



FOREWORD

The collection of stories and photographs bound between the covers of this 95th volume of the Petit Jean aim to transcend time and preserve our memories of this year at Harding. While few real moments can be fully contained, photographed and printed in words, the stories found on these pages serve as a reminder of memories that become increasingly more valuable as time passes. As you turn the pages of this book, remember that you were a character who shaped the narrative of this year at Harding.

by Megan Stroud



Assistant Professor of Education Lisa Bryant is involved in the daily lives of students in the education department and on the football team. Bryant was nominated as the 2019 Petit Jean yearbook dedication recipient by students across campus in November 2018. | photo by Sterling McMichael

Lisa Bryant

DEDICATION RECIPIENT

Assistant Professor of Education Lisa Bryant's greatest passion was ensuring that people with disabilities received the services they deserved. After beginning her college career at the University of Arkansas, Bryant graduated from the University of Central Arkansas with an undergraduate degree in special education and a master's degree in secondary leadership in 1997. She has been married to Bruce Bryant for 25 years and has two sons — seniors Mills and Haydn Bryant. Prior to her teaching career at Harding, Bryant was a special education teacher at Morrilton High School. Her community-based instruction class taught independent living skills to individuals with severe disabilities. She was promoted to special education director at Morrilton High School after 10 years of success in the classroom. After adjunct teaching for Harding in the summer, Bryant came to Harding full-time in 2012 and spent her time at Harding teaching education majors how to teach people with disabilities in regular education classrooms while also being involved with the football team as the academic coach, the College of Education service organization SALT (Scholars Advancing Learning and Teaching), Relay for Life and Bison Praying Moms.

Megan Stroud: How did you decide you wanted to be a teacher, specifically a special education teacher?

Lisa Bryant: Well, I was born a teacher. My favorite toy as a child was my chalkboard, and my little sister was always my student. For a long time, I thought I wanted to teach kindergarten. I took a little hiatus from college, and I worked retail as a manager in St. Louis. On my off days, I would substitute teach because I still knew I wanted to teach. I got a phone call one morning and [was asked to sub in a class] for kids with disabilities. I had no idea what I was walking into. I don't remember the names of anybody in the classroom, but I remember it being the best day ever. I remember being so inspired. I believe that God orders our steps. I think we end up where we're supposed to end up. I was in that classroom as a slap in the face to say this is what you're supposed to do. At that point, no joke, within a week I was making plans to go back to school to the U of A. It was that day in that classroom with kids with disabilities that made me realize that I had no business with little knee-biter kindergarteners and that special ed was what I was supposed to do.

MS: What are the biggest differences in teaching special education and teaching future special education teachers here at Harding?

LB: I always wanted to teach in college. I just didn't know I wanted to do it this soon. When I first took my director job [in Morrilton], I missed being with kids, but whenever I wanted to I could leave my office and go hang out in a classroom. When we moved here I didn't know anybody in classrooms. It was really different, but I told myself that I, from this place, could exponentially make the lives of people with disabilities better through the training of general ed teachers and special ed teachers than I could having eight to 15 kids with disabilities in a classroom in Morrilton by myself. I'm teaching people who will hopefully go the extra mile for kids with disabilities because of something they learned in my class.

MS: If you had to pick a favorite, what is your favorite class that you teach at Harding?

LB: [My law class is] probably the one that I'm the most passionate about because it's what most school districts do incorrectly. I like to empower future teachers to go and see where the law is and

read it for themselves. But that's where I feel like I can instill the need for advocacy that a good special ed teacher has. And then my most fun class to me is the [Educating Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities] class because I'm teaching people how I taught and doing those skills that are totally different than most students learn in high school. I get really attached to folks in class and so I hate when they leave. I love all of them.

MS: What is the most important piece of advice that you strive to instill in all of your students?

LB: Two things. All students can learn. There's a quote that I use. 'All students can learn, just not on the same day, not in the same way.' And the other is to do what you love and don't waste your time. Don't waste your time doing something that you don't love. If you don't love what you're doing, find something else to do. If it's not teaching, if you don't love teaching, go do something else. Life's too short and too precious not to do what you love. I love teaching, I love being with kids.

MS: Why do you think Lisa Bryant deserves this honor and how have you personally been impacted by her?

Natalie Frederick, senior special education with licensure major: Lisa Bryant challenges everyone to see ability. Ability in themselves, and ability in others. She demands excellence. She never asks that you come to her perfect or pristine, but she looks you in the eye, she sees what you can do, and she challenges you to see it as well. If I had to describe Lisa Bryant in one word it would be 'advocate.' She taught me and my classmates to advocate for the rights of those with disabilities — more importantly she taught us to teach them to advocate for themselves. She taught us to fight when the fight doesn't seem fair. She taught us to speak up when the world is silent. She taught us to find strengths when it seems like only weakness abounds. Mrs. B reminded us to find humor in everyday, put commas where the world put periods, and to always use our nice words. There are innumerable things I have learned and carried into the world because my life has been influenced by Lisa Bryant, but the most important is this: if I ever have a student who has to describe me in one word, I hope that word is 'advocate.'

interview by Megan Stroud



STUDENT LIFE

At the heart of campus, the George S. Benson Auditorium served as a hub for events like chapel, Spring Sing, concerts and lectures that enhanced students' everyday lives. | illustration by Morgan May

Over the course of the year, students across campus shared experiences and created deep bonds with their peers. Moments like celebrating after a Spring Sing win, becoming a part of Searcy's flourishing city-life and even mourning loss brought students together. These individual moments of campus life became memories that connected us and formed the larger Harding story.

Jacob McAlister
student life editor

In Memory of

John H. Ryan

REMEMBERING THE ORIGINAL "MR. SPRING SING"

2018 John H. Ryan Sweepstakes Award

WINNER: "Houston, We Have A Problem" | Ju Go Ju, Ko Jo Kai, Sub T-16 & friends
FIRST RUNNER-UP: "The Tooth, The Whole Tooth & Nothing But The Tooth" | TNT, Zeta Rho & friends
SECOND RUNNER-UP: "Going Home Plane & Simple" | Chi Sigma Alpha, Regina, Sigma Phi Mu & friends
THIRD RUNNER-UP: "Cut Loose: The Barbershop Tunes" | Delta Gamma Rho, Omega Phi & friends

The 2017 Spring Sing hosts and hostesses, former student Brooks Bennett, senior Caroline Ritchie, sophomore Max Ross and junior Ava Galyean, perform the song, "United We Stand," in memory of John H. Ryan in the George S. Benson Auditorium during the final performance of "Heroes and Villains" on March 27, 2018. The song was traditionally sung by the hosts, hostesses and audience members at the end of the show each year. | photo by Sterling McMichael





Spring Sing 2018 honored the legacy of John H. Ryan, the show's original producer for 32 years.

Harding's Spring Sing began in 1974 when two students approached Dr. John H. Ryan, or "Jack," as he was known to many, with the idea of a campus-wide musical extravaganza that involved clubs and healthy competition. Ryan excitedly joined the students in making the event happen. Little did he know that 45 years later Spring Sing would be a staple annual event on the Harding calendar.

During the 2018 Spring Sing show, Harding honored Ryan after his death just one month prior to the show. He was an integral part of making Spring Sing happen for over 30 years before his retirement in 2006.

"He was 'Mr. Spring Sing' before I was ever 'Mr. Spring Sing,'" Dr. Steven Frye, director of Spring Sing since 1995, said.

Ryan remained the Spring Sing producer until 1995 when Cindee Stockstill was named producer, and Ryan moved to executive producer.

"I grew up listening to [Ryan] on the radio because he would do the narration part of the Harding Hymns radio program that played just before my dad would speak on the radio," Stockstill said. "I grew up listening to Jack Ryan read scripture on the radio, and then, to be

able to get to work with him personally for that many years, it was just amazing."

Ryan was honored for his leadership in numerous Spring Sing shows when the final award was renamed the John H. Ryan Sweepstakes Award in 1998 after the 25th Spring Sing. The renaming of the award was a complete surprise to Ryan.

"It was pretty cool because it totally caught him off guard, and we were just grinning," Dottie Frye, director of the hosts, hostesses and ensemble, said. "For the first time in his life, he was speechless."

There were a lot of changes since the first show: Spring Sing moved from the Administration Auditorium to the George S. Benson Auditorium, club shows were grouped together rather than being individualized and giving to charities added a philanthropic aspect to the competitive nature of the show. Though many aspects of Spring Sing changed, Ryan had a profound and lasting impact on the production.

"He was an amazing influence on my life," Steven Frye said. "I can't minimize the impact that he had on me as a person. There are very few true mentors that you call on in life, and he was certainly one of those."

story by Kayla Meeler



Sophomores Kaci Mason, Reid Pace and Faith Sibert celebrate freedom from the reign of their oppressive Martian mayor in Ju Go Ju, Ko Jo Kai, Sub T-16 and friends' show, "Houston, We Have a Problem," in the George S. Benson Auditorium on March 27, 2018. The show placed first for the John H. Ryan Sweepstakes Award and received \$2,000 to donate to the Sunshine School. | photo by Sterling McMichael

Sophomore Elise Smith and seniors Kaylan Griffin, Jessica Mitchell and Emory Rockwell present the Tablet of Abkmenrah during Chi Omega Pi, Zeta Pi Zeta, Shantih, Iota Chi and friends' "Night at the Museum" themed show in the Benson Auditorium on March 27, 2018. The show featured museum exhibits that came to life through visual effects including a life-sized dinosaur. | photo by Sterling McMichael

Sophomore Courtney Mann leads the soprano section of Delta Gamma Rho, Omega Phi and friends' show, "Cutloose: The Barbershop Tunes," in the Benson Auditorium on March 27, 2018. The students participating in the show were split into four groups by voice part and wore colors to differentiate the groups from each other on stage. | photo by Sterling McMichael

Junior Emily Jacobs, sophomore Jamica Gaither and senior Maleah Brown act as students at a strict private school in Delta Nu and friends' show, "The Nuns Are Back in Town," in the Benson Auditorium on March 27, 2018. The show followed a group of unruly students who were forced by a group of nuns to clean up their attitudes. | photo by Sterling McMichael



COMMITTED TO CONNECTION

Since 1924, students attended daily chapel services to worship, build camaraderie and celebrate Harding's identity as a faith-based institution; in 2018, chapel continued to bring the Harding community together.

PROFESSOR MOST OFTEN ON STAGE IN FALL 2018: **ANDREW BAKER**

"For me, chapel is a community opportunity at Harding that you can't re-create. You have to be present to really engage what is there and so my hope for chapel is that whatever is happening is something related to our community that provides an opportunity for engagement for those who would so choose to do so."

