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Millennium Society President Daniel Cochrane introduces speakers Alex Nowrasteh and Mark Krikorian

Immigration Debate Brings Crowd

PHC's Millennium Society Invites Differing Immigration Analysts to Campus

by Carrie Durning

Patrick Henry College's Millennium Society hosted a debate on Immigration and National Security moderated by Government Department Chair Dr. Mark Mitchell on March 29. Alex Nowrasteh, immigration policy analyst at the Cato Institute, took the affirmative position on the question "Do the moral duty and economic benefits of taking in additional refugees outweigh the potential security threat?" Mark Krikorian, Executive

Director of the Center for Immigration Studies, took the negative.

"The point of borders and an immigration policy is to protect the country, our national security, our American workers, our finances, and our nation's culture," Krikorian said. "Quite simply, having open borders means not having a country."

He argued for taking a more limited approach to immigration by enforcing immigration policy and keeping America's borders closed to refugees. The United States

should use its resources to help more refugees where they are rather than spend more on less refugees to transport them to the United States, he said, and refugees should only be brought into the United States in "emergency situations."

"We should have free immigration because it is good for America," Nowrasteh said. "It increases the size of the economy, increases economic growth, and our traditional openness to foreigners is in line with the traditions of the

continued on page 3



Rojagopalan and Crandall

Alumna Wins Law School Moot Court

by Victoria Cook

Patrick Henry College Class of 2016 graduate Sarah Crandall and partner Shanthi Rojagopalan won the Thurgood Marshall Memorial Moot Court Competition on March 17. They had never participated in moot court at the law school level before, but Crandall and Rojagopalan placed first in moot court and second in the brief-writing competition for their college, University of Virginia School of Law.

The Federal Bar Association hosts the annual competition to provide law students with the opportunity to increase their speaking and reasoning skills. Thirty-eight teams from around the U.S. competed, and

continued on page 4

Credit: Christine McDonald

Courtesy: Sarah Crandall

theherald

volume 25, issue no. 9

thestories

- senate communications page 3
- mock trial page 5
- town cleanup page 6
- social media series page 7
- brian morra page 8
- profile: abi carter page 9
- creative classic page 11

themasthead

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socialmedia

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studentgovernment

This week, Student Senate confirmed myself and Leo Briceno as Co-Communications Directors as well as Leah Widener as Tech Liaison. Senate passed the Executive Budget, the Financial Transparency Act, the Snapchat Competition Act, the Food Quality Survey Resolution, and the Need for a Student Nurse Resolution. The Snapchat Competition Act created a PHC geofilter design competition. All submissions must follow snapchats rules and regulations. This includes but is not limited to the rule that all submissions for a community geofilter cannot include any logo. All entries also must follow the PHC style guide. The competition runs from April 3-April 10. Please submit all entries to sgadmin@students.phc.edu. The winner of the competition will win \$75. Contact Tim Kocher with any questions.

Beth Bergstrom, Communications Director
for Student Government

Immigration Debate Impacts Campus Opinon

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United States here.”

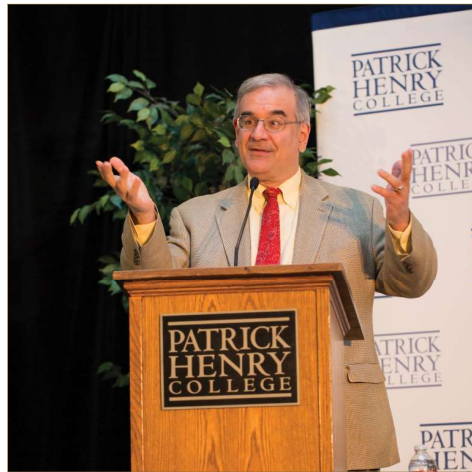
He argued for allowing an open border and cutting back on harmful government programs.

Students that attended the debate found that both sides presented compelling points.

“I agree with Nowrasteh’s argument,” said sophomore Daniel Cochrane, who is the president of the Millennium Society. “I agree that the government does not have a moral obligation to care for immigrants, but that it is the obligation of individuals in a community.”

For some students, the debate helped their understanding of both sides but did not change their opinions.

“I agree with the point made by Krikorian about how America can use our funds to help refugees where they are, instead of only allowing some into our country and neglecting the rest,” said sophomore Seth



Mark Krikorian



Alex Nowrasteh

Lucas.

