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ARETÉ

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NCHC Student Newsletter of the Year 2007-2008

WKU

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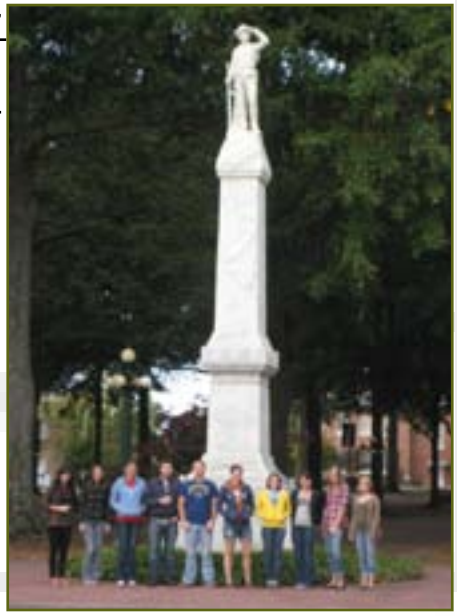

The Honors Hemingway and Faulkner class visited many influential sites about William Faulkner and Ernest Hemingway

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The event-fulness of Honors Club

BETHANY RIGGS
Areté staff writer

Katy Perry won the costume contest. Or at least, Jackson, Ky. freshman Sarah Clevenger who was dressed as Katy Perry did. Clevenger's handmade Candy Land outfit was similar to the costumes in Perry's "California Gurls" video. One of the judges, Honors Club Executive Board Member Kate Masterson, said she was very impressed with Clevenger's creativity and craftsmanship.

The costume contest was a highlight of the night for many of the students who came to the annual Honors Halloween party. This year, the Honors Club teamed up with the Downing University Center (DUC) staff to co-host this event. It was held on the 4th floor of DUC for three hours on Wednesday night, Nov. 20. Over 150 students came to show their Halloween spirit with costumes ranging from princesses to ninjas and characters from popular YouTube videos. Big Red also made an appearance. "It was really cool that Big Red was there," Beaver Dam, Ky. freshman Nick Bratcher said. "He was definitely a hit."

PHOTO BY BETHANY RIGGS

Honors students Amanda Pursell, Kate Masterson, and Jennifer Hail and Honors alumna Beth Truax dressed for the occasion at the Honors Club Halloween Bash.

PHOTO BY BETHANY RIGGS

The Honors Club Halloween Bash drew a large crowd at DUC with events such as the costume contest.

Besides the Halloween Bash, the Honors Club has held many other events for students this semester, like the Mix 'N Mingle dance, Ice Cream Social, Homecoming activities, a trip to Jackson's Orchard, community service outreaches, and, of course, meetings. The Honors Club meets bi-monthly in DUC, and averages around 30 people per meeting according to President Erin O'Flaherty. "We are really trying to boost attendance this year," she said. She added that at every meeting attendees can sign in, which not only gives them a chance to win a prize during the meeting, but also allows them to earn points for each meeting. At the end of the semester, members can win some great prizes for their attendance. O'Flaherty also mentioned Honors Club has many more activities that students can get involved with throughout the rest of the semester. An Angel Tree program and a Christmas party are definitely on the agenda.

"We are really trying to boost attendance this year." - Erin O'Flaherty

A Bus Ride to Enhanced Learning:
Honors Music Appreciation and the Opera

GABRIELLA C. DEVIA-ALLEN
Areté guest writer

On Oct. 9, 2010, students approached a school bus in Diddle parking lot with anticipation. Dressed to impress, Honors students gathered for none other than...a field trip? During fall break? Yes, the Nashville Opera was the final destination for this vehicle of eager scholars.

For weeks, Honors Music Appreciation students had been learning about the components of music, finally arriving at the opera segment. Through viewing opera tapes, watching online segments through Kamen, and enjoying lectures on genre periods and terminology, Dr. Mary Wolinski's students trooped into the theatre fully prepared for an artistic experience.

This year, the Nashville Opera presented *Andrea Chénier*. Roy Cornelius Smith, Lori Phillips, Luis Ledesma, and several other talented performers displayed the passionate nature of the Italian production. They enticed the audience through their angelic voices and graceful movements. With so many students having never attended an opera, the Nashville Opera was the perfect place to start. Elegant attire, comfortable seating, serene lighting, and amiable ushers were the exact formula for a memorable trip.

Some may think it odd for English-speaking students to attend an Italian opera for the sake of music comprehension; however, Wolinski properly prepared her pupils. Nothing compares to the joy of viewing a live opera performance-let alone in another language! What better way is there to blend education with entertainment?