-Andrew Baker

Dr. Andrew Baker, assistant professor of Bible and director of the Mitchell Center, interviews Wayne and Alice Anne Keller during a chapel presentation in the George S. Benson Auditorium on Sept. 28, 2018. Chapel attendees saw Baker present lessons, make announcements and participate on stage more than any other professor during fall 2018. | photo courtesy of Jeff Montgomery

1924-1925 HARDING CATALOG:

One of the chief characteristics of the school's work is the daily chapel exercises. The devotional service talks are intended to prepare students for dealing sanely with the problems of life, to develop proper ideals of true manhood and womanhood and to impart a desire for accomplishing greater things. Every student is expected to attend chapel. We believe that the conscientious student will derive more from the chapel talks than any other course of study.

"I love chapel because it allows me to take time out of my busy schedule to just sit and worship God. It's time when I don't have to worry about anything else. I feel it's important because we all gather as like-minded people for one purpose."

-Camille Overman, freshman

TIME SPENT IN CHAPEL IN FALL 2018:

CHAPEL
1 DAY 13 HRS. 15 MIN. | **DEVO** 13 HRS. 56 MIN.

TIME PRAYING
1 HR. 50 MIN.

91 NUMBER OF PRAYERS

248 NUMBER OF SONGS

TIME SINGING
10 HRS. 11 MIN.

TIME BIBLE READING
30 MIN.

ANNOUNCEMENT LENGTH **4 HRS. 8 MIN.**

Projections for the amount of time spent in chapel for the semester were based on statistics gathered by junior Hannah Wise, assistant organizations editor for the Petit Jean yearbook, using the available chapel programs archived by HU16 on The Link from Aug. 20, 2018, through Oct. 31, 2018.

data and interviews by **Hannah Wise**



BOTHAM SHEM JEAN:

a life remembered

Botham Shem Jean, 2016 alumnus from Saint Lucia, was shot and killed in his apartment in Dallas, Texas, on Sept. 5, 2018. Many groups across campus were affected by the 26-year-old's death and celebrated his legacy of leadership.



Students gather on the steps in front of the George S. Benson Auditorium on Sept. 10, 2018, to mourn, pray and reflect on the life of alumnus Botham Shem Jean. The Black Student Association and the Student Association planned the candlelight vigil to bring grieving students and community members together. | photo by **Sterling McMichael**

Botham Shem Jean, 2016 alumnus, volunteers with the Original Rock House, a ministry of the College Church of Christ, on April 30, 2014. Jean spent many hours serving with this ministry and became known for his strong servant leadership. | photo courtesy of **Jeff Montgomery**

BLACK STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The Black Student Association (BSA) asked the Student Association (SA) to join them in hosting a vigil for Botham Shem Jean on Sept. 10, 2018.

After hearing about Jean's death, President of BSA junior Makayla Twigg decided to take action and plan a candlelight vigil. The weekly BSA meeting agenda was dropped to discuss Jean.

"We spent the time talking about our frustrations and how we all felt about it," Twigg said. "We just had that time to let ourselves feel because I think we were trying not to be angry. Everyone was already looking at us like, 'So how you guys feel about it?' So we were trying to hide it, and that was our time to let it out."

Vice President of BSA sophomore Gabrielle Hood said the SA helped spread the word about the vigil through their influence on the student body.

"I was just really astonished at the turnout we got and how many people supported Botham," Hood said. "It was just nice to see the whole Harding community just come together for him."

The event was planned for the Harding community, but members of surrounding communities who were touched by Jean's passing traveled to Harding to participate in the vigil as well. At the conclusion of the event, students and community members chose to stay and continue the vigil, honoring Jean in song.

Secretary of BSA sophomore Otis Idlebird led a prayer at the service.

"I'm glad I could get involved and help [with] that," Idlebird said. "It brought everyone together. I think everyone could say everyone was closer in this time of sorrow and mourning. Things like that just... gives me goosebumps."

Twigg said the vigil was a time to worship, sing, pray and mourn.

"He's still doing work even though he's not here," Twigg said. "He's still making such a difference in people's lives." ❧

story by **Maleah Brown**

ROCK HOUSE MINISTRIES & CHAPEL

Botham Shem Jean often led singing in chapel and was an Original Rock House Ministry intern at College Church of Christ during his time at Harding. Jean was described by many as soulful, positive and joyous.

President Bruce McLarty knew Jean well within Jean's first semester at school and saw that Jean had a gift to lead any type of song. McLarty said he recognized deep feeling and emotion in the songs Jean led.

"Though he was a very public figure, he was an unassuming person, which was a rare combination," McLarty said. "Everyone could feel comfortable in his presence, and that is a remarkable gift."

Debbie Gentry, college and outreach coordinator for the Original Rock House Ministry, met Jean in fall 2011 when Jean began attending College Church of Christ. Gentry said she saw a gift within Jean and began involving him in Bible classes and student-led worship services.

"Botham was heavily involved in Bisons for Christ," Gentry said. "For four years, he took care of the assigning and input of projects and their leaders."

Evan Graves, post-baccalaureate economics major, was Jean's friend and spent time with Jean at Wednesday night devotionals.

"The thing about Botham is he had a lot of power in his voice," Graves said. "Singing was his calling."

During Jean's memorial chapel on Sept. 11, 2018, McLarty recounted the story of when he asked Jean to lead the song "Master, the Tempest is Raging" during chapel in 2012. Jean did not know the song but called his grandmother in Saint Lucia to help him learn the tune and melody. The video of Jean leading the song was played during the memorial chapel and allowed all who were there to feel his presence and get a glimpse of who Jean was.

"There will never be another Botham," Gentry said. "He loved deeply and treated everyone with a genuine kindness that is rare." ❧

story by **Lexi Hoagland**

SUB T-16

The unexpected passing of Botham Shem Jean sent waves of emotions across men's social club Sub T-16 which Jean was a member of during his time at Harding.

Senior Hunter Hoagland, member of Sub T-16, knew this was a traumatic time for the whole Jean family and wanted to help in any way he could. A few hours after hearing the news of Jean's passing, he and the rest of the social club decided to organize an online fundraiser. All of the funds that were raised were given directly to the Jean family and were used for any expenses they had.

"We raised our goal amount of \$5,000 within a couple of hours," Hoagland said. "People from all around the world donated, posting messages that they are praying for the family, and that they are sorry for the Harding community's loss."

The fundraiser collected over \$45,000 for the Jean family. Sub T-16 sponsor and Assistant Vice President of Advancement Steve Lake was close to Jean and said he was saddened by his passing. He knew the fundraiser would help the Jean family and was not surprised by the amount that was raised.

"This story resonated with a lot of people outside the Harding family," Lake said. "That's why people gave, because they felt for his family, and they felt they wanted to do something to make a difference."

In fall 2015, Jean served as vice president of the club and oversaw induction week activities. A portion of seniors that joined Sub T-16 that year ran the Conquer the Gauntlet race in Little Rock, Arkansas, on Sept. 15, 2018. The group included senior Jase Thornton who said the race held special meaning because, after Jean's death, they chose to run in his honor.

"Through struggle, he taught us to rely on each other, and that was the only way we made it through the race," Thornton said. "Running for him was the least we could do after what he's done for us and for the world around him." ❧

story by **Haley Hood**

GOOD NEWS SINGERS

After auditioning in spring 2014, Botham Shem Jean was chosen as a member of Good News Singers. The Good News Singers were a 10-member a cappella singing group created with the purpose of bringing glory to God through musical arrangements, lyrics, harmonies and the message of Christ in song.

"Botham was an energetic baritone who captivated audiences with his enthusiasm," Chuck Hicks, assistant professor of music and director of Belles & Beaux and Good News Singers, said. "He had the ability to be both humble and assertive simultaneously."

Harding's Good News Singers made the trip to Dallas, Texas, for Jean's funeral to honor him and his family.

Junior Justice Laws was a member of Good News Singers in 2018 and sang at Jean's funeral alongside the nine other members.

"Botham had such a big presence on campus," Laws said. "The way people spoke about him at his funeral was very much how I want people to speak at my funeral. The way he carried himself and the love he showed toward everyone is something I want to emulate."

Alumnus Tyler Samuel was a member of Good News Singers at the same time as Jean.

"I was fortunate to have the opportunity to sing with Botham in the Good News Singers," Samuel said. "He used his gift of singing to touch others, and I'm grateful for the chance I had to get to know Botham. I was shocked when we learned that he had been taken away, but even in his abbreviated time on earth, he made an indelible mark on everyone who knew him. He will be greatly missed."

Hicks reflected on his interactions with Jean and the impact he had.

"Botham's love for God and conveying the messages of God in song will not soon be forgotten," Hicks said. "His Christian passion was evident and will continue to be an example to the Good News Singers of what God can do when we use our God-given talents to teach, lead and serve others." ❧

story by **Jacob Broyles**

SANTORINI SANDSTORM



HUG students were caught in a sandstorm during their weekend in Santorini.

The Harding University in Greece (HUG) spring 2018 group experienced a sandstorm from the Sahara desert while on a six-mile hike on the Greek island of Santorini.

Near the end of the semester, the group took a two-day trip to Santorini and stayed in Oia, a town on the northern part of the island. Santorini was known for its sunsets, and although the group arrived on the island in time to witness this natural phenomenon, the sandstorm hindered their plans.

Junior Luke Humphrey recalled arriving on the island. "When we first got there, we were really disappointed because Santorini's known for its famous sunsets, and we were staying in a city where it's the best view ever," Humphrey said. "The very first night we were there, it was really cloudy, and we were just really bummed about that."

The following morning, the group rode a bus south to Fira, the island's main city. After lunch, the group began a six-mile hike back to Oia. The cloud cover in the sky seemed unusual.

Sophomore Kinsey Stubblefield said the sky cast a pale hue on the ground.

"The way that it looked, it's really hard to explain," Stubblefield said. "The only way I can explain it is imagine watching The Wizard of Oz before Dorothy

goes to Oz where it's black and white. Imagine being Dorothy and seeing in black and white."

On the hike back, the wind began to pick up. Sand, rocks and dirt swirled in every direction, and students had to stop at times to shield themselves. Junior Laura Waldron remembered the intensity of the event.

"We got an hour or so into the hike, and all of the sudden, the wind was so aggressive," Waldron said. "It was knocking us a few steps sideways. We were kind of on cliffs and edges of these hills. At first, we were like, 'This is fun,' and then we were kind of miserable at the end of it."

Upon completing the six-mile trek, the group returned to their hotel in Oia, and every member was covered in dust.