When arranging for this debate, Cochrane had three goals in mind: for a clash of ideas to start a conversation, to get students engaged in a relative topic, and to get the community involved. Many members of the public attended the event, including students from local high schools Loudoun Valley and Woodgrove.

“We definitely accomplished all our goals, especially our goal of starting a conversation,” Cochrane said. “According to a poll taken before and after the debate, about 10 percent of those in attendance had their opinion changed. I believe this debate was a success.” ♦

Senate Picks New Communications Directors

by Danielle Fife

Student Senate met for a special session Monday night to unanimously confirm junior Beth Bergstrom and freshman Leo Briceno as the Co-Communications Directors for Student Government.

“There is a stigma about student government where people either think they are really closed off or don’t do anything important, but neither of these things are true,” Bergstrom said.

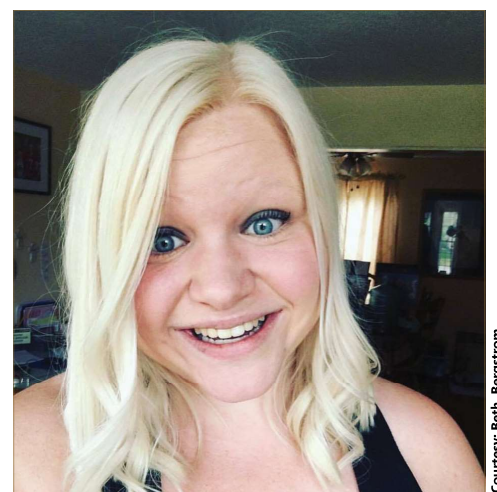
Before the vote, Bergstrom addressed the Senate and outlined how she and Briceno will streamline the information coming from student government. Limiting the number of emails and bringing student government to social media are two ways that they hope to improve com-

munication.

Last week, Student Senate sent a survey to all PHC students to determine the best way for student government to communicate with them. Students overwhelmingly reported Facebook as their main social media platform and recommended that student government use Facebook along with the Student Government Blurb in *The Herald* and chapel announcements.

In an effort to limit mass emails, student government will send one email on Sunday nights announcing all the meetings for the coming week and one email on Thursday containing the minutes from those meetings. These will include all Student Senate, committee, and commission meetings.

The Election Commission and Judicial Panel will operate independently of this



Beth Bergstrom

new email system because of guidelines outlined in the constitution.

While senate and some commissions and committees may still occasionally

continued on page 4

Alumna Wins Law School-Level Moot Court

continued from cover

first-year UVA student Crandall and second-year UVA student Rojagopalan won.

“I think we’re both still in shock,” Crandall said. “Neither Shanthi or I had ever won any sort of debate or advocacy competition before, so to have won first place team overall and tied for second place brief was something we had barely hoped for.”

UVA was Crandall’s first choice law school for its community, academic rigor, appellate litigation training, and professional opportunities.

“By the time I got the call from UVA, I knew that was really where I was supposed to be,” she said.

Having participated in moot court and taken a class in constitutional law at PHC, Crandall was prepared for tackling law school and the Thurgood Marshall Memorial Moot Court competition. Crandall had to know how to examine witnesses and felt prepared due to a year of mock trial practice.

“PHC sharpened my writing skills and accustomed me to juggling a lot of reading, which is pretty much all one does the first semester of law school,” she said.

Preparing for the competition was like preparing for other college moot court competitions, except that competitors were not limited to a particular set of cases. Crandall and Rojagopalan had a month each for the brief and the oral argument and ended up concentrating their efforts on each task 10 days before



Sarah Crandall and partner Shanthi Rojagopalan right before the final round

the due dates.

While the competition had no preliminary rounds, it was as intensely competitive as collegiate moot court regionals. When she became part of the UVA’s moot court program, Crandall noticed that most of the other competitors were second- and third-year law students.

“I think UVA is fairly unique in allowing first-year students like me to compete,” she said.

The competition lasted two days with two preliminary rounds on the first night and the octofinals the next day. Each team’s appellate brief score factored into who went to the octofinals. During the rounds, teams were given 30 minutes to speak. For their last round, Crandall and Rojagopalan had a hot bench, meaning the judges actively questioned Crandall and Rojagopalan. It was an answer to Crandall’s prayers.

