

by Leah Greenwood

"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." -- Exodus 20:2

Patrick Henry College alumnus Christian Fernandez and senior Grace Richardson are co-directing an off-campus play set to open May 25.

"One of the chief goals is to glorify the Lord," Richardson said. "But at the same time, not in a cheesy Christian way. We want to do Christian drama the way it should be done; we want it to be excellent, entertaining, inspiring and moving... something that people, no matter what [their] belief is, can come away saying, 'That was really good.'"

The play, *The Exodus*, is being produced by a local Christian homeschool drama club, Lighthouse Drama. Anne Bittner, the founder of Lighthouse Drama



Cast members of *The Exodus*, directed by Christian Fernandez and Grace Richardson

Credit: Christian Fernandez

who currently works at the Homeschool Legal Defense Association, approached Fernandez to take over some of her duties which she could no longer perform due to work limits. Bittner began offering drama classes at Franklin Performing

Arts Center when she moved to the area and discovered that there were no opportunities nearby for her own children to get involved in drama.

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PHCers Work with Lighthouse Drama

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Richardson joined Fernandez as an assistant teacher and co-director after reconnecting with Bittner through a networking event hosted by Geronimo Productions, which was started by PHC alumni Tim and Keaghan Wier. Richardson had taken one of Bittner's drama classes at age 13 and attended a summer camp, but had no other interactions with her since.

After reconnecting, Richardson played a small role in *The Hiding Place*, Lighthouse Drama's production last year, and was the head teacher for the summer drama camp last summer.

For this year's production, Fernandez wrote his own adaptation of the Exodus account for the drama class. He completed the full-length script in about three weeks, Richardson said.

Eighteen homeschooled high schoolers are signed up to be in the play. Rehearsals have been taking place every Thursday. Currently, the cast is blocking out the play and finessing the scenes that have already been blocked.

They have been reaching out to churches and schools, and have been making good progress on collecting props and costumes, Richardson said, but many large set pieces still need to be built.

"[Christian and I] have a very big vision for the play," she said.



Will Koleszar as Moses

PHC alumnus Stephen Pierce is composing a score for the play, while Fernandez and Richardson are working on additional music.

"I'm really looking forward to seeing it all come together, and seeing...all the costumes, props, sets, effects, and the plagues come to life with the music and everything," Richardson said.

Since starting work on the play, Richardson has been learning to pray for things and then stop worrying about what

will happen. She has realized that she needs to trust God to either provide what she asks for or to provide something even better.

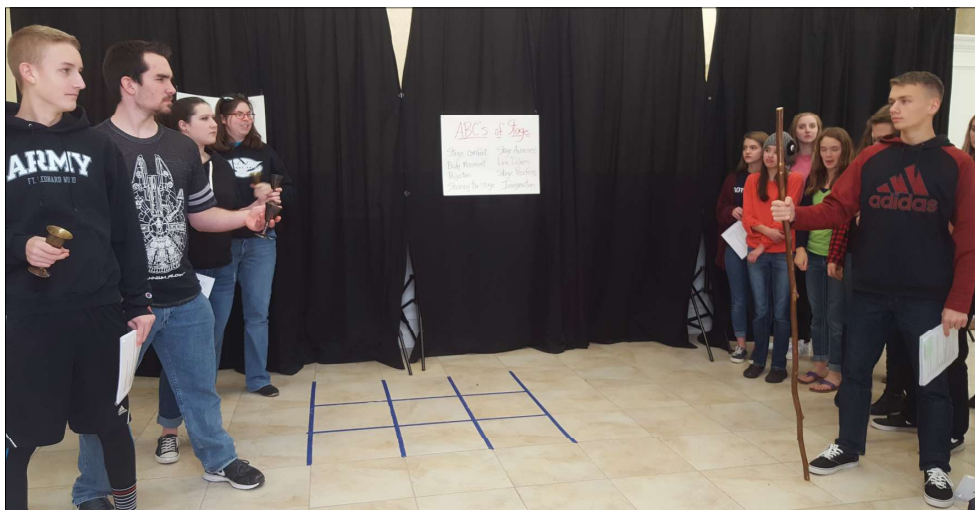
Already, Blue Ridge Bible Church has let the drama group borrow a large number of stage extensions, and Sterling Playmakers, without being asked, offered the group a bunch of free fabrics.

"The Lord is really providing for a lot of our needs in things I couldn't even remember to ask for," Richardson said. "It's just cool to see that and to have my faith encouraged by that and by seeing the Lord at work."

Contact Fernandez or Richardson if you are interested in being an extra, helping backstage, or providing costumes or props for the play. There is a \$15 production fee to be an extra.