"Later that night, as it got into evening time, kind of near that sunset time again, the entire sky turned yellow," Stubblefield said. "Everything was yellow. It seemed the real night sky was never going to come."

Though the intensity of the sandstorm prevented any chance of witnessing one of Santorini's sunsets, Waldron appreciated the opportunity to experience such an event.

"Once I set aside how miserable it was to be pelted in the face with dirt for a few hours, I just kept saying over and over again, 'Man, I feel alive,'" Waldron said. "It was so cool to experience so much power." ←

story by Zach Bissell

*The banks of Santorini, Greece, receive a coating of dust and sand from the Sahara Desert on March 22, 2018. Members of the spring 2018 HUG group experienced the sandstorm while on a six-mile hike. | photo courtesy of **Hannah Grace Freeman***

*Juniors Meredith Holmes, Ashlyn Wilson, Emelia Thomas and Hannah Grace Freeman hike to Oia, Greece, during a sandstorm on March 22, 2018. The HUG students returned to their hotel completely covered in dust. | photo courtesy of **Hannah Grace Freeman***

50 YEARS AND COUNTING

After originally voting to disband themselves in their 50th year, members of Alpha Tau Epsilon decided to keep the club alive.

A club rooted in strong values and unity faced the possibility of disbandment in fall 2018, the same semester they celebrated their 50th anniversary. Men's social club Alpha Tau Epsilon (ATE) was encouraged to take on spring recruitment as a tool for continuing the club's traditions.

During homecoming weekend 2018, the existing members of ATE hosted club alumni and were able to learn from past traditions and memories. Adjunct Professor in the College of Business Administration and ATE Sponsor Erastos Evdoxiadis said he felt inspired from hearing stories from the club's 50-year history.

"We saw people from 30 to 35 years ago that were just like us in many ways," Evdoxiadis said. "It was neat that the spirit of the club had not changed, which is encouraging."

When the members and sponsors began to look at the future of the club in fall 2018, they realized that most of their members were graduating the following semester. The members took a vote, and the majority decided that ATE should disband at the end of the school year.

According to ATE president sophomore McKinzy Kendall, the deans came to the men and stated that as long as one member and one sponsor still wanted to keep the club going, they would not be forced to disband. According to Kendall, Evdoxiadis told Kendall that it would be a lot of work, but they were both willing to keep the traditions and the club spirit alive.

"After what nearly happened to us last semester, it felt a lot like God was saying, 'You have a shot at this, so go for it,'" Kendall said.

In spring 2019, the remaining three active members, Kendall, freshman Marcus Bocox and junior Colin McIntosh, began spring recruitment, something that, according to Assistant Dean of Students Kara Abston, had never been allowed before.

Spring recruitment, according to Kendall, involved many individual conversations, encouraging interested students to join the club. ATE hosted game nights in the student center and sent postcards to incoming male students, hoping to attract potential members.

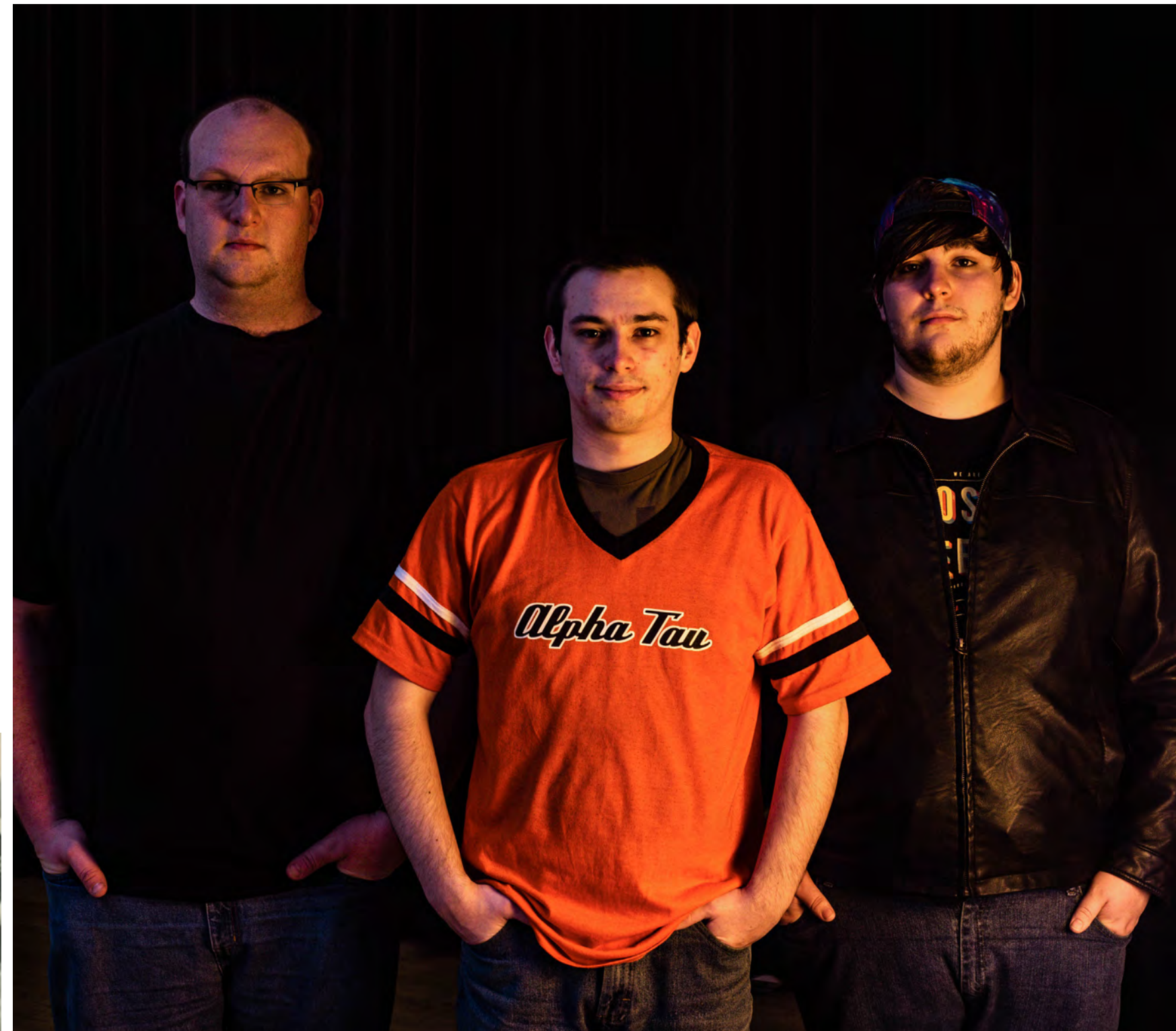
One of Kendall's friends, sophomore Thomas Bowen, was one of the first members to join as a result of this recruitment. Through the personal relationships formed with the members of the club, he was encouraged to attend All-Club on one of the last nights of Club Week 2018. The night he attended, the other 29 clubs on campus gave ATE a standing ovation with the understanding that it would be their last All-Club performance.

"I went to All-Club for the first time last semester just to see what it was like, and the outpouring of support that this tiny club got — I couldn't wait to a part of it," Bowen said.

Through support from faculty and students, ATE grew from three in December 2018 to seven official members by March 2019. Kendall remained hopeful for the future of the club.

"We're making progress, and we're hoping to reach the 100th anniversary," Kendall said. "We'd like to be here forever." ←

story by **Hannah Foust**



Members of men's social club Alpha Tau Epsilon gather for their annual club photo in 1973. More than 40 years later, after voting to disband, members of Alpha Tau Epsilon worked with the dean of students to develop a spring recruitment strategy to help the club grow. | photo courtesy of **Christopher Reynolds**

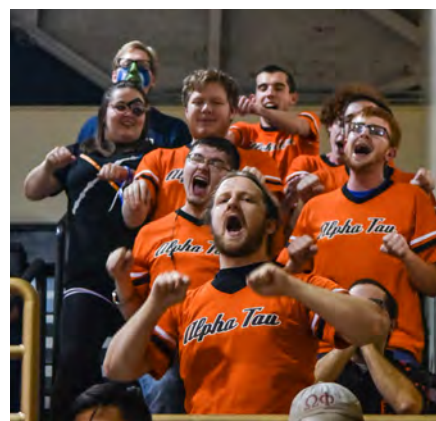
Sophomores Thomas Bowen and McKinzy Kendall and junior Josh Smith come together on March 4, 2019, and stand prepared to prevent the disbandment of men's social club Alpha Tau Epsilon through spring recruitment. In 2018, Alpha Tau Epsilon conducted the first-ever social club spring induction and planned to do the same in spring 2019. | photo by **Sterling McMichael**

Alpha Tau Epsilon member participates in a softball game in the 1970s. In their early years, Alpha Tau Epsilon actively participated in club sports and won the 1970 club sports swimming championships. | photo courtesy of the **Christopher Reynolds**

Members of men's social club Alpha Tau Epsilon and GATA gather at Pattie Cobb Dorm in the 1980s. In 2019, this was the traditional spot for clubs to take group photos each spring. | photo courtesy of **Marty Dejarnette**

The men of social club Alpha Tau Epsilon come together for a Spring Sing group photo in 1989. Alpha Tau Epsilon joined GATA, Sigma Phi Mu and Ka Re Ta to develop a show called "Cell Block Rock," which they performed in the 1989 Spring Sing show. | photo courtesy of **Marty Dejarnette**

Senior Quinn Holleman leads members of Alpha Tau Epsilon in a club cheer on Oct. 22, 2018, during All-Club in the Rhodes-Reaves Field House. The club received a standing ovation from all other social clubs in honor of what was believed to be their last All-Club before disbanding. | photo by **Sterling McMichael**



BIG HEART, BIGGER FAITH

Senior Will Brannen exemplified faith and trust in the Lord despite complications after his heart transplant.

According to senior Bible and ministry major Will Brannen, he was the youngest person to receive a heart transplant in the state of Alabama in 1995, at six weeks old.

At age 9, Brannen was diagnosed with lymphoma, a cancer caused by the transplant's anti-rejection medications, which he battled for about a year before the cancer came back more aggressively at age 10. Brannen said his parents were very supportive of him experiencing childhood and never let him feel like he should not do something because of his illness.

"I was a pretty happy kid, despite the circumstances," Brannen said. "That kind of goes to show you that attitude really is everything and how we can't really control the situations we're put in, but we can control how we act, and that's going to influence who we become afterwards."

Brannen said he spent most of his 10-year-old life in the hospital, and during that time, he realized what it meant to fully rely on God while struggling with spiritual doubts and physical weakness.