“After the tournament, we got to meet

our judges privately and receive feedback, which was a really helpful experience, and then held our breaths until the awards ceremony,” Crandall said.

St. Mary’s University won four of the last five competitions, a fact that Crandall is happy not to have known until after the competition. St. Mary’s came in second for the overall moot court competition and won the brief-writing competition.

Crandall is thankful for the experience of competing and winning her first moot court championship as a law student.

“For me, it was a confirmation that I am capable of doing the type of work I want to do,” she said. “I tend to doubt my ability to communicate orally, so I see this as a gracious reminder from God that He will help me accomplish whatever tasks He sets before me and that His power is not limited to my comfort zone.” ♦

Student Government’s Communications Plan

continued from page 3

send out extra emails, this is expected to be a vast improvement.

On Fridays, students can continue to read the Student Government Blurb on the second page of *The Herald*. The communications directors may occasionally post on Facebook or live stream important events, such as the Student Body Presidential Debate last Tuesday. While

Student Senate has a Twitter, its use will be limited as few students expressed an interest in student government communicating through that platform.

In Senate’s meeting Wednesday night, they also confirmed Leah Widener to the position of Tech Liaison. Widener will meet as a student representative with IT director Jeffrey Good. This new position replaces the Tech Commission, formerly

part of student government.

These new positions mark a movement in student government to communicate more effectively and efficiently with the student body and represent the needs of the students well. In the future, students can expect to be more informed of student government actions, and student government can expect to be more informed of the needs of the students. ♦

Mock Trial Barely Misses Advancing Past ORCS

Sophomore Caleb Engle of Team 1160 wins witness award despite challenging round

by Evie Fordham

Mock trial teams 1159 and 1160 were knocked out in the Opening Round Championship Series at the Widener University Delaware School of Law on Saturday and Sunday, but the weekend was not without its bright spots.

“My team became a family this year,” junior Brenna Bakke of Team 1160 said. “I looked forward to every meeting because I knew we’d work hard and have a ton of fun doing it... We’re already so excited to hit the ground running again in August!”

Team 1160 finished the tournament with a 5-3 record. They went up against George Washington University, the University of Pennsylvania, and the College of William & Mary.

Other teams with the same record advanced to the national championship, but the tiebreaker method kept Team 1160 from advancing.

“The tiebreaker is collective strength of schedule, so we had a collective strength of 14,” sophomore Cooper Millhouse said. “It takes into account the total number of ballots that teams you’ve gone against have won. If you’ve hit harder teams and have the same record as teams that have hit less hard teams, the tiebreaker is in your favor. There were two other teams that were 5-3 but they had collective strengths of 16 and 17.”

Prior to ORCS, Team 1160 had been undefeated in the regular season.

Sophomore Caleb Engle of Team 1160 won a witness award for portraying the defendant’s best friend, despite having to change how he played his character for the round against William & Mary.



PHC Mock Trial Team 1159

Courtesy: Caitlin Coulter

“I am so proud of my team for continually bettering ourselves as a team and never being afraid to adapt to the case, the team, or the problem in front of us.”

Caitlin Coulter

Senior

“We realized that the judges were not buying the witnesses on the other team,” Millhouse said. “We didn’t think the judges would like the brusque character he had planned. Caleb got on the stand, and we had no idea what would happen. He put on the best performance I’ve seen as a character he had never practiced with a backstory he was coming up with. He even had hilarious comedic timing with Josh Webb, who was playing an attorney.”

Team 1159 had a 2-6 record with an extremely high collective strength of 23.5. Two of the teams they versed, American University and the University of Virginia’s A team, qualified for the national championship.

“I’m really proud of everyone because they worked harder than I’ve ever seen,”

said Team 1159 co-captain Andrew Kelly, who played an attorney. “We were flawless in all four rounds.”

When senior Ellyse Elmer, who portrayed an expert witness, was unable to attend Saturday’s rounds, junior William Bock, whose team had not qualified for ORCS, stepped up.

“It was great to be able to represent PHC,” Bock said. “This team is a close-knit group with a lot of seniors who have participated in mock trial together for four years. I felt like I was joining an adoptive family.”

Participating in her last mock trial tournament was bittersweet, said senior Caitlin Coulter of Team 1159.