Be sure to check the Lighthouse Drama Facebook page for updates: <https://www.facebook.com/lighthousedrama/>.

Performances will be held at Purcellville's Bush Tabernacle Roller Skating Rink from May 25-28. Doors open at 7:30 p.m., play begins at 8:00 p.m. Admission is free. Donations will be accepted. ♦



Students rehearsing for *The Exodus*

Credit: Grace Richardson

Credit: Christian Fernandez

The People Behind the Candidates

by Vienna Jacobson

Three teams, six people, and a plethora of campaign team members. As the April election date approaches, three tireless campaign managers are behind the three tickets who want your vote.

Junior Keith Zimmerman accepted the position as campaign manager for candidates Christian McGuire and Sarah Geesaman in January after being offered the position last June. While he had briefly considered running himself, Zimmerman sees himself as the implementer of the ideas rather than the man of ideas.

Zimmerman sees his biggest challenge as a lack of free time that he could devote to running the campaign. He has brought volunteers including a writer and a social media manager.

"We needed them, and they wanted to help," he said.

Zimmerman said that regardless of a McGuire/Gessaman win, their end goal is "to get the job done."

"My role has been presentation," Thetford/Hoke campaign manager Ian Frith said. Daniel Thetford and Matthew Hoke brought the sophomore in to run their campaign early on. His job has been taking their ideas and re-working them so that they are easily communicable to the student body, Frith said.

Frith sees one of the deciding factors of the race being the female vote. He said that a focus of their campaign has been

spending time trying to reaching out to leaders within that demographic. He hopes that Esther Katz, who has recently joined their team, will play a role in outreach.

The strategy of the Thetford/Hoke campaign according to Frith is talking with specific people in each friend group.

"I've always tried to be a bridge-builder," Frith said.

While Frith admits that it has been difficult getting started, he thinks they have traction now.

"It's not about us," he said. "It is about what we are talking about."

Junior Meridian Paulton is co-managing William Bock and Josh Webb's campaign with Shane Roberts. While she would never want to run herself, she enjoys participating in the political process.

The primary focus of their campaign is unity and changing how people think about community by focusing on similarities rather than differences, she said.

"Reaching out individually is super important," Paulton said.

The Bock/Webb campaign took time to evaluate who would be the best representative to different individuals and who can best answer the different questions individuals have presented.

Paulton is surprised at the strategic nature that the race has taken.

"I've been impressed with the level of political thought that has gone into campaigning," she said. ♦



Roberts, Bock, Webb, and Paulton



Geesaman, McGuire, and Zimmerman



Thetford, Hoke, and Frith

Opinion: Just Raise Your Hand

by Meg McEwen

"All you have to do is follow the rope to the escape route. If you need help, just raise your hand," the ropes course guide instructed us. It was 2014 – long before I would walk the Farris Wheel, confront

my first college exam, and partake in the joys of chicken tender day – when my high school peers and I visited Camp Grace. The day was full of rigorous exercise and team-building activities meant to forge an unbreakable bond of trust that would endure a lifetime of class reunions. It dissolved into a bitter competition from the

first course.

We groped, blindfolded, around multiple sets of ropes, seeking an escape route. I thought *It can't be that hard!*

Yet as the minutes ticked by and I continued to feel my way along a limp, rugged brown rope, I heard an increasing

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Depression and Faith Are Not Mutually Exclusive

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number of joyful shouts from my classmates. My frustration mounted. They had clearly found their way out of the labyrinth, but how?

Suddenly, the voice of a friend called, "If you can't find your way, just raise your hand for help!"

Aha! I raised my hand, was caught by a supervisor, and realized that stubborn independence and pride had kept me locked in a giant circle for twenty minutes of darkness.

How many times do I find myself meandering blindly through the darkness of this life, passing the same rugged oaks and running my hands along the same ropes? It is hard to admit when I am depressed, to raise my hand and willingly be led out of the darkness. I have never experienced clinical depression, but I am well acquainted with the depression that comes from overworking myself and indulging in a stressful, spiritually dull lifestyle. In times like these, it can be easy to fall prey to the false belief that depression cannot coexist with a dynamic relationship with Christ. However, I have found that many of the heroes in the Bible suffered bouts of depression, depression that systematically drove them closer to their redeemer in a quest for the balm of truth.

David is a case study of a godly man who did not let his struggle with down-trodden thoughts keep him from communion with God. He does not try to claw his way out of a pit by himself. Through transparent prayers that pervade time and culture, I see a broken man constantly seeking the help of God.

"The sorrows of hell compassed me



Participant in a ropes course

about: the snares of death prevented me. In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears," David says in Psalms 18:5-6.

