

THE HONORA

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WINTER 2011

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A Successfully Scary Honors Halloween!

Halloween season means one thing at the Honors College: the Haunted House! For three nights, Honors students transformed the Honors House into Rolling Meadows Daycare, a spectacular Halloween attraction. Planning for the fourth annual Haunted House began immediately after classes started in August, and students built props and accessories during September and October. Freshmen volunteers were recruited at Orientation Days and the Freshman Colloquium.



Samantha Powell and Kristina Oliver get ready for the night!

The theme of this year's house centered on a daycare full of crazed children because, well, kids can be creepy! Some of the guests refused to go in, and others ran screaming from the house! Clowns, tricycles, and plenty of scary "kids" frightened over 275 guests over three nights. This year's attraction ran from October 27-29 from 8 pm to 12 am. Tickets were \$3, and part of the proceeds bene-



The cast of Rolling Meadows Daycare

fited Harvest of Hope, an organization that gives aid to migrant workers and their families. All of the students spent a lot of time preparing for this year's haunted house, and that dedication showed: the students raised \$845!



Jacob Benoit and Jessica Bartek play around in the hallway



Joseph Albahari plays a "Joe in the Box"

Student Volunteers:

Amber Blocker
Ashley Dailey
Ashley Land
Caleb Koebble
Calvin Van Patten

Chelsie Norton
Christal Oliver
David DeMeritt
Desiray Ward
Eric Abbott
Erica Garcia
Felicia Stover
Helen Burkett
Jacob Benoit
Jennifer Stakich
Jessica Bartek
Joseph Albahari
Katie Tucker
Kiana Lively
Kristina Oliver
Marcel Smith
Nathaniel Slayton
Nicholas Rouse
Phillip Laurents
Samantha Powell
Shakeria Bonaparte
Stephanie Byington
Terrance Jenkins
Zachary Taylor
Zadie James

Special thanks to:

Dr. Dixie Haggard
Student Government Association

VSU HONORS COLLEGE

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Honors College Director

Mrs. Jane Robinson
Honors College Secretary

Amanda Semetko
Graduate Assistant

Jennifer Stakich
Student Assistant

Dorrian Baber
Student Office Assistant

Honors Sponsors Guest Lecture on DNA!

On November 8th, the Honors College presented guest lecturer Albert Scherr, professor at the University of New Hampshire School of Law. Professor Scherr conducted a lively discussion on the topic of “Genetic Privacy and the Constitution: Do You Know Where Your DNA Is?”

After brief introductory remarks from Dr. Nikolova, Professor Scherr spoke to a packed room that included Provost Dr. Phil Gunter and scores of students, a majority of them in Honors. Professor Scherr opened by explaining he had been invited to speak at VSU by Honors professor Dr. Dennis Bogyo and revealed that he actually taught Dr. Bogyo at a summer camp! Professor Scherr also spoke in Dr. Bogyo’s Honors perspectives class while he was here at VSU.

Professor Scherr introduced his topic by listing some popular TV crime shows that use DNA technology. He then shocked the audience by revealing that everyone born in the United States had their DNA taken and sampled at birth for a

dozen genetic disorders such as PKU. A nationwide DNA database, then, is not so implausible as many might think.

As a running joke, Professor Scherr selected Dr. Gunter as the mock victim of “surreptitious sampling”—when police collect abandoned DNA from a public place without a warrant. By Professor Scherr’s examples, Dr. Gunter should not give out his DNA when someone asks for it, visit Starbucks, spit on the side-

walk, or go to a bar. Of course, Professor Scherr assured us that Dr. Gunter never spat on a sidewalk or frequented a bar.

Professor Scherr also listed common “external” sources of DNA that we shed everyday but don’t realize it: hair, saliva, and sweat were at the top of the list. In his words, “You cannot stop shedding DNA!” Professor Scherr also informed the audience that hotel room comforters had the most accumulated DNA on them (the crowd

was fairly disgusted) and that standardized test answer sheets held copious amounts of your DNA.

In the future, Professor Scherr predicted that DNA technology will increase, allowing scientists to use DNA to pinpoint more genetic disorders and even mental illnesses.

Professor Scherr’s main question of the night centered around the issue of whether it is constitutional to “surreptitiously sample” DNA from people. He cited the Fourth Amendment as the primary amendment for personal privacy—but there is legal debate whether abandoned, external DNA falls under the amendment’s umbrella of protection. Professor Scherr argued that external DNA should be protected but listed several possible future answers for this issue.

After the lecture, groups of students lined up to speak with Professor Scherr, and discussions lasted for over thirty minutes. The lecture produced enthusiastic response from both students and faculty, and Honors students appreciated the opportunity to attend this special presentation!



Professor Albert Scherr



Dr. Nikolova with Professor Scherr

A Call for Proposals!

Spring is right around the corner, and that means Honors conferences aren’t far behind! If you’re interested in presenting your research at an Honors conference, please be working on those proposals and abstracts over the Christmas break.

The Georgia Collegiate Honors Conference will be held at North Georgia College & State University in Dahlonega, Georgia this year. The conference dates are February 17-18. Proposals for this conference

are due to Dr. Nikolova by January 9th, 2012. Both papers and posters are accepted for this conference.