“I am so proud of my team for continually bettering ourselves as a team and never being afraid to adapt to the case, the team, or the problem in front of us,” she said. “I can’t think of many other places where I’ve felt so often valued and surrounded by such camaraderie. The past four years have been so much more than I knew I would get.” ♦



PHC students participate in the Purcellville Town-Wide Cleanup Day

by Hailey Kilgo

Ten Patrick Henry College student volunteers and PHC President Jack Hays worked at the Purcellville Town-Wide Cleanup Day along with Purcellville residents and Mayor Kwasi Fraser on March 25. The team picked up trash on the side of the road for about a mile east of the Berlin Turnpike roundabout. About 200 volunteers picked up 145 bags of trash last year. This year, 337 volunteers picked up over 300 bags, which is over one ton of trash, said event coordinator Adam Broshkevitch.

For students who attended, this opportunity to work alongside members of the community of Purcellville was the chance to show them that community matters.

“For about two hours we picked up trash on the side of the street,” junior Shiyi Zhang said. “I wanted to do it be-

cause it’s a good way to be involved in the community, and I seldom get other chances to be involved in our local community. This was a good opportunity for me to do that but also for a group of students from our school to come together and form a good community as well.”

Among the PHC volunteers who attended the cleanup, college president Jack Hays was one of them. For Zhang, this show of leadership made picking up trash on a Saturday morning well worth her time.

“We worked in a group of just PHC students, and President Hays also went with us,” Zhang said. “He taught me what it is like to be a servant leader... He had to humble himself to do the work that other people might not want to do, and if we want to be like that we all must have a servant’s heart.”

For other students, cleaning up Purcell-

ville was a way to portray PHC in a positive light for the community, while also helping keep the town beautiful. Junior Keith Zimmerman took this chance to interact with other students at PHC and members of the community not to get anything out of it, but for the sake of service itself.

“I was involved in a lot of community service in high school and really appreciated doing that, so I was excited to have the opportunity to be involved in community service in college, too,” Zimmerman said. “I don’t necessarily get anything out of the service, but that’s okay. If you’re serving people because you want to feel better about yourself or get recognition, then you’re missing the whole point.”

To learn about more volunteer opportunities in the community, visit the PHC Community Involvement Commission Facebook page ♦

Students Weigh in on Going “Facebook Official”

This is the sixth story in the Herald’s social media series

by Leah Greenwood

“You should be writing your paper that’s due tonight,” I tell myself as I browse through Pinterest. “Or completing your reading assignment that’s due tomorrow,” I add as I check my email. “Or doing everything else that you have to do,” I mutter, logging into my Facebook account.

I scroll through my newsfeed and discover that this one guy I used to have a crush on now has a girlfriend. I do not know this girl, so of course, I have to look her up and find out as much about her as I possibly can. After browsing through some of her pictures and coming to the conclusion that she and my friend are cute together, I click through other people’s accounts until I find myself on another friend’s page. I notice that her status has been changed to “single,” and I wonder what happened.

In a society that seems to revolve around social media, it has become the norm for a couple to go “Facebook official.” The focus has switched from working to maintain a good, healthy relationship with your significant other to trying to maintain an image on social media as the “perfect couple” that always posts cute pictures together. People seem to need validation from “likes” or “shares” on social platforms in order to feel good about their relationship. I have never understood the desire for this type of validation.

I will be the first to admit that I have looked up people on Facebook to find out

“The focus has switched from working to maintain a good, healthy relationship with your significant other to trying to maintain an image on social media as the ‘perfect couple’ that always posts cute pictures together.”

Leah Greenwood



Courtesy: Pixabay user karenwafel

whether or not they have a significant other. In fact, a person’s relationship status is one of the first things I look for when ~~stalking~~ ~~researching~~ viewing someone’s Facebook page. I have even found myself saying, “Have you checked their relationship status on Facebook?” when asked for relationship advice.

However, I will also be the first to admit that I am a hypocrite. I have never once updated my own relationship status on Facebook for ~~stalkers~~ other people to discover. In fact, I hardly ever update my Facebook account; I rarely post anymore, and mainly use the website as a way to keep in touch with people.

“But don’t you want people to know that you’re single,” some might ask, “so that anyone who is interested might be

more encouraged to ask you out?”

“Or if you’re taken,” others might say, “Don’t you want to put that on display so that everybody knows and can see how proud you are of your significant other?”