"I was surprised by how much I enjoyed the opera," says freshman Katy Nash. "It was the first opera I'd ever attended, and thanks to Dr. Wolinski, I was more than prepared for what was going to happen."

"I was surprised by how much I enjoyed the opera," says freshman Katy Nash.

Because of Wolinski's approach to the curricula and the values of the Honors College, her students were able to appreciate the opera in a way that many others will never be able to experience. Surely, this event will be repeated among WKU students for many years to come.

Teaming Up: The American Studies Class

KAITLYNN SMITH
Areté staff writer

Dr. Sandy Hughes from the English Department, Dr. Tony Harkins from the History Department, and Dr. Roger Murphy from the Political Science Department teamed up this semester to teach a group-taught course, American Studies.

Ten students from each of the professor's home departments take the class. All thirty students and three professors meet once a week for discussion.

"It's really great to get an interdisciplinary perspective in a class," said Honors sophomore Shanna Downey of Auburn, Ky. "The history or political science students almost always notice something in a text that I, as an English major, may miss. It's a well rounded learning experience."

The Honors-embedded course has a different theme each semester. Students currently taking the class are learning about crime, justice, and punishment. Past themes include Dissent in America, The American Dream, and Utopias and Dystopias.

The class uses literature, films, court cases, historical accounts, and political documents selected by the three professors to aid in discussion on the semester's topic.

Readings this semester include *Arc of Justice*, *Nickel and Dimed*, *Courtroom 320*, *The Crucible*, and *Jasmine*. Films include *Stranger with a Camera* and *Lone Star*, as well as a viewing of the television show, *Dexter*, according to the syllabus. The class will also travel to the American Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tenn. for a different learning experience this semester, according to Hughes.

The three-hour course counts as an upper-division elective for history, political science, English, and popular culture studies majors. The class also fulfills three hours of the Honors upper-division requirements.

Comparing Opposing Pairs

ELIZABETH BEILMAN
Areté staff writer

Every fall, a group of English majors from the Honors College travel to the literary locations of Oak Park, Ill. and Oxford, Miss. for the Honors Hemingway and Faulkner class.

This class, taught by Walker Rutledge of the Department of English, was created in 1992 to study two famous American writers and grasp an understanding of the Modernist movement.

"I have found through the years there is no better way to understand a literary movement than looking at opposing pairs," Rutledge said.

According to Rutledge, Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner are ideal contrasts for this time period because, while they lived in the same literary period within years of each other and won Nobel Prizes, their writing styles are polar opposites.

Rutledge said that Hemingway, who hails from urban Illinois, used a "terse, minimalist style." Faulkner, a rural Mississippian, used a "lush, stream-of-consciousness style."

The course is not split into two separate sections but rather "weave[ed] back and forth" between the authors, Rutledge said.

"I find you understand Faulkner better by reading Hemingway, and you understand Hemingway better by reading Faulkner," Rutledge said.

This class also provides students an opportunity to have an upper-level course in an Honors environment that is not augmented.

"The number one thing is the students." Rutledge said. "The ideal Honors class is the class that is Honors from the very inception."

PHOTO PROVIDED BY WALKER RUTLEDGE

Students on the trip stayed at the Write Inn in Oak Park, Ill., the hometown of Ernest Hemingway.

Colloquia reaches out to community

KALI O'ROURKE
Areté staff writer

Students in the Fall 2010 Honors colloquium Community Development through Service Learning are focused on making a difference at WKU and the community.

Taught by Dr. Bernard Strenecky, Scholar-in-Residence at WKU, the colloquium revolves around the Legacy Project, which looks at the impact students can have during and after their years at WKU. The project and the class look at the community near WKU, known as the Legacy Zone, and decide how to help that community and make it an important part of WKU.

Strenecky said, "What they're doing is…bring[ing] the people in the community…and the people at Western closer together."

Students will acheive this goal through a system that Strenecky calls the $100 Solution. The students are divided into two groups. Both groups study the Legacy Zone to find areas where they can help and form a plan to make that possible. After that, they take $100 and go to the area to implement their plan. The students do almost all of the work that's required to help change the community.

"It's up to the students," said Strenecky. "They determine what these needs are. They determine what they're going to do, and they make a difference."

One of the groups is looking at a youth football program in the Legacy Zone. Strenecky said that the students want to work with the coach to bring the program–and thereby the community–and WKU together through youth development in the areas of academics and culture.

Mayor Elaine Walker met with the other group of students, and her office is helping them to decide what needs help.

Strenecky stressed the importance of making a difference in the community and at WKU. He said, "This is just the beginning of what, hopefully, will be a long-term relationship between the university and the community."