The Southern Regional Honors Conference will take place in Tampa, Florida this year. Students may submit papers, posters, or artwork for this conference. SRHC sets a much higher bar for research, so if you want to attend this one, you need to start thinking about it now.

Honors will cover hotel costs and some transportation costs as well. Conferences are a great way to get involved in research while also meeting other Honors students and faculty from the region.

Contact Dr. Nikolova at ornikolova@valdosta.edu for more information. If you would like a peer-review of your project, email HSA’s undergraduate Research Coordinator Erica Garcia at elgarcia@valdosta.edu.

Honors Roundtable on Antique Art and Artifacts

On October 26, the Honors College sponsored a Round Table on Antique Artifacts as part of the Student/Faculty Colloquia series. Our participants were Dr. Sebastian Bartos, Historian, Dr. Claire Orenduff-Barots, Art Historian, and Mr. Andrew Tatler-Burgess, Honors student majoring in Psychology. Mr. Tatler-Burgess, an avid collector and former gallery owner, brought some exciting artifacts from his collection, including:

- Martin Luther bible leaves dating from 1550's and the 1600's.
- Leaves from the 2nd edition Geneva bible, a leaf from the Great Bible (1540) and others.
- Leaves from Sebastian Brandt's allegorical work Ship of Fools, including woodcuts from the young Albrecht Durer.
- Incunabula including leaves from the Biblia Sacra.
- Leaves including woodcuts from Virgil Solis dating from the 1500's.

In his opening presentation, Dr. Bartos focused on the period of the Reformation, on one of its main figures, Martin Luther, and on the invention of the printing press and its impact on European history. Dr.

Orenduff-Bartos traced the development of the art of book writing, printing, and decorating from the Egyptian papyri to the printed works of the 15-16th century thus providing an art history perspective on some of the artifacts on display in the UC Theater. M. Tatler-Burgess talked about these artifacts, part of his private collection, in detail and explained how a collector makes the decision to purchase certain items for his/her collection and some ways to authenticate antique artifacts. He advised the future collectors in the audience to select a relatively narrow topic of interest and do a thorough research on the time period, the materials used to produce the artifacts, and the artists,

before making any purchases. He mentioned also the importance of



authenticating a document or objet d'art from the point of view of reliability of the research done using these ma-

terials. Students and faculty attending were thrilled by the exciting opportunity to handle some of the centuries-old artifacts of significant value. The event was an enjoyable encounter with exquisite art and food for thought about in-depth research in the field.



Honors Winter Graduates

This December, Honors will lose another batch of enterprising graduates. Ten Honors students will be graduating in December and bidding VSU farewell as they head to graduate schools and job opportunities.

Helen Burkett
Kristol DeGroot
Tyrina Dickson
Lauren Gordon
Feartatious Hogan
Candace Howard



Matthew Portwood
Jay Prosser
Khristian Roberts
Mary Warthen

Congratulations to all our graduates!



HSA Corner

Benefits of joining HSA include numerous opportunities to be involved in community service and social events. For more information look for VSU's Honor Student Association on Facebook and check out their website.

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/group.php?gid=2200950440>

2011-2012 HSA Officers

President: Jennifer Stakich
 Vice President: Chelsie Norton
 Secretary: Shakeria Bonaparte
 Treasurer: Adam Uelmen
 Community Service Coordinator: Amy Dandron
 Freshman Board Advisor: Kiana Lively
 Undergraduate Research Coordinator: Erica Garcia
 Public Relations Officer: Jessica Bartek

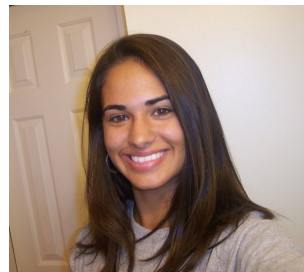


Most photos in this issue are courtesy of Jennifer Stakich, Chelsie Norton, and Dr. Nikolova.

Focus On...HSA Undergraduate Research Coordinator Erica Garcia

Thinking about participating in an Honors research conference but don't know quite what to do? Erica Garcia is here to help! Erica is HSA's Undergraduate Research Coordinator, and that means it's her job to help you hone your project, poster, or paper into conference-worthy material! Erica is a sophomore mathematics major; she's a part of the Blazin' Brigade color

guard, the Mathematical Association of America, and Sigma Alpha Iota. If you need some help with a project for GCHC or another conference, email her at elgarcia@valdosta.edu



HSA Teams Up with Student Veterans of America!

On November 17, HSA partnered with VSU Student Veterans of America to present a night of letter-writing for deployed service personnel. Mark Smith, president of the VSU Vets group, started the evening by explaining some hardships of a deployment.



Adrienne Fry and Christa Heaney

He emphasized how grateful these service people would be to receive letters from home.

Over 25 students participated in HSA's first Letters for Troops event, writing a total of 103 letters! These letters will be sent to active-duty personnel stationed overseas through the That Others May Live Foundation, a non-profit



Ashton Casey and Stephanie Byington

group. HSA is proud to support such a great cause!