Junior Daniel Thetford chose to update his relationship status on Facebook.

“My [relationship status] is a form of public commitment to one person,” Thetford said. “It signals that you are not a single person ‘still on the market’ and that you are interested in learning how to grow in love with one particular person.”

Sophomore Olivia Bowers, however, has chosen not to update her relationship status.

“I think there is a lot of social pressure in general to portray the perfect life or relationship on social media,” Bowers said. “It’s never been important to me to get 100 ‘likes’ because of a relationship... and an updated relationship status doesn’t define who you are as an individual or together.”

Becoming “Facebook official” also has the potential to add an unnecessary element of stress to a couple’s lives. The

continued on page 8

Brian Morra on the Value of Liberal Arts in Tech

by Bruce Truax

A liberal arts background can lead to a top job at a big corporation because it helps people become curious, ethical problem-solvers, said Brian Morra. The former Vice President of Strategy for Northrop Grumman spoke to Patrick Henry College students at an Economics and Business Analytics event this past Wednesday.

Morra, a history major, worked his way into the defense industry after he left the Air Force in his early 30s.

“The best personal attribute I had was intellectual curiosity,” he said. “I was just willing to ask dumb questions.”

In describing his rise to the top of the global aerospace and defense technology company, Morra said that large tech corporations like Google are hiring liberal arts majors. Companies are discovering that liberal arts majors are good at solving problems, a key skill in high-level executive positions.

Morra was an intelligence officer before working at Pacific Sierra Research Corporation, a company that sold defense equipment and technology to the military. This company was later bought by a bigger company, which was later bought by an even bigger company. Morra found himself working for giant corporation Northrop Grumman.

Morra advised students to value ethics in the business world. Companies only consider ethical applicants, he said.

He advised students what personal



Northrop Grumman B-2 Spirit

Courtesy: Flickr user Christopher Ebdon

qualities to exhibit in order to get hired.

“I can’t stress enough how important listening is,” he said.

Students found his lecture informative and helpful.

“It was really interesting to hear the perspectives of businesses from someone who actually had started in a small company then ended up in a massive corporation,” sophomore Daniel Fierer said.

“I really appreciated the emphasis on practical skills that employers are looking for,” sophomore Erin Kondak said.

There is a substantial vacancy in the defense industry because baby boomers, hired in droves during the Cold War, are retiring, Morra said. Few workers were hired to replace them in the ‘90s due to budgeting concerns, leaving a huge workforce gap. Northrop Grumman expects to hire 25,000 people in the next few years.

The state of the defense industry con-

cerns Morra.

“The Air Force today is by far the oldest Air Force we’ve ever had,” he said.

He claims that pilots are flying airplanes more than two generations old.

Morra emphasized China’s reemerging as a world power. He is also concerned that Russia may have meddled in the U.S. elections, and, according to him, the United States has made no major response.

Morra is concerned with the private defense sector as well. During the 1990s, the economy was booming, there were numerous startups, and huge amounts of money were invested in new companies, he said. Today, things have changed. He claims that increased government mandates and regulations stifle small companies and startups.

“I thought it was good,” said Dr. Michael Kucks, EBA Director. “I couldn’t imagine a better presentation.” ♦

To Update or Not To Update Relationship Status?

continued from page 7

possibility of having other people poking their noses into places they don’t belong appears to become greater when a relationship is broadcast over social media. Besides, when you attempt to subtly change your relationship status from “in

a relationship” to “single,” people notice. This leaves both parties involved in the split not only having to pick up the scattered pieces of their heart, but also having to face the fact that everyone, it seems, knows about and keeps reminding you of your breakup.

Frankly, I think that there is something

to be said for keeping one’s private life private. Not everybody needs to know every single detail of something as personal as a romantic relationship. The people in my life who truly need to know my “relationship status” will know. ♦

Abi Carter: Joni and Friends Volunteer

PHC student volunteers as a tour guide at the Joni and Friends ministry headquarters in Agoura Hills, California

by Meg McEwen

Seventeen-year-old Joni Eareckson-Tada had no idea that within moments of diving into the shallow, East Coast ocean, she would never be able to move her limbs again. If her sister had not seen Eareckson's body floating in the water, she would have perished. To many people, Joni Eareckson-Tada, who married in 1982, is the protagonist of a miracle story, the paralyzed victim of a tragic diving incident who now paints beautiful works of art with a paintbrush poised between her lips, but that is only half of her story. Freshman Abi Carter knows Tada as a vivacious woman who encourages disabled people around the world through her ministry and whips around corners in her wheelchair, greeting volunteers like Carter with a hymn of praise every morning.