Homecoming Thrills

CAMERON FRANEY
Areté staff writer

Low attendance in classes and rumors of elaborate floats being created means it's time once again for Homecoming. It's almost a new feeling on campus when Homecoming rolls around, and this year was no exception. The theme for this year, Thrill on the Hill, centered on the fact that Homecoming took place the day before Halloween.

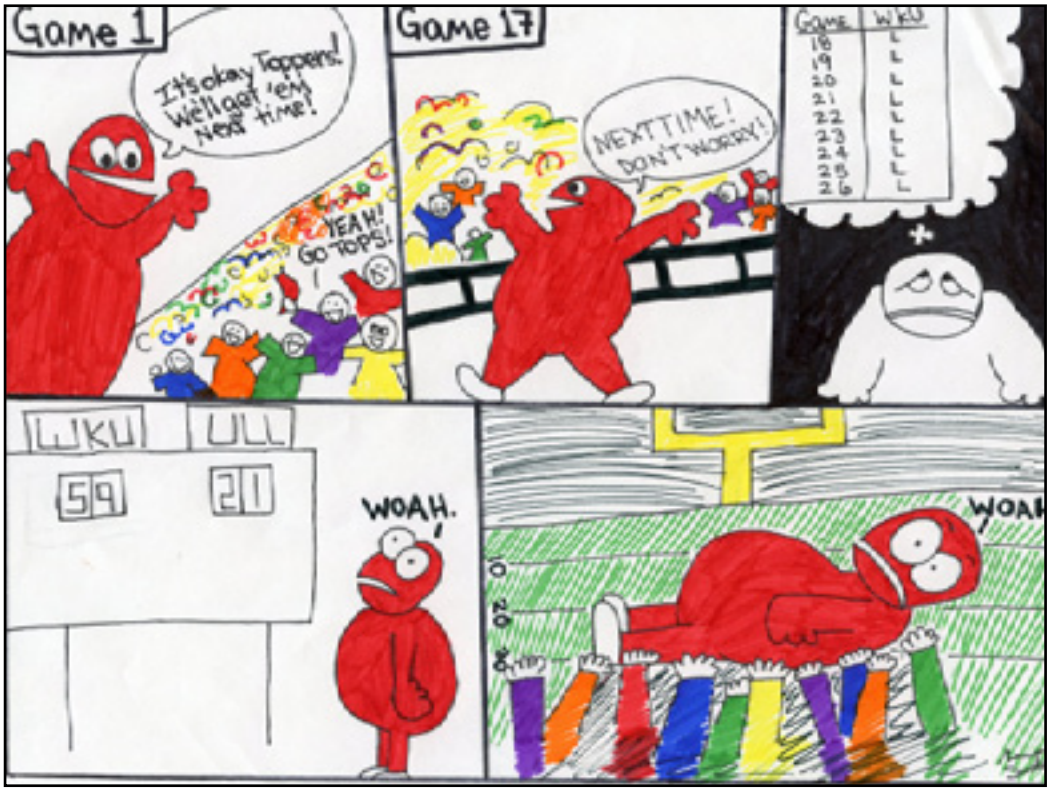
The events for this year's Homecoming were the Homecoming games, the banner competition, the parade, Big Red's Roar, the Homecoming queen competition, and, finally, the football game versus North Texas.

This year's festivities started off with the Homecoming games. The games were scheduled to be held on Tuesday, Oct. 26; however, mother nature decided to change the plan. The winner of this year's games was chosen based on attendance due to a storm preventing the completion of the full games. FIJI, KD, and Farm House had the most people show up, making them this year's Homecoming games winners.

The parade and Big Red's Roar were held on Friday, Oct. 29. The parade featured floats from the fraternities and sororities on campus along with the football team, the men and women's basketball teams, and many other organizations from around the community. The winners of the float competition this year were Pi Kappa Alpha, Omega Phi Alpha, and Zeta Phi Beta. Big Red's Roar saw a strong turnout from fraternities, sororities, and student organizations. In the student organization category, Baptist Campus Ministry beat out Honors for spirit. FIJI, KD, and Farm House took the spirit stick and the overall awards. Honors also lost out in the student organization banner-making competition, which was won by the American Society of Interior Designers.

At the game against North Texas on Saturday, Oct. 30 Homecoming queen was announced. Voting took place Monday, Oct. 25 before the game. This year's Honors candidate was Lesley Greenwell, who has been an active Honors College member since her freshman year. The Homecoming queen this year is Josclynn Brandon who represented NPHC and Resident Staff Association. North Texas University beat WKU 33-6.