Every time David deals with his own internal fight against the darkness, he looks toward God for hope and perseverance.

The Bible brims with hope for those who trust in God, like Deuteronomy 32:10, "In a desert land he found him, in a barren and howling waste. He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye."

Tracy Carter, women's counselor at Patrick Henry College, says this regarding depression in the Bible: "Feelings of worthlessness, challenges to self-esteem, and nega-

tive thinking are often found when a person is struggling with depression. These thoughts, that can turn into beliefs if depression is experienced over a long time,

are in contradiction to what the Bible says about our worth. We have worth simple because God created us."

Carter referred to these two scriptures when addressing this concept: Psalm 139:13-14, which says, "For you formed my inward parts; you covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well" and Jeremiah 29:11, which says, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

But just handing a Bible to someone struggling with depression does not fix the problem, Carter said.

"Reminding a person with depression about these things does not automatically cure them," she said. "It does give them a reminder of the truth that their depression is making it difficult for them to see or believe. Identifying that depression is impacting a person's thoughts and feelings, then helping them help themselves to reframe those false thoughts[with] the Word can be helpful in navigating out of depression."

God takes you as you are, whether you are as happy as a clam or bedridden with despair. Don't hesitate to reach out of the darkness to Him. ♦

"Identifying that depression is impacting a person's thoughts and feelings, then helping them help themselves to reframe those false thoughts [with] the Word can be helpful in navigating out of depression."

Tracy Carter

PHC's Women's Counselor

Film Review: *Beauty and the Beast*

by Victoria Cook

Beauty and the Beast is a visually stunning and powerful story about the monsters we are and how we can only change through rightly ordered love. The new tale as old as time paid homage to the original *Beauty and the Beast* with a few modern twists that provoked praise and controversy. Though naturally more intricate and nuanced than *Cinderella*, *Beauty and the Beast* lacked a clear message and promoted ideas that at times overpowered the movie's main message of transformative love and sacrifice.

After hitting theaters last Friday, *Beauty and the Beast* quickly became a box office success, making \$350 million its first week according to *Glamour*. Three weeks prior, the film generated controversy by including Disney's first openly gay character and, to a lesser extent, the more feminist Belle.

Le Fou, the gay villager played by Josh Gad, was one of the better developed characters. Le Fou's change is from villain sidekick to hero and provides humor and depth to the story. When Le Fou struggles to choose between his attraction to Gaston and doing what he feels is morally right, he chooses the latter, a choice that is later rewarded with a new attraction. As Le Fou becomes more openly gay, he is also portrayed as more morally good.

Given that the movie attempts to normalize homosexuality, Christians wondering whether to watch it should consider 1 Corinthians 10:23-33, which talks about the believer's freedom and conscience. Verse 24 states that no one should seek

their own good, but the good of others. As Christians, we have to consider if the entertainment we consume hurts our testimonies or distorts our view of the world. While our convictions may differ, we must seek to glorify God in everything we do, including what we watch for entertainment.

Arguably, *Beauty and the Beast* has always leaned feminist with the Beast waiting in his tower for someone to love and save him from the curse. The new changes make Belle an inventor who is pluckier than the original. Though sadly lacking the original Belle's bubbly spirit, Emma Watson's performance improved towards the second half of the movie.

The film provides essential character depth. Most of the original characters were stereotypes. For example, Gaston was a brainless muscle man, Lumière was a passionate Frenchman, and Maurice was a crazy, lovable engineer. The new version makes these characters much more nuanced than the original stereotypes. Gaston has come back from war itching to conquer everything, Lumière is committed to his love Plumette, and Maurice is a humble artist and tinkerer.

The character development helps viewers make the connection between Gaston and the Beast. Both men come from prideful beginnings and are attracted to beauty, but only one is able to change from a monster into a human being through selfless love. The Beast goes through an internal change which eventually changes him externally whereas Gaston's internal pride ends up fatally dooming him.

The romance between Belle and Beast



Courtesy: Flickr user Melissa Hillier

takes more time to develop and thus is more genuine than the original. The Beast influences Belle's tastes in reading and helps her fulfill her dreams. Likewise, Belle helps the Beast realize all he has to be thankful for. Belle's sacrificial actions move the Beast to make his own.

Beauty and the Beast is a tale that considers how love shapes and transforms our identities. Love can shape us for the better or the worse, depending on if it is the right love. Gaston's love for himself kills him. The Beast's love for Belle redeems him. As Christians, we know that the love of God is what fully changes us; all other loves can never compare. *Beauty and the Beast* is not a Christian film, but it does have messages that Christians moviegoers can discuss. ♦



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