In 11th grade, Carter longed for a way to bridge her growing desire to volunteer with her love for public speaking. She reconnected with an old childhood haunt, the Joni and Friends ministry headquarters in Agoura Hills, California, and immediately knew this opportunity was what she had been searching for. Founded by Tada, the expansive nonprofit has two branches: Wheels for the World, which delivers wheelchairs that prisoners refurbish for the disabled, and Family Retreats, week-long retreats for the disabled and their families. Carter applied to be a tour guide at the Joni and Friends headquarters in California, where Tada herself works, and began immersing herself in preparation for the position, shadowing other docents and reading more about Tada's story.

"It's just such an amazing organization," Carter said. "It taught me so much



Abi Carter (center) at an art class with Joni and Friends volunteer leaders

about service... Every time I walk into the Joni and Friends headquarters I am filled with the presence of God because everyone in that building is filled with a love for Christ and the weakest people. People with disabilities around the world are usually seen as cursed and cast out from their society."

"I am filled with the presence of God because everyone in that building is filled with a love for Christ and the weakest people."

Abigail Carter

PHC Freshman

though she struggles with her own limb-related disabilities.

"We also had a woman who was blind start leading tours," Carter said. "It was the most encouraging thing to see. If I had a disability, I don't know if I could be happy enough to get up and serve other

people like that."

Tada is one of Carter's greatest role models.

"She is one of the most joyful people I have ever met," Carter said. "It's so encouraging to see her come into the office singing hymns and encouraging everyone else every morning."

Carter witnessed some of the wealthiest individuals in California leave the Joni and Friends headquarters sobbing after talking to Tada about the work that she does. A picture of a paralyzed man from Uganda hangs on Tada's office at the headquarters. The man sits in front of his home, a tin-can shelter. His friends had found him days after his fall out of a tree left him paralyzed. When Wheels for the World found the man completely helpless, they asked to take his picture before equipping him with a wheelchair. The Ugandan asked them politely to wait a moment as he struggled for five minutes to adjust his ragged shirt, which had

continued on page 10

Student Shares Joni Eareckson Tada's Story

continued from page 9

slumped off his shoulder. Tada told Carter that this picture shows that “every person has an innate sense of human dignity given to them by God.”

Tada’s road to recovery was not easy. She had to adjust her entire way of thinking. Feeling lost and unable to fulfill simple tasks of life, she struggled with a depression so overwhelming that she would have committed suicide if she could have. Initially, Tada pushed away God and hope. She did not see how her life would ever have meaning because she was paralyzed from the fourth vertebrae down and had no motor ability.

This perspective changed when one rehabilitation center encouraged her to try art therapy. At first, she felt silly holding a paintbrush in her mouth and stubbornly kept spitting it out.

“When she came into the [art therapy] room one day she saw a man who was paralyzed from the second cervical vertebrae down, so he was even more paralyzed than she was,” Carter said. “She was very spit-fire and energetic, so that made her want to try it.”

Tada began perfecting an unconventional way of painting that would eventually inspire millions. Her faith in God was restored, and her life imbibed new meaning.

Tada’s prolific career as an artist took off. She shipped her paintings to buyers all over the world and, with some encour-



Joni Eareckson Tada

Courtesy: Vimeo

agement wrote, *Joni: An Unforgettable Story*, an autobiography that attracted media attention almost immediately after the Today Show picked it up.

The public responded to her inspirational narrative. Hundreds of letters began pouring in, and Tada’s local community began helping her respond to them, forming the first iteration of Joni and Friends.

Over the past 35 years, the Joni and Friends ministry has blossomed to include 26 facilities.

“People came from everywhere for tours,” Carter said. “I once led group of people from New Zealand, and we went into the chapel inside of the building and they sang a hymn in their native language.

There are people from New England and from the East Coast all the way up through California.”

Carter still enjoys leading tours and volunteering for Joni and Friends today. Aside from her role as a tour guide, Carter invests in both branches of the ministry. She regularly calls up hospitals and thrift stores on the hunt for wheel chairs to donate to Wheels for the World and spends time with disabled children at family retreats.