"The fact that you are able to stand up and say 'I represent the WKU Honors College,'" said Nikki Deese, 2009 Honors Homecoming Queen candidate. "Well, that's something that is invaluable.



CARTOON BY RAMONA SUDBECK

Honoring a Legacy

The Jim Wayne Miller Celebration of Writing

AUDREY GEARHART
Areté editor

On Sunday afternoon, Oct. 31, English professors, students, and photographers arrived at Garrett Conference Center for the 14th annual Jim Wayne Miller Celebration of Writing. The annual conference honored the late Jim Wayne Miller, acclaimed poet of Appalachian roots and professor at WKU for 33 years.

A soft buzz of anticipation filled the room as the 2:00 starting time approached. Acclaimed author Sharyn McCrumb was set to take the stage.

"Write what you know; know what you write," McCrumb counseled her audience.

She spent the afternoon giving insight behind her wildly popular books *St. Dale* and *If Ever I Return Pretty Peggy-o*, her motivation to end Appalachian stereotyping, and her inspiration from Jim Wayne Miller himself.

In addition to speaking at a conference open to the public, McCrumb hosted a writers' workshop for the ten finalists of the Jim Wayne Miller Celebration of Writing's fiction competition. McCrumb also had the honor of awarding the prize-winning recipients. This year's first place award winner was Honors senior Molly Koenemen for her short story "Hand-Me-Down."

"[It is] based on my Great-Uncle Gene and on something that happened to him during his childhood in Glendale, Ky.," said Koeneman of her award-winning story. "This story is my favorite, and its success in the Jim Wayne Miller Fiction Writing Contest was happily received."

Hosting Honors from 'Round the State

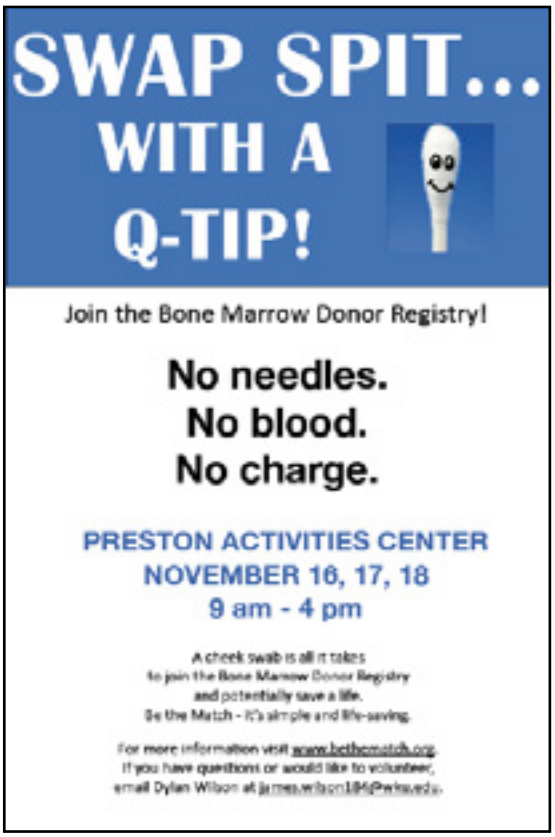
TATE GOINS
Areté staff writer

On Oct. 15-16, 2010, WKU hosted this semester's Kentucky Honors Roundtable, or KHR. The KHR is a conference where Honors undergraduates from around the state come together to present their research. Each of Kentucky's public universities sends students who present on topics from a variety of disciplines. A different Kentucky public university hosts the conference each semester, and this fall WKU had the honor of doing so.

Since the KHR took place here, about half of the students who participated were WKU Honors students, said Dr. Clay Motley. One of these students is senior Molly Koeneman. She presented her Honors thesis project, a six-part collection of short stories entitled Casualty of Home. The stories revolve around three generations of a southern family.

"I've been to conventions before, but at the other's I presented analytical papers," said Koeneman. "Presenting my thesis was exciting because it's something I've been working hard on and it's something I care about. Sharing that was nerve-wracking, but it was rewarding, too."

Motley stated that hosting KHR was not only a great opportunity for students to present their work, but also a chance for WKU to showcase the Honors College. WKU's Honors College is the only institution in the state that is a college rather than a program. Next semester, KHR will be hosted by Kentucky State University in Frankfort, and the Honors College is looking for a solid group of students to represent WKU. If you would like to present your research, please contact Ami Carter, the CE/T Coordinator for the Honors College.



"Hand-Me-Down"

Koeneman's story is one part of a six-part series of stories for her Honors CE/T project. This is an excerpt from her award-winning story, "Hand-Me-Down."