"I came to find out, whenever it looks like [God] isn't there, that's probably when the Holy Spirit is doing the most work," Brannen said.


One of Brannen's mentors, Ken Bissell, senior advancement officer and sponsor of men's social club Omega Phi, said

he especially noticed how Brannen used his story to affect others as he took on leadership roles in Omega Phi. Bissell said the other men in the club looked up to Brannen and respected him because of his ability to share his faith and to speak truthfully.

"He's one of those rare students who, when he walks out the door, he's going to make an impact immediately," Bissell said. "Whatever he's going to do, wherever he goes, whatever he does, he's going to make an impact."

Junior Bible and ministry major Brady Jackson said he and Brannen connected through Omega Phi and the College of Bible and Ministry. Jackson said he enjoyed the deep theological conversations, encouragement and consistency from his and Brannen's friendship. Jackson said Brannen took his studies very seriously and strove to be a positive light on campus.

"I think he recognizes the life he's supposed to live and the life he's supposed to give to God," Jackson said. "He recognizes his calling, and you can just kind of tell the way he lives is a testament to how God has worked in his life and how He brought him out of those very life threatening things."

Brannen planned to pursue a doctoral degree and become a university-level Bible professor and finish a book about his own life story after graduation. 

"I came to find out, whenever it looks like [God] isn't there, that's probably when the Holy Spirit is doing the most work."

-Will Brannen

story by Sarah Brister

Senior Will Brannen reflects on his story of spiritual doubts and physical weakness on the Front Lawn at Harding on Sept. 24, 2018. Brannen overcame the adversities of a heart transplant and the resulting lymphoma diagnosis to realize God's hand was working in all situations. | photo by Sterling McMichael

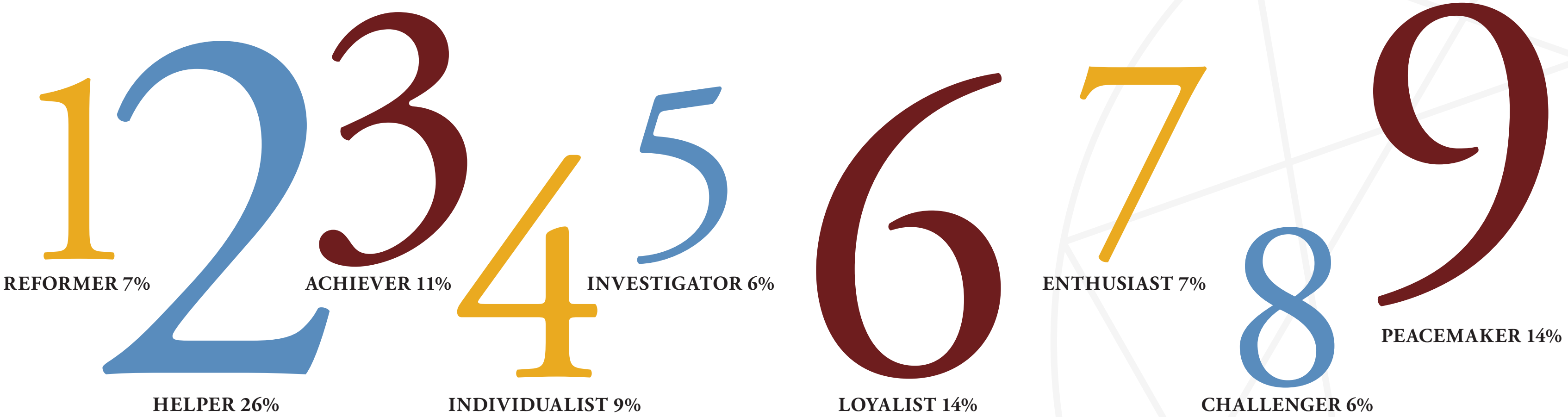


THE ENNEAGRAM

During 2018, students across campus became intrigued with the Enneagram of Personality Types and the implications and transformations the results brought to relationship dynamics.

The goal of the Enneagram was to provide a framework for the nine human archetypes of character structure. These various types explained how each type of person perceives and interacts with the world and the people around them using insights from philosophy and psychology. The Greek words that made up "Enneagram" mean "nine" and "point," referring to the circle with nine points arranged to represent the nine personality types. The origin of the concepts were disputed, but the types specifically associated with the Enneagram were attributed to Oscar Ichazo's work in the 1950s.

Based on a survey of 606 students at Harding University, the most common personality type on Harding's campus during fall 2018 was 2: The Helper. This survey consisted of 73 percent female respondents and represented students from every academic department on campus and every classification including graduate students. If students did not already know their Enneagram number when given the survey, they were provided with the free version of the test from 9types.com. To learn more about the Enneagram visit enneagraminstitute.com, read the series of books by Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson or listen to the podcast "The Road Back to You: Looking at Life Through the Lens of the Enneagram."



How has knowing your Enneagram number impacted your personal awareness of your relationships with people around you, especially other people on campus?



"Knowing my Enneagram number has definitely made me more aware of myself and allowed me to grow as an individual. It allows us, as a diverse community, to discuss our strengths and weakness which each type has. Being aware of these strengths and weaknesses can be helpful in building lasting relationships and understanding people better, which every university needs."
- Hannah Jones, senior

"I don't typically buy into personality tests because I feel like they change all too often and don't describe me. As I first started to read through the Enneagram this past summer, I had a completely different outlook as I read the description of a 2. It described perfectly how I'm motivated, what I seek in life and how I view success in life; it described me. In life, we watch people from our own viewpoints and measure them by our standards, because we believe they think like us — because it's all we know. But Enneagrams helped show me the different strengths and views of everyone around me."
- Grant Dowdy, junior

"Three's have a tendency to be impulsive and just do things to get stuff done when stressed, and will avoid conflict and get really confused about who they are and if they matter. ... Knowing my Enneagram helps me interacting with people on campus because I know that I will forget sometimes to be intentional with my time and forget to seek out the people I care about."
- Sydney Sanford, junior

"Through this tool, I have discovered parts of myself that are unique to me and also useful for community. Most importantly, the Enneagram has stressed the intricate and complex beauty with which God has created us. ... My default mode of introspection is useful in helping friends think through their emotional issues, but becomes a hindrance when I am asked to silence my emotional narrative and serve someone else's needs."
- Lindsey Fronberger, senior

"Knowing what type I am has helped me understand how I approach relationships and how others approach them. I'm definitely much more aware of my friends' values and the things that they struggle with."
- Madeline Elliott, freshman

"The Enneagram of Personality is frightfully accurate. As I read about my personality I began to understand more about myself than ever before. ... Forceful friends aren't jerks, they are motivated and will do what it takes to succeed. Friends who constantly need attention or want to hangout aren't needy, they just cannot get enough of the things in life that make them happy. All that to say, people need understanding of themselves and others. With understanding comes appreciation and room to grow in relationships."
- Alan Jacobs, graduate student

"I find the Enneagram to be extremely beneficial. I really enjoyed the Myers-Briggs test, but I found that it was accurate in describing what a person did, but not really why. I also realized that your results could change along with your maturity. The Enneagram on the other hand, accounts for your growth in describing the connections between the different personalities. I will always be a 7, though I will gain positive or negative qualities of the 5 or 1 respectively. I find the Enneagram to be an invaluable tool in self-reflection and the process of maturity."
- Isaac Davis, sophomore

"I see the Enneagram test as a way for a person to be aware of who they are deep down and to see where they fall in relation to their friends. At first, I brushed off the whole thing, but as my friends and I talked about it more and more, I started to realize that I am my number through and through. [My friends and I] have grown by being more aware of each others' deeper personality traits."
- Logan Glewen, senior

"After taking the test, I started to compare every decision I make to the result I got, and I have realized that my response to several situations is in accordance with my number. Knowing this I usually try to think more about something before I take action and try to put people's feelings first."
- Alejandra Penalva Funez, junior

Students across campus represent each of personality types in the Enneagram of Personality. The students were asked how their understanding of their Enneagram number helped them understand and relate to people around them. | photos by Sterling McMichael



DEDICATED TO DAD

Freshman Garrett Smith became part of the Homecoming musical "Big Fish," a story that hit close to home.

Each year, Harding's Homecoming musical was filled with bright lights and dance numbers. Beyond these aspects, freshman Garrett Smith, who was part of the ensemble for the 2018 Homecoming musical "Big Fish," found a deeper connection to his role in the musical.

Smith said the story of "Big Fish" followed a father telling life stories to his son as he battled terminal cancer. Smith's dad was diagnosed with stage four kidney cancer in November 2017. Smith auditioned for "Big Fish" because he wanted to be part of Harding's theatre program, and his dad encouraged him to be the hero of his own story and pursue his talents.

"I saw 'Big Fish' as a celebration of my dad's life, not just [a way of] dwelling on his cancer," Smith said.

Sophomore Allie Scott, who played Sandra Bloom in "Big Fish," said what stuck out to her the most when she met Smith was his energetic spirit and willingness to listen.

"He's just a very joyful person for somebody who is going through something so hard," Scott said. "He didn't let it change the way that he lived his life and just who he was as a person."

Ben Jones, assistant professor of theatre, technical director and director of "Big Fish," said actors and audiences often viewed theatre as an escape from reality and an opportunity to experience a story different from their own.

Jones said one of the challenges he noticed for Smith was him having to come to rehearsal and be reminded of his life challenges instead of finding an escape from them. Jones said Smith was very open about his family situation but never let it affect his performance and responsibilities in the show.

"My hope is always that he was sitting in a position where he knew he was surrounded by cast members and production staff members who could be there to support him," Jones said. "So, instead of, you know, instead of dealing with it by yourself, you have an opportunity to work through some of the emotions with other people. That's the hope."

Smith said being part of the musical was therapeutic and cathartic because he became close with the other cast members and was able to share his story openly while being part of something he loved.