Eventually, she wants to begin an effort at PHC to gather wheelchairs for Joni and Friends.

“In America, we view a wheelchair as something scary, symbolizing depression and immobility, but if you actually do have the need for a wheelchair, it is a symbol of life, strength, and mobility,” Carter said. ♦

“If you actually do have the need for a wheelchair, it is a symbol of life, strength, and mobility.”

Abi Carter

PHC Freshman



Courtesy: Pixabay user WildOne

SUBMIT YOUR OPINION

Email thoughtful opinions to ejfordham248@students.phc.edu.

The Winter War: A Tale of a Christmas Tree Farm

Waters is the third place winner of the Creative Classic Contest - check back next week to learn who took second place!

by Jimmy Waters

“Every December, they come. Although we are guilty of no offense, they continue to cut down and dishonor our brothers and sisters. Now is the time to rise up against these savage invaders! Now is the time to end this senseless slaughter!”

A chorus of assent arose from those who heard the tall, hoary pine who spoke. The pines, the firs, and the spruces had listened with rapt eagerness at his words, which touched them all to the sap. They had all suffered greatly, and they had each lived in constant dread of the destruction that inevitably occurred each winter. Indeed, the trees had, every December, experienced the gluttonous cruelty of the race known as humans. It was they who, with their shining blades, ruthlessly cut them down and hauled them off in triumph. The speaker continued.

“As you well know, our nemesis comes in three forms. The first is called the father, and it is he who is the chief executioner. The second is what we believe to be called the honey. These eagerly and despicably record our destruction with a horrible black, flashing cube. The third form, the most terrible of all, is the child. Those of this form sing, laugh, and dance as we are brought to our ends. It is they who sway the former forms as to who shall live and who shall die. Must we allow our nemesis to persist in these terrible designs? No, say I!”

Spectacular cheers arose from the listeners.

“Let us unite to a common defense!” they cried. “Tell us, Harnedles, what to do to stop the humans!”

The ancient raised one of his many fingers, motioning for silence.

“We must defend ourselves in any way we are able. Pines, prepare your cones and make ready to hurl them toward the invaders. Firs, sharpen your needles and prepare to unleash a whirlwind of tiny

blades. Spruces, release your sap and gather it into adhesive projectiles. I know that such action is, for our kinds, unprecedented, but our very survival depends upon success!”

With exclamations of hope, the three clans set to work.

That night, the first snow fell.

The next morning, old Mr. Barnard, whom the trees called “the keeper,” hung up a piece of carved wood that served to summon the coming destruction. For the next thirty days, only the coming of night could give respite to the trees within the compound.

The first humans entered as the sun reached its zenith. Through the little gate they came, eager for the acquisition of a Christmas tree. The trees saw that this group was a family of humans. All three forms – father, honey, and child – had come, the last cheerfully riding on a crimson sled.

“Steady, friends,” said Harnedles, his voice not betraying the slightest quiver. “Remember to wait for my command. Today shall and must be the day of salvation!”

The trees whispered their approval.

Avoiding several promising specimens at the urging of the child, the humans made their way to a beautiful fir tree. The trees themselves gasped, for the one the family admired was Emasapia, a young fir only a few years old. The little one shuddered at the touch of the cheering and dancing children and looked toward her powerless mother in terror.

The father brought forth the saw. The trees knew that they must act quickly, for it was a self-cutting blade that whirred and buzzed. It was, in fact, a chainsaw.

“Now!” roared Harnedles. Instantly the air was alive with flying needles, pinecones, and balls of oozing sap. The trees concentrated their aim upon the electric saw, and their well-placed throws quickly knocked it out of the hands of the startled father. Countless needles whizzed



Courtesy: Pixabay

through the air, stinging the humans and causing them to cry out in alarm. The honey shrieked as oozing sap stuck to her long fur dress, dropping the flashing black cube as she did so.

After looking in vain for the perpetrator of this unexpected attack, the family fled from the compound, warning all they met that the place was despicable and should be avoided.

The trees themselves were satisfied with their work. The day had been carried, Emasapia had been saved, and the first of many invaders had been vanquished.

They knew that they might still falter in the struggle, but determination, the wise leadership of Harnedles, and a newly sprung courage had laid the foundation for a brighter future. The war for independence had begun. ♦