

THE CRUSADER

WELCOME BAC

A Very Late Welcoming

BY: MASON HARRIGFELD

As the semester comes to an end, we can't help but to feel like we just started. Everything is weird and different with online learning and social distancing. However, we will get through this little bump in our bright future! Let's make this weird semester the best we can and try our hardest in all of our classes. I suggest to everyone, take an extra 15 minutes to study for that quiz or test, read through that paper at least two more times, put in that extra effort to create a bigger, brighter future for yourself. Don't close the doors that you will need open in the future!

Welcome back to Belmont Abbey!

Pumpkin Spice Mug Cake

BY: AMANDA MCLAUGHLIN

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon pure pumpkin puree (comes in a can)
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour

Instructions

1. Spray mug with non-stick spray
2. Mix all ingredients
3. Pour in mug and microwave for 60-90 seconds or until toothpick comes out clean
4. Top with your favorite cake topping and enjoy!

Self-Care Tips from a Fellow College Student

BY: SARAH SCHWINDT

In these difficult times we are living in, life can feel particularly overwhelming, especially as a college student. However, despite everything that you may have going on, it is still incredibly important to make time for self-care. Taking steps to improve yourself will benefit your overall life as a college student. Try implementing a few of these practices into your daily routine to alleviate stress, maintain energy, and stay focused this semester!

Sleep: Don't underestimate the power of sleep! Getting a good night's rest is one of the most important self-care habits to maintain. It is the body's best recovery method, which is especially important to consider if you are a student athlete! However, we all know that as a college student, it can be quite difficult to make sure that you get the proper amount of sleep each day. Try taking steps to wind down earlier in the night to achieve a good night's sleep. Eliminating screen time for the last 30 minutes to an hour before you go to bed is one great way to do so. Set a schedule and stick to it-- your body will thank you later!

Make Time for Your Hobbies: College life is full of homework, extracurricular activities and obligations... and more homework. However, don't let all of those responsibilities keep you from the things that you love to do! Pick up a hobby and make time for it in your weekly routine. This could be anything from playing guitar, skateboarding, painting, reading-- really anything that interests you! Pursuing an activity that you enjoy is a great way to combat stress, and as research shows, improve your mood and overall well-being.

This in turn will help you to be more productive and successful in your daily obligations as a college student.

Journal: Your mental health is as much of an importance to your self-care as your physical health! Journaling is a good way to check in on yourself and keep track of how you are feeling. Giving yourself time to journal will give you an outlet for self-expression and help you to realign your priorities. When I am starting to feel stressed, I always pull out my journal. It helps me articulate my thoughts, calm down and re-focus!

Get Outside & Be Active: This is probably one of the most effective ways to care for yourself both mentally and physically! Spending time in nature is scientifically proven to alleviate stress, boost your confidence, improve your physical well-being, and make you feel more relaxed and at ease. Refresh your mind and body by walking, jogging or hammocking on campus, going for a hike at Crowders or South Mountain, or having a picnic at Stowe Park in Downtown Belmont. My personal favorite hammock spot on campus is the trees between the grotto and the back of O'Connell! Also, if you'd like to bring nature inside, get a snake plant for your room. They are great houseplants and will improve the air quality of your room, which is another way to boost your health.

Making time for self-care can be a challenge, but it is an important element of maintaining a balanced and positive lifestyle. Give yourself small goals to achieve each day to improve your mental and physical health, and better your life as a whole. If you are struggling to reach your goals, it always helps to reach out to a friend to help hold you accountable. Let's make this semester your best one yet!

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5 Tips for Improving Online Learning With Canvas

BY: LAUREN HARPER

Online classes are challenging for everyone involved. It's not just an opinion—with the recent move for distance learning, professors, teachers, and students are being forced to find new ways to try and restructure their entire definition of “school” in their minds. What do things like “learning,” “class,” and “homework” mean when everything is filtered through a screen and a webcam, and the only way to get in contact with your professor after class is via email?

Canvas is the learning management system that Belmont Abbey College has employed for four years, but hasn't had to fully utilize before now. Instructors were required to publish their syllabus on Canvas, but could choose whether or not to involve it more. Many professors chose to publish some assignments or grades, while others ignored it completely. Now, Canvas is the main platform of many classes on campus which has helped with students who have been quarantined or with others unable to otherwise be in class due to social distancing.