"[The cast] became a family by the end of it," Smith said.

story by Sarah Brister

Sophomore Chantel Ceaser, freshman Garrett Smith and sophomore Valentino Warren perform in the Homecoming musical "Big Fish" in the George S. Benson Auditorium on Oct. 17, 2018. Smith viewed his part in the show as an opportunity to celebrate the life of his father, who was diagnosed with stage four kidney cancer in November 2017. | photo by Sterling McMichael

On Dec. 4, 2018, on the Front Lawn, freshman Garrett Smith reflects on his first semester at Harding. One of the hardest things that Smith had to do while in the Homecoming musical "Big Fish" was to come to rehearsals and be reminded of the parallels in the play's story to his own life, yet, as he came closer to the cast, he said participating in the musical became a therapeutic experience. | photo by Angelo Felix



Hannah Faulkner
Tina Fazenbaker
Katelyn Fehr
Emma Fennel
Kelsey Force
Erin Fous

Emily Fronck
Vivian Fuentes
Sarah Gautreaux
Kenton Gentry
Hailey Gerrard
Meech Geer

Makenna Gibbs
Zachary Givens
Anna Grace Glenn
Grant Gloff
Mary Grace Golden
Harris Good

Jennerose Goodwin
Sarah Gossett
Elliott Graffice
Todd Gray
Ryan Green
Hannah Hackworth

Heidi Haddix
Madie Hale
Sarah Hale
Kendall Hall
Brooklynn Harrell
Parker Harrelson

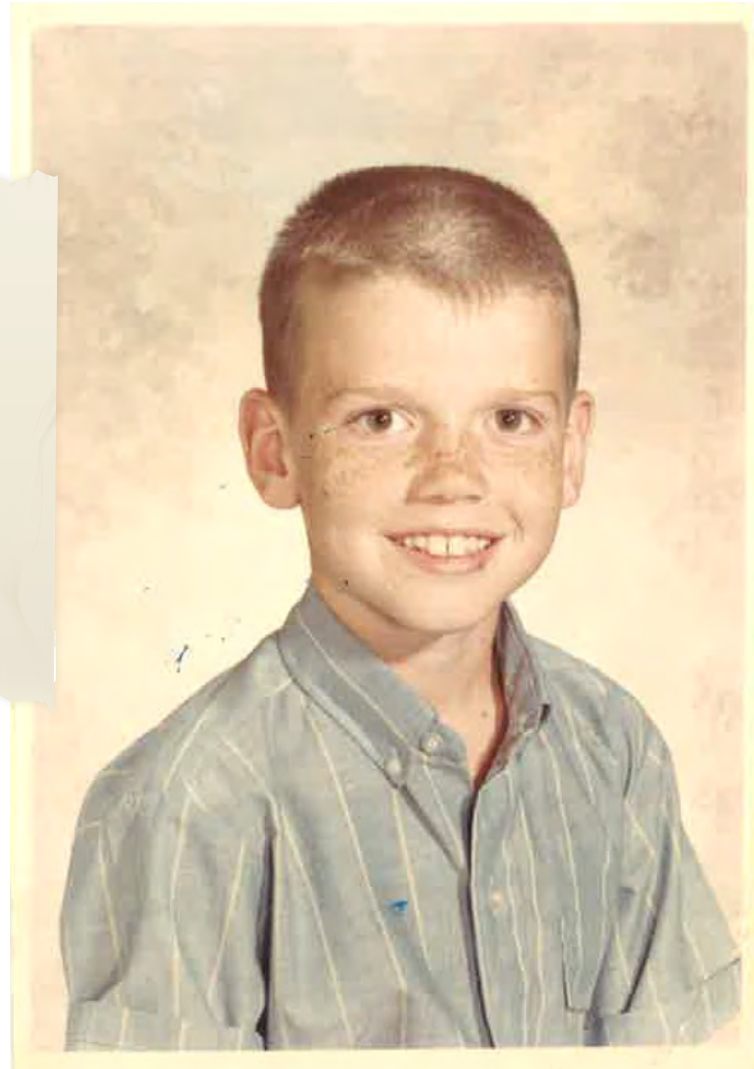
Kaitlyn Harrington
Chloe Harris
Elise Harrison
Aiden Haslam
Chaela Hastings
Taylor Hasz

Shelby Hathorn
Holly Haught

THE MAKING OF MCLARTY

President Bruce McLarty shares the narrative of his life from his birth to his inauguration with seniors Editor-in-Chief of the Petit Jean yearbook Megan Stroud, Head Copy Editor Morgan Taylor, Assistant Editor Hannah Foust and Head Photographer Sterling McMichael in the sunroom of his home on South Cross Street on Oct. 23, 2018. In his presidential home, McLarty was surrounded by memories and heirlooms of past presidents and family members, including a framed photo that once hung in the office of Joe Pryor, Harding's second provost, a sunroom that once housed President David Burks' lap pool and wooden pieces of furniture built by his wife's father. | photo by Sterling McMichael





President Bruce McLarty grew up in a strong family with a life-long goal to be a preacher which led to his inauguration as Harding's fifth president on Sept. 20, 2013.

Harding's fifth president, Dr. Bruce McLarty, welcomed four members of the Petit Jean yearbook staff into his home on Oct. 23, 2018. McLarty shared the narrative of his life beginning with his birth and ending with the moment he learned that he had been selected as the fifth and oldest president of Harding University. This is his story in his words:

interview by Megan Stroud

BLESSED BY FAMILY

I am the oldest of four children in my family, born to Mom and Dad when they were students at Tennessee Tech University. My parents met each other because my mom's sister married my dad's brother, so I've gotten double first cousins, which is legal in all 50 states. ... My mom and dad met when my dad and his parents came up to meet the new in-laws. Dad is from near Oxford, Mississippi, and mom is from near Cookeville, Tennessee — Gainesboro, Tennessee. A lot of their courtship was when dad was in the Air Force, and it was by letters. He proposed over the mail, and she accepted through the mail.

He got released on the east coast for a leave, bought a truck, drove to Gainesboro, Tennessee, and picked her up. They went to Booneville, Mississippi, where they were going to meet his parents, and a preacher was waiting. They got married and all, and then they drove to Sacramento.

When they came back from Sacramento, they started at Tennessee Tech. Dad became an engineer, and I was born while they were in school there. Mom could never get a clear TB skin test, so they put her in the TB hospital, and I was born in the TB hospital in Nashville, Tennessee. ... But because of that, my mom's parents took care of me the first four months of my life, and I always

In October of 1967, President Bruce McLarty spends his fifth grade year in Washington, D.C. While his family lived there during 1967-1968, Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated, causing a lot of violence and demonstration in the city. | photo courtesy of Bruce McLarty

had a bonded relationship with them. A big piece of the story of who I am and my life and everything is I was blessed with four incredible grandparents, and they all four hold a very dear place in my heart. ... When Ann and I met here at Harding, one of the points of connection that we had immediately was she had very dear connections with her grandparents. I really didn't know her at all other than name, but [one] Wednesday night I looked over, and she was sitting in the middle of this sea of white-headed ladies. I just, you know, I just had a weakness for that.

When I was about two-and-a-half years old, Mom and dad had a set of triplets, and they lived a portion of a day. Each of them died along through the day and all. Two years ago now, Mom turned 80 and, for her birthday, we kids got together and said 'Let's go back and spend two days just traveling around Nashville and around Gainesboro and Cookeville, going to places that are significant in mom's life.' It was just an incredible experience. We ended up at the triplets' grave, and mom and dad told us the stories that we'd all heard bits and pieces [of], but we'd never heard as much as we heard that day and all. ... That was a piece of my family story. [It] wasn't talked about a whole lot, but it was something that my little sisters Jean, Jane and Joan, who died the day of their birth, [were] just always a part of the family story.

Mom and Dad graduated from Tennessee Tech when I was three years old, and Dad's first job as a civil engineer — his whole career was with the Corps of Engineers — was in Oklahoma. He was working on Lake Eufaula. All of my dad's buddies, you know, as a little three-year-old, they would tell me, 'You're going to Oklahoma. There's Indians out there you know.' I grew up in the era of Roy Rogers and cowboys and Indians and all this kind of stuff. Dad went out and got us set up. I came out with mom. I wore my six shooters [and cowboy hat] on the Greyhound bus all the way out to Oklahoma. I was ready for everything, you know, but we lived there for a couple of years, moved to Little Rock, and I started school in Little Rock.

I didn't go to kindergarten. Mom was a school teacher, and she taught me my ABC's and numbers and all that. I came through in an era where not everybody went to kindergarten. I started first grade at Wilson Elementary. When we had Ruby Bridges [at Harding] a couple of years ago, it just brought all that rushing back to me because, in my elementary school, there were twin girls who were the first African Americans in my school. I had one of the sisters in my first-grade class and the other one in my second-grade class. I don't know their names, but I have the pictures. I've made two trips to the Little Rock School Board to see if they could help me identify these 61-year-old women now because Ann and I would love to have dinner with them. In first and second grade I'm like everybody else, I'm just trying to survive, you know, figure out playground dynamics and rules and all that, and I would just love to know what it was like for them with the overlay of the whole race thing going on. ... They followed us a great deal in the news because [of] being in Little Rock, and we were the kids that were born the year of central high school — 1957.

When I was five years old, my dad was baptized at the old Pulaski Heights Church of Christ in Little Rock, Arkansas. I slept through the whole thing on the pew, but from all of my memory of my life, my folks have been very, very involved with church, always working, helping, always at every meeting of church. All that changed when I was five years old and became what it was in all of my growing up.

Mom and dad announced to us that we were going to have an addition to the family, and we found out it was going to be two. And so we had a twin brother and sister that were born when I was seven years old. Dad built a house for us in another part of Little Rock because we were in a two-bedroom house.

'A YEAR-LONG FIELD TRIP'

We moved to Memphis at the end of my fourth grade [year], and within six weeks we got word that dad had received this honor where he was going to get a year of special training in Washington, D.C. so my fifth grade year was in Washington, D.C. It was the perfect age to get something like that because I was 10 years old, and it was like a year-long field trip to Washington, D.C. Every Saturday the folks would roll us out of bed, and we would go to the Smithsonian or Washington Monument or White House or Mount Vernon or something like that. It was just magical along that line. For a 10 year old, it was just perfect. It was perfect timing and all.

The year we were up there was the school year '67-'68, and it was a terrible year in America. It was the year that Martin Luther King [Jr.] was assassinated, the year Bobby Kennedy was assassinated. I remember being in my bed and hearing my parents, watching our little black and white TV in the living room.

And I remember hearing the voice of President Johnson saying, 'I will not seek, nor will I accept the nomination of my party for president of the United States.' And Vietnam was going on and all of that. And after Martin Luther King was assassinated, there was a lot of violence in the city, and there was a lot of demonstration. And so the field trip came to an end, but we still went to places like Boston and New York and the battlefields and all of that for the rest of that year.



President Bruce McLarty, his father Durley, his mother Sue and his siblings Kim, Karen and Karl lived in Washington, D.C. during May 1968. The McLartys moved to Washington, D.C. after learning Durley had the opportunity to receive special training there for a year. | photo courtesy of Bruce McLarty

THE PREACHER'S 'HALLOWED GROUND'

[We] came back from there and lived in the house from sixth grade on that my folks lived in until 20 years ago, long after I'd left home. And so when people ask me where I grew up I say Memphis. I went to public school until my junior year of high school, and my parents put us all in Harding Academy in Memphis. I graduated from there in the fall of '75.