MOLLY KOENEMAN
Areté guest writer

We finished repairing several sections of fence before Nick looked at his watch, then at the setting sky and told us it was getting close to six o'clock. The rotten lumber we decided to come back for after supper.

"Let's race," Hemmy said

"I don't wanna," I protested.

"That's only because you never win," Hemmy said. "Come on, don't be a baby."

"I'm not a baby," I muttered as I took my place in line next to Nick.

Hemmy yelled, "Go!" and we ran.

Hemmy pulled away.

Nick followed.

I followed.

As the heat of the late March afternoon swam around us, our coats and thick socks collecting sweat, we ran over fields still hard from the winter cold, breathing air that smelled of rain.

Hemmy was far ahead of us; his face up-turned and his arms held out mimicking an airplane.

He began to make a circle.

Nick followed.

I followed.

Ahead of us the laundry from the line waved in the wind and, from where we were, we could see the sheets dancing like flags. Home was so close. In a looping circle, the race became about catching Hemmy instead of winning.

Then Hemmy stumbled and stopped, dropping to his knees. Nick tackled Hemmy, pushing him to the ground. I ran up beside them.

Nick laughed.

I laughed.

Hemmy gasped and rolled over. He was clutching his chest with his left hand, a hand full of fabric caught in his fist. With his right he was reaching up towards me. Nick was on his butt, pushing away from Hemmy with his feet and hands like a crab.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY MOLLY KOENEMAN

Molly Koeneman, Honors senior, won first place in this year's Jim Wayne Miller Celebration of Writing fiction contest for her short story "Hand-Me-Down."

Are you creative? Do you write?
Do you write creatively?
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An Evolving Process:

Honors Advising Videos

AUSTIN LANTER
Areté staff writer

With a new year comes a new way of advising Honors students. Amy Chester, academic advisor for Honors students, used to lead eight sessions. Students were required to attend one of the eight sessions. Due to inconvenience and several other factors, the sessions are no longer existent.

"The sessions were well attended," said Dr. Clay Motley. "However, some students would show up and then check out mentally."

This semester the Honors College chose to take a different route and implement a new medium to advise students. Students had to log onto Blackboard and watch a series of videos discussing topics such as augmenting a course and studying abroad.

These videos incorporated convenience for both the students and administrators into the advising process. Students gained the freedom to pick and choose when and where their Honors advising happened without losing content. This was a key reason for the change.

Chester and Motley both agree that the videos might have been boring. They hope the videos will become more interesting and involve more students.

"From a student's perspective, it's great, in a way, because you don't have to hear the same advising pitch over and over," said sophomore Brian Campbell. However, a problem that arose with the videos is the question of the attentiveness of the students.

"I think it was easier for students but probably less effective," said Honors junior Katie Knecht, who starred in one of the videos. "When you're in an in-person session, you're more likely to pay attention as opposed to when a video is playing in your dorm room, and you're also on Facebook and writing a paper."

Motley acknowledges that students may not have been paying attention throughout the videos. He believes inattention is the "most unreliable thing" within the new system.

Since the administration has no way of tracking how well the students pay attention, the idea of a quiz at the end of the videos has been thrown around. A quiz, which students must pass before they would be eligible for priority registration, would more accurately measure students' attentiveness.

"We don't want to [make a quiz mandatory]," said Chester. However, "with students just running the videos in the background [and] not watching, a quiz is becoming more likely."

Although the videos were definitely more convenient for students, Knecht feels that the lack of attending a session is a negative thing. "To me, the disadvantage is that it reduces the personal touch the Honors College always offers," she said. "A Skype conversation can't do an in-person conversation justice."

Students may not be able to physically raise their hands and ask questions because they are no longer attending sessions, but Chester is always available for one-on-one advising sessions. Students are encouraged to seek additional information if they have concerns because the new system is being perfected.

This semester was just a trial-run for these new videos. Though the videos may be questionable concerning content retention, they also seem to reach a certain level of success; more students are available for priority registration this semester than before.

"We haven't had time to evaluate yet, but it worked well enough that we would consider sticking with it," said Motley. "This is just the first draft in an evolving process."

Students gained the freedom to pick and choose when and where their Honors advising happened.

Areté

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Newsletter Staff:
Elizabeth Beilman
Cameron Franey
*Audrey Gearhart**
Tate Goins
Meghan Kennedy
Austin Lanter
Kali O'Rourke
Bethany Riggs
Kaitlynn Smith
Ramona Sudbeck

Advisor:
Dr. Angela Jones

Honors Exceutive Director:
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*editor

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Email us at
arete@wku.edu

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