Even after five years of presidency at Harding, what am I? I'm really not a college president. I'm a preacher. You know, you scratch me, and that's what's beneath the surface and all. And I remember telling people from the fifth grade, 'I'm going to be a preacher.'

When I came to Harding College in the fall of 1975, I was a Bible major and biblical languages minor and never really looked back on that. I loved Harding from the get go. I remember my first weekend on campus. I moved into Armstrong 109. That's hallowed ground. And then lived my last two years at Keller 310A. Those were my two dorm rooms. I went through in three years. My first weekend on campus, there was a retreat out at Wyldewood for Bible majors, and what is now Alpha Chi Malachi used to be called the Timothy Club. We went out there, and I remember writing a letter to my parents — because we wrote letters to our parents back in those days and put a stamp on it — just gushing about 'this is the most incredible thing I've ever experienced, and I'm around people who have a heart for the Lord and a vision for the world and who care.' I just thought I had died and gone to heaven. And some people collide with their expectations when they come to Harding. They expect it to be perfect and when it's not, they get disillusioned. My expectations, I think, were a lot more modest, and Harding far exceeded them. And so I had a great experience while I was here.

I got in King's Men as a social club. I think my freshman year was the third year of the club on campus, and it was started by about a dozen guys from

Alabama Christian College, which was a two year school at the time. They won A-team football two years in a row. These guys were beasts. They just came, and they were great athletes. My freshman year I think there were 35 of us that came into the club, so the club more than doubled. And I don't think we ever won another athletic event ever, you know. We just killed all of that.

'DROP HIM NOW'

When my wife and I met in the fall of my last year, she and I went to see "The Hiding Place." We had probably been flirting at the cafeteria for forever, you know, and I finally asked her to a movie and we go to "The Hiding Place." And the movie is so long, as y'all saw in chapel last year. ... So after the movie we went over to where a El Almacen is now — it used to be a Dairy Queen before that building was built. So we went over there, and we closed the place down. We just talked all night, you know, over a milkshake or something. And after that we didn't date anybody else.

In January, we come back from break, and now we're dating steadily. She tells her mother one day on the phone, 'I'm going out with this guy named Bruce McLarty.' Her mother says, 'What year is he?' She was a sophomore, and I was a senior. Wrong answer. Most mothers are terrified their daughter is going to get married and drop out of school, at least in our era that was the [case]. 'What's his major?' 'He's a Bible major.' Not sure that was the right answer. And she said, 'Well, what's he doing when he graduates in May?' And [Ann] said, 'Well, he's spending the summer in Africa.' Ann and I were walking and I said, 'Well, what did your mom say?' And she said, 'You don't want to know.' And I said, 'I do want to know!' And so we are right in front of the American Studies building, walking hand in hand, and she said her first words were 'drop him now.' So that was my future mother in law. Those were her first words about me: 'drop him now.'

I graduated in May, and Ann was getting ready to start the nursing program. That summer I went with two guys I graduated with, Mark Hogan and Dave Hogan, and we spent the summer in Ivory Coast, West Africa. And back in those days there was not a summer internship program like there is now. We had no idea how three guys could wind up in Africa, you know. We even contacted Exxon to see if we [could] work on a ship going across the ocean or something. We eventually found a church, Crieve Hall Church of Christ, in Nashville, that had a place for us to stay if we could raise the money for the tickets. And so we went and had a summer there and a mission experience in Africa.

I came back and started at [Harding School of Theology (HST)], and Ann was starting over here in the nursing program. So for two years, every other weekend or so, one of us would be going one direction or the other, and it's a marvel that she married me. It really is. Because two years of long distance was a long time.

Well, we get engaged along the way. And when she graduated in 1980, we got married three weeks later in Ohio. Our first home was in the Mississippi Delta in a little town called Marks, Mississippi, about an hour-and-a-half south of Memphis. She was a nursing grad, so she became the charge nurse at a little county hospital, and all she had to do was open her mouth and people would say, 'oh honey, what did you do to have to come down here?' And it's like there is just is no good reason for a girl from Ohio to be in the Mississippi Delta. But we were there, and had a great couple of years.



Ann and Bruce McLarty married in Ohio on May 31, 1980. After a date to see "The Hiding Place" and drink milkshakes during Bruce McLarty's senior year, the two never dated anyone else. | photo courtesy of Bruce McLarty

'COMING BACK FROM KENYA'

We moved back to Memphis to my home church with the idea that we would work with them for a couple of years, and they would send us to Africa. And then [on] January 31, 1984, we got on a plane and went to Kenya in East Africa. We were one of five couples on a mission team. Our youngest [daughter], Jessica, was four months old and our oldest was two years and four months old when we went.

When we had been there for one month, the first two couples came home, and it was traumatic; it was a great difficulty. One of the couples came home and got a divorce. It was just a shocking experience in our lives. And Kenya for us just never got easier. And at about the 14-month mark we went out to western Kenya to see this 'older missionary couple,' and I think they were 36 years old, but they were like the sages in Africa because we were 26 years old. But we went out there to talk with them; 'Do we need to go somewhere else in Kenya or do we need to go home.' They talked with us and prayed with us and listened to us all weekend. And then they went for a walk on Sunday afternoon, and they came back and they said, 'We think you have a ministry in the states.' And so that was the beginning of coming back from Kenya. And that was a really difficult thing. And it probably — just emotionally, spiritually, and all — probably was something I was still getting over three years later.



Ann and Bruce McLarty and their children, Charity and Jessica, participate in an Easter Egg hunt on April 22, 1984, in Kenya. On January 31, 1984, the McLarty family flew to Kenya, East Africa, with five other couples on a mission team, but 14 months later, after several other couples on their team had already come home, they returned home, following the advice of an older missionary couple to find their ministry in the states. | photo courtesy of Bruce McLarty

COLLEGE CALLED

When we came back, we settled in Cookeville, Tennessee, and I was the preacher for the College Side Church of Christ, which was right across the street from Tennessee Tech University. ... I preached there for six years, and our girls started school there. They kind of grew up — we kind of grew up all there. Six years seemed like a long time and a long tenure, you know. We would tell people when they would ask us, 'You know, such and such church is looking for a preacher. Are you going to interview or have they talked to you?' And we would say, 'We feel very purposeful here. We feel God's opened a great door for us here. We enjoy it. Our family is very settled. Now if the College Church in Searcy, Arkansas, called.' ... And then we would kind of laugh like, 'that's never going to happen,' you know, but Ann and I had been deeply touched by the ministry of Jim Woodruff preaching at the College Church when we were students here. I came home from an elders' meeting one night in Cookeville, and it was about midnight and Ann said, 'well, we got a call.'

Mike Cope had announced his departure here, and Ray Muncy — that's the one that the clock in front of the Student Center is named after — was the chairman of the search committee. So he called Ann and asked to speak to me. ... When I got in [from a late-night elders' meeting] I called him, and they set up the interview. I came and interviewed with College Church and things happened very quickly. By the end of July they had hired me and my first Sunday at College Church was the first Sunday after classes started in the fall of '91. I was 34 years old at the time. And we started life over here in Searcy, Arkansas. I preached at the College Church for a total of 14 years, so that six years in Cookeville didn't look so long after 14 years of all that.

THROWN INTO THE DEEP END ACROSS THE STREET

During that time I was very much preaching to Harding people — so many of the professors and administrators and a lot of the students. I'd go to chapel three or four days a week. Part of my morning was to walk over and be in chapel, and just kind of keep in touch with what's going on.

After 14 years, it was in January of 2005, right before students came back from the Christmas break, Dr. Burks invited me to lunch one day. He told me about this new position he was opening at Harding, and it was going to be vice president for spiritual life. He [encouraged] me to interview for the job. I had not thought of doing anything but preaching for the College Church for the whole time I had been here, and so I prayerfully considered that possibility. I interviewed for the job and was offered the job. I went that summer with the Harding University in Greece program. [Ann and I] both taught in that program, and then my first day coming back was when school started in August. And I remember all that summer I'd wake up at four in the morning, eyes wide open, and think, 'What have I done?' You know, I loved my life and what have I done? I've ruined it. A piece of me still misses what I did at the College Church because I loved every year more than the year before. **It was really a great thing, but I felt that coming to Harding, it would give me a place at the table as the future of the university I love so much was being hammered out.**

So I came across and was dean of the College of Bible and vice president, and it was really just a phenomenal opportunity for me because being dean of Bible put me right into the middle of all of the academic gears of the university. And so I saw just how majors develop and how programs start and just academic affairs, how everything is connected with everything else. ... It took me two years to take a single class and move from a 200 level to a 300 level. I will never forget the day they showed me the piece of paper that had blanks on the back of it for 13 signatures that I had to get. All of these people had to agree to this before we can move this thing forward through academic affairs. It was an incredible experience. You know, it was the equivalent of being thrown into the deep end of the pool to see if you can swim.

On Mondays I was always at the cabinet table where the cabinet would have lunch with Dr. Burks, and I would hear all these administrators report out. I would hear advancement and admissions and athletics and student life and IS&T and just all of these folks. So that was an education in the administration of it all.

EMBRACING THE DOCTORAL MISSION

When I interviewed for the job, Dr. Burks had asked me, 'Would you be willing to work on your doctorate?' My master's degree was the old master of theology degree at HST, which was a 90 hour master's degree, and Dr. Burks never made his peace with that degree because he said '90 hours after a bachelor's degree you should be Dr. Somebody.' And so when the time came I asked Dr. Burks. I said, 'What do you want me to get? ... and he said, 'An accredited degree that makes you a doctor.'

So I began looking at doctor of ministry because that's what my whole life had been prepared for up to that point. I ended up going to the school in Ann's hometown in Ohio — Ashland, Ohio. I kept looking at the program, and I thought, 'This fits me. This is what I want,' ... but I didn't want to tell anybody until I was pretty certain because I thought, 'If I tell Ann and then I don't [go there], she'll be disappointed. And if I tell Ann's family and I don't go, they'll kick me out of the family.' So I didn't want to tell anybody until I was certain, [but] I interviewed there and was accepted into the program.

When I got ready for dissertation, they let me use stuff that was what I needed to study for this place. **My literature review of my dissertation was about how faith-based schools tend almost inevitably to walk away from their faith, given enough time and, ironically, often become an enemy of the faith that founded them.** So, with that in mind, in a doctor of ministry dissertation, you get to that point, and then you step out of your dissertation and create something that addresses the challenge you have seen. So if this is what happens, how do we keep this from happening at Harding University?

I created a curriculum called 'Embracing the Mission.' It's made to teach first-year university faculty at Harding who we are, where we came from, why it's so important that we be who we are and that we teach Christianly at this place and that we not lose our soul and become just another private institution of higher education. The world's got more than enough of those. ... When I finished all that, I was able to immediately use that. And one of my favorite things to this day is that every August I spend about eight hours with the new faculty coming in to start at Harding, and I teach them that stuff. So I get to tell them the Harding story and the Harding stories ... [about] the people that brought us here, and the people that built this place.

That brings us to the interview for the presidency.

THE INTERVIEW FOR THE PRESIDENCY

Dr. Burks announced his retirement, and so the question is coming up, 'Are you going to put your hat in the ring for this?' You know, and that was the most talked about, gossiped about, thing in Searcy, Arkansas, for probably five years, you know. So when the board set the process in motion, the first thing was you had to apply with a letter of interest and then you had to answer about 10 questions. It was like writing another dissertation.

The board decided never ever to divulge who was being considered, even when they were finalists, for the sake of the people involved — worst kept secret in the history of the world, but at least the board didn't tell who it was and all.

John Simmons was chairman of the board at that time and John called me up one afternoon to tell me that I made it through to the second round. ... Then there was a battery of maybe 14 questions. A lot of them had multiple parts, and it was a lot more writing and all. This time it was just wanting to know about how I viewed all kinds of things about our code of conduct and our charter and all these sorts, and leadership issues in general and all. So then you turn loose of that, and it's in their hands.

Then I get the call that I'm one of the finalists, and they didn't even tell me how many others there were. Later on, everybody figured out there were five. And so then they met with us in a hotel in Little Rock right next door to Emmanuel Baptist church. The whole board came in, and they had these two-and-a-half-hour interviews. We were to walk in through a certain door, and we were interviewed. Then we walked out another door, and none of us were supposed to see each other and all that. Like I said, worst kept secret in the history of the world. But they tried. But for the face-to-face interview, you walk into this room, and there's a round table. There are six people at the table,

and your interaction is to be with them. The rest of the Board of Trustees is at these rectangular tables all over the room. And so they are there as spectators, and they're watching. They don't say anything, you don't say anything to them. You're there with these folks around this table. ... The people at the table had a script, and I think it was 18 questions that they walked me through. And when they finished, if anybody sitting at the other tables had a question, they wrote it on a card and handed it in to these folks and then they asked me and everything.

When it was over, I left the room and went out. Ann picked me up in our blue minivan. And I said, 'Krispy Kreme, as fast as you can go. I want the biggest, fattest cream filled donut they have. It's time for some comfort food.' So then it was in the hands of the board.

Their plan was to get together at Homecoming that year, and the regular board meeting would be replaced with the selection committee meeting. And then at the Black and Gold Dinner that night, John Simmons gets up and updates us on the process, and he said, 'People ask, how are we doing? It's going along really well, you know, we're on schedule.' He kind of chuckled and said, 'Matter of fact, we're way ahead of schedule.' They were hoping to get together one more time and have the announcement in February. And so I thought, 'They may have decided.'

The next day was the dedication of Legacy Park — the first buildings of Legacy. And so I was there for the dedication, and John Simmons saw me and said, 'Is there a time this afternoon I could come over and visit with you and Ann?' And I thought 'They have decided. I don't know if I'm it or not, but they have decided.' And so he came over, and he asked if I would be willing to be Harding's fifth president. **It was one of those moments where you know your whole life just changed.** >>>



In 1986, President Bruce McLarty and his family, Ann, Jessica and Charity, have a family portrait taken by Olan Mills, a photography studio headquartered in Chattanooga, Tennessee. After returning from Kenya, the McLarty family settled in Cookeville, Tennessee, where Bruce McLarty preached for the College Side Church of Christ for six years before moving back to Searcy, Arkansas, where he would become the preacher for College Church of Christ for 14 years. | photo courtesy of Bruce McLarty



LIFE IN THE CLOUDS

Harding pilot Ken McConnaughay flew his 19th year in the Searcy skies.

In 1975, on his 16th birthday, Harding pilot Ken McConnaughay focused his attention not on an interstate, but on the Searcy airport runway. This was his first solo flight and the beginning of a passion-filled career in aviation.

The Harding jet was, in fact, not a jet. It was considered a turboprop, and more specifically, it was a Beechcraft King Air 350 2006 model. In his 19th year flying for Harding, McConnaughay never viewed his position as work.

"It's not a job," McConnaughay said. "When I was younger, my dad and I were sitting at the supper table. He looked at me and said, 'I don't care what you do, just as long as you like it.' There isn't a day that has gone by where I haven't enjoyed what I'm doing."

President Bruce McLarty flew across the country with McConnaughay a number of times. He considered McConnaughay to be a highly trusted friend.

"I have complete confidence in Ken that he watches out for our safety," McLarty said. "I love the way he treats people, the way he loves Harding and the way he takes care of things. He's always ready to get us where we need to go."

Chancellor and former president Dr. David Burks hired McConnaughay in August 1999.

"It's very important that we be able to get to all kinds of functions around our constituency whether it's for fundraising, whether we're going to a ball game or whether we're going to an alumni reception," Burks said. "He's always extremely dependable, has everything ready and does a first-class job in taking care of Harding people."

McLarty said that every trip with McConnaughay was pleasant, but that McConnaughay enjoyed joking with him.

"I remember being in Nashville once, and we weren't able to fly out when we wanted to because a storm blew in and everything," McLarty said. "So the storm had almost passed over, and, you know, I looked at Ken and said, 'What do you think?' And Ken said, 'Oh. We can probably make it.' He just loves to talk like that and kid us, and of course, it was with a smile."

McConnaughay's co-pilots were all university students including his co-pilot in 2018, junior Nick Turnage. McConnaughay was professional in training his apprentices as each former apprentice moved on to major careers in the aviation world. Yet at the end of the day, McConnaughay believed "flying" and "fun" were synonymous.

"I know there isn't any playing on the airplane, but if there was one person who played the most, it would be me because I just love what I do," McConnaughay said. 🍂

story by Zach Bissell

Harding pilot Ken McConnaughay and co-pilot junior Nick Turnage fly Harding's plane, a Beechcraft King Air 350 2006 model, from Searcy, Arkansas, to Memphis, Tennessee, on Nov. 6, 2018. Former President David Burks hired McConnaughay in 1999. | photo by Sterling McMichael

MARKETING, MARATHONS & MARRIAGE

Dr. Rich Brown, chair of the marketing department, and his wife, Laura Beth Brown, took on new experiences during their semester abroad.

Dr. Rich Brown, professor of business administration and chair of the marketing department, led students to New Zealand, Australia, India, Cambodia and Thailand on the Harding University in Australasia (HUA) study abroad program for the second time in fall 2018. Brown's wife, Laura Beth Brown, accompanied him on the trip as an assistant professor of marketing.

While on the trip, Rich Brown participated in a marathon in Bangkok, Thailand. He had run close to 100 marathons, and he said this one was different because it began at midnight due to heat, smog and traffic concerns.

"[The conditions] were miserable," Rich Brown said. "Many people needed medical attention on the course. I have never seen a marathon course with so much medical support. ... I was just happy to finish without walking or needing an IV."

To add to the complications during the 26.2 miles, the heat index was 95 degrees, it was very crowded and he could not talk to other runners due to the language barrier.

"[It was] just like running anywhere else except I could not talk with anyone," Rich Brown said. "[I] did not really need to until the end when I was trying to find out where to get the finisher medal and shirt."

Laura Beth Brown was unable to attend because she was with a sick student, but she was still proud of her husband.

"I am always proud of Rich when he runs a race," Laura Beth Brown said. "It was special for him to be able to run in Bangkok."

Rich and Laura Beth Brown did more than teach and explore; they also immersed themselves in the cultures they came across. Their original wedding was in Searcy, Arkansas, on Nov. 13, 1987, but while in India, they participated in a mock traditional Punjabi ceremony, an Indian wedding, in Amritsar, India.

The couple dressed in Punjab wedding clothes, made a processional entrance with a parade and participated in a recessional and parade exit.

"The students and other people at the resort really enjoyed it," Rich Brown said. "Laura Beth and I did, too."

The recreation of a traditional Punjabi ceremony happened on a special day to the Browns.

"It was a coincidence. That [day] was our 31st wedding anniversary," Laura Beth Brown said. "We will never forget it!"

Sophomore Jack Brower was on the HUA trip with the Browns and was inspired by their Christ-centered marriage.

"I'm getting married soon, so I want to treat my wife the same way he treats his," Brower said. "He sees her like an angel and truly sees her that way."

Rich Brown said the HUA program exceeded his expectations.

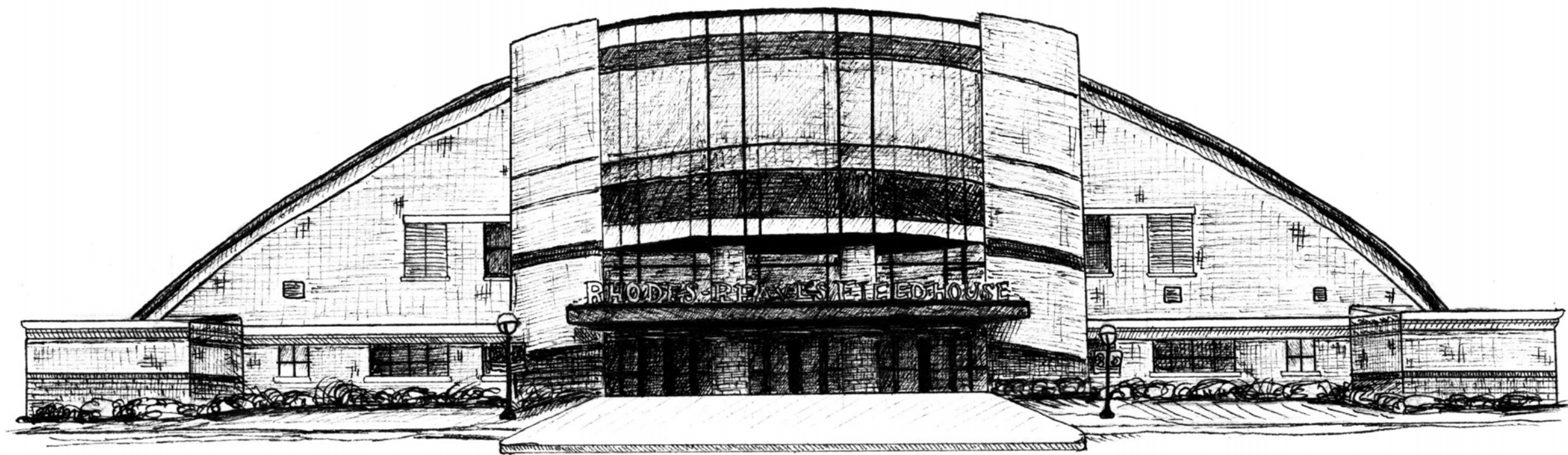
"I'm always amazed at how alike people are all over the world despite the obvious differences in cultures," Rich Brown said. "I love seeing the great creativity of God on the Earth."

story by **Wesley Bryant**



*Dr. Rich Brown, professor of business administration and chair of the marketing department, and his wife, Laura Beth Brown, participate in a mock Indian wedding ceremony on Nov. 13, 2018, in Amritsar, India. The ceremony took place on their 31st wedding anniversary. | photo courtesy of **Jacob Wilkerson***

*On Oct. 30, 2018, Brown and the HUA students visit Humboldt Falls in Fiordland National Park in New Zealand. Throughout the semester, the fall 2018 Harding University in Australasia (HUA) students and faculty traveled through countries such as Australia, Cambodia, India, Japan, New Zealand and Thailand. | photo courtesy of **Jacob Wilkerson***



ATHLETICS

The Rhodes-Reaves Field House was home to the Bison and Lady Bison basketball teams and the Lady Bison volleyball team and was a part of Harding athletics since its construction in 1949. | illustration by Morgan May

For the college athlete, every field was a stage and every court was a pulpit. Games were a collection of stories coming together in an ultimate performance with no predetermined ending. Players came from all different states, countries and cultures to build teams regardless of their differences. Spectators, coaches and players all played their role to give the team the best chance to win. Whether you were on the field or in the stands, we were all a part of the game, writing the narrative of the season one moment at a time.

Parker Samuel
athletics editor

STAYING *rooted*

Association of Biological Sciences and Student Publications came together to raise money for a nonprofit organization.

Two organizations from different departments joined together to create one of the most successful fundraisers on campus to date. Student Publications and the Association of Biological Sciences (ABS) raised \$1,645 for Roots Missions through a plant sale.

On Aug. 30, 2018, Student Publications and ABS had their third and most successful fundraiser for Roots Missions, a nonprofit organization that supported mission work churches on a Navajo reservation in Arizona. Both organizations worked together to prepare for the fundraiser by painting pots for the plants, hanging up decorations, transporting the plants to the Hammon Student Center and hosting the booth to share information and attend to customers.

Senior Public Relations and Marketing Director for Student Publications Samantha Shepherd planned the previous three events by organizing announcements, preparing promotional signs and posters, and posting information on social media outlets.

Shepherd said that after having three fundraisers for the mission, it gained more awareness. She said a Bison newspaper article was written for the third fundraiser, which got more people interested.

"It's a lot of fun, and I like doing it," Shepherd said. "People were really getting excited about it because it was actually going towards something, and they're getting something cute out of it like plants."

Dr. Michael Nicodemus, associate professor of biology, was the faculty adviser to ABS and one of the board members of Roots Missions. Nicodemus ran the Harding greenhouse, which gave him the resources to provide the sale with plants. Through collaboration, Nicodemus and Director of Student Publications and Assistant Professor of Communication Katie Ramirez decided to combine their organizations to create awareness and raise money for the organization.

"I have been overwhelmed with how much the students in both clubs have been willing to give up some of their time to help in this work," Nicodemus said.

Senior President of ABS Sydney Foster explained that the club had been an organization for one year. Foster said the fundraiser created more opportunities for the members to get to know each other, as well as connecting with other people outside of the science building. Foster said the sale was easy enough that the club could quickly be ready for more sales.

"Student Publications really took the lead and made sure we had advertising and nice posters, along with helping us paint pots," Foster said. "It was nice to get some publicity for the biology club, so people could see that we're more than just a little science club."

story by **Alyse Yates**

The Association of Biological Sciences provides plants to sell on Oct. 18, 2018, in the Hammon Student Center. Members of the organization worked to raise plants throughout the school year. | photo by Sterling McMichael

Seniors Sydney Foster and Isabelle Graesse tend to plants in the Pryor-England Science Center greenhouse on Oct. 19, 2018. The students dedicated hours of preparation for the fundraiser benefiting Roots Mission. | photo by Sterling McMichael





BE THE REVOLUTION

During the Searcy watch party on Feb. 25, 2019, in the George S. Benson Auditorium, Co-host of the Small Business Revolution Main Street and Chief Brand and Communications Officer at Deluxe Corporation Amanda Brinkman announces Searcy as the winner of the Small Business Revolution by appearing on the Benson stage. The town worked together as a community to make a revolution happen from the time President and Chief Idea Officer of Think Idea Studio Mat Faulkner submitted an application for Searcy to be featured on season four of the Hulu show. | photo by Sterling McMichael

Senior Emily Tanley and junior Saraya Dodd celebrate with the rest of the Benson Auditorium as Searcy is announced as the winner of the Small Business Revolution. As the winner, Searcy received \$500,000 to make over the six small businesses chosen by the producers — Savor + Sip, Zion Climbing Center, Nooma, Whilma's Filipino Restaurant, El Mercado Cavadas and ARganic Woodwork. | photo by Sterling McMichael



Searcy announced the winner of the Small Business Revolution competition.

After a nearly four-month process of campaigning and voting, Searcy went from one of roughly 12,000 nominations in the Deluxe Corporation's Small Business Revolution to the No. 1 spot, winning \$500,000 and a spot on season four of the Small Business Revolution Main Street Hulu reality TV show. The money won was used to revitalize six chosen local businesses.

Thousands of Searcy residents and Harding students gathered at the George S. Benson Auditorium on Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2019, to watch the live announcement.

As anticipation built, several community leaders, including President Bruce McLarty, spoke at the beginning of the watch party. McLarty said students were energized and involved in the voting process, and Searcy Mayor Kyle Osborne said he had never seen so many people get excited about one thing.

Amy Burton, executive director of Main Street Searcy, a volunteer-based non-profit organization that works to preserve and enhance historic downtown Searcy, was highly involved in the Searcy Revolution from the beginning of the application process.

"The reward is going to be so huge," Burton said. "There has been a fire in our community that we have never seen. It makes me so proud to look out and call this my hometown."

Mat Faulkner, president and chief idea officer of Think Idea Studio and one of the main organizers of the Searcy Revolution, said the community of Searcy built up to that moment for four months.

"Everybody coming together and organizing this event [watch party] was the pinnacle for this whole process," Faulkner said. "We were ready. Just like the slogan says, Searcy was ready for a revolution."

As Searcy was announced the winner, Amanda Brinkman, co-host of Small Business Revolution Main Street and chief brand and communications officer at Deluxe Corporation, walked on stage amid balloons and confetti to congratulate the crowd.

"You have so much to be proud of because of the way you have rallied together in the last four months," Brinkman said. "You guys get to be an example to the rest of the world. So congratulations. It's so great to be back home in Searcy."

Many students were involved in the public voting process, promoting the competition and spreading the word to vote. Senior Carson Gentry frequently posted across different social media platforms to encourage more voting.

"I was pretty confident that no matter what the choice was, we were going to end up with some sort of revolution," Gentry said. "I just feel like Searcy has the momentum to go forward because we're already a growing town."

On March 22, 2019 during Beats & Eats in downtown Searcy, Brinkman and Co-Host of Small Business Revolution Main Street Ty Pennington announced Savor + Sip, Zion Climbing Center, Nooma, Whilma's Filipino Restaurant, El Mercado Cavadas and ARganic Woodwork as the six businesses who would receive the renovations on the show.

story by Cassidy Ward
originally published on The Link on Feb. 27, 2019



LETTER *from the* EDITOR

I was sitting in chapel on Jan. 26, 2018, when I heard Dr. Nathan Guy, assistant professor in the College of Bible and Ministry, say the word “narrative.” I don’t know why this particular moment was so significant. I had heard the word a countless number of times before. I was preparing to apply to be the editor-in-chief of the 95th volume of the Petit Jean yearbook, and I was searching for a theme to authentically encapsulate our yearbook.

I have been on the Petit Jean yearbook staff since my first day at Harding. I don’t know what it is like to be a student at Harding and not have a home in the Student Publications office. I had already been a part of making three incredible yearbooks, and, if anything, I had to try to raise the standards for my book.

As soon as I heard the word that day, I knew it was the culmination of everything I was trying to say about the importance of our yearbook.

In the same chapel presentation, Guy said that “students cannot live well unless they have something to live for.” I think that I have lived well because Petit Jean is a part of my narrative. While walking in the door of the student publications office freshman year dramatically affected my Harding experience and my personal growth over the past four years, my connections to Petit Jean began when I was a little girl.

I was too young to remember the first time my parents took me to Petit Jean State Park in Morrilton, Arkansas. We parked our camper there so often that the park rangers knew the names of our two beagles, Tipper and Tiny. I spent my childhood hiking to Cedar Falls, covering myself in dust from Rock House Cave, attending ranger-led programs about flying squirrels, and earning as many junior ranger badges as the velcro curtains in our camper could hold. Petit Jean was and still is a part of who I am. I take my friends there on weekends, took my engagement photos there, and now I am the editor of the publication that bears its name.

The Petit Jean yearbook has come to mean more to me than just a publication. It records the history of the university year by year, provides inspiration and serves as a reminder of our experiences. Both on the day the book is distributed and on the day it is opened again after 50 years of sitting on a dusty shelf, the ink and paper will serve as a tangible reminder of the memories that will be recalled simply by one word or picture. For some, those moments will be the calendar events like Spring Sing, the Ben Rector concert, a conversation between C.S. Lewis’ biographer and stepson or the candlelight vigil for Botham Jean. For others, the daily moments walking across campus that seem insignificant at the time will outlive the memories of the big events and will come flooding back as they turn the pages of this book.

No matter who you are, you are part of the narrative of this year at Harding. The spirit of the campus we walk every day is captured through the green of the front lawn, the maroon of the brick buildings, the gold of the Harding icons and the blue of the sky that hangs above our heads on most days. Like the threads that are woven to make up the green linen cover of this book, each of our own narratives has become intertwined in the heart of our campus to create a story that will forever live within us.

You shaped the narrative of Harding. 🍂

Megan Stroud
editor-in-chief

Water flows heavily off Cedar Falls in Petit Jean State Park on Nov. 4, 2018, after heavy rain fall. The original campus of Harding College, where the first Petit Jean yearbook was created, sat in “the foothills of the Ozarks” in Morrilton, Arkansas, below Petit Jean mountain.. | photo by Sterling McMichael