With anything at all worth doing or learning, there is a learning curve to be had—especially with the transition to online learning. Students are often unaware of resources available to them, or don't know how to use them. Even if you do all of these every day, it's worth a refresher just to check out this list of everything you can be doing to help with the transition to online learning:

1 Check due dates at least once a week

This may be an obvious one, because who doesn't check due dates? But with something so simple, it's easy to forget to check. Dr. Erin Jensen, advisor to the Writing minor, suggests: “It's really important for students to be checking at least once a week for assignments they have due...Have at least one specific day that you check, if you aren't already checking more often.” Make sure you have at least one day a week, if not more often, that you're checking Canvas for new assignments and upcoming due dates. Even better, make sure they're written down somewhere that you won't forget.

2 Keep notifications on.

While this seems like a simple suggestion, it is still a crucial tip for success. Oftentimes, professors will post an announcement the morning of class related to the class that day. The professor might be sick and cancel class, or maybe they added something else they want you to read before class. Constance Oliver, our on-campus instructional designer, emphasizes this: “Oftentimes, instructors will

post announcements to reach the entire class all at once. It's crucial to be paying attention to those.” Either way, make sure your Canvas notifications are on and you're checking your phone for them frequently (but not during class!). Announcements are not the only reason to keep notifications on, either—professors will also send emails to your student email. If it's in the student email inbox, it's probably important. Make sure that those notifications are coming through, and read whatever your instructor has sent as soon as possible.

3 Utilize the built-in inbox in Canvas

Many students are aware of the Canvas inbox function, but may not have used it. After all, professors reach out mainly through announcement posts, actual in-class announcements, or email—so it's easy to overlook yet another method of communication. One of the best aspects of the Canvas inbox is that it serves as a private messaging system already within the Canvas app. It's easy to privately message an instructor before you switch apps and forget, or some professors even send messages exclusively through the inbox. Another reason to use the Canvas inbox is that it allows you to message anyone that you share a class with—this proves incredibly helpful for group projects or reaching out to classmates when you need some notes or study help. It's definitely worth using.

4 Check the options for assignment submissions

Usually, professors want an assignment turned in a certain way. Most often, when you submit an assignment through Canvas, the default option is a file upload, which allows you to upload a saved file directly from your computer storage. What most people don't realize, however, is that sometimes professors will allow other options for submissions—at the top of the submission area, where it says File Upload, there are usually two other tabs for “Google Doc Upload” and “Drive Upload.” The first allows you to select a Google Document directly from your Docs without having to save it as a doc or a PDF to your storage—it fetches a copy of the document from the cloud so that the original does not reflect any changes your professor might highlight or insert as feedback.

The second, a “Drive Upload,” is functionally the same, but expands to your entire Drive—it will fetch any format like a Slides slideshow, a Sheets spreadsheet, or anything else saved to your Drive storage. This allows you to submit files that aren't saved directly to your computer. Dr. Jensen



A Zoom call with the senior Honor's class

recommends double-checking to see if your professor has enabled this feature: “Students, think about using the Google doc submission that's already built into Canvas to submit assignments. It may help with formatting and file-changing issues.”

5 Check grades and feedback after getting your assignments back

Some professors use Canvas to keep track of grades and to provide feedback on assignments. As Ms. Oliver explained, “Students will often ask me why they got a certain grade or how they're doing in the class. They're often unaware that the updated grades are in Canvas, which provide real-time updates on where you're at and how you're doing.” Professors will often provide feedback on essays and papers, explaining even further why you may not have gotten the A you hoped for. If you go to the submission and click on submission details, there is a link titled “view feedback,” and this link will take you to your document and show all comments. Again, not every professor does this, but it's worth checking to see if they have.

This is not a comprehensive guide to succeeding in online classes, nor even a guide to navigating Canvas, but it is a good list of reminders about using Canvas. Hopefully, some of these tips help your ability to utilize Canvas tools to their fullest extent, and make your technology work for you.

Additional Information: Constance Oliver is the on-campus faculty trainer and Canvas coordinator. She provides resources for faculty members for teaching practices using technology. She is not in the IT department—IT's main function is to ensure that the technology is working properly. Ms. Oliver's function is different; she provides ways the technology can be used to its fullest extent. She can be contacted at ConstanceOliver@bac.edu for further questions or concerns.

Building Community

BY: SAMMY DAY

Community—one of the ten Benedictine Hallmarks, but a true Hallmark of Belmont Abbey. When asked what their favorite aspect of Belmont Abbey is, most people will answer that it is the community that they have found here. The Abbey is constantly taking steps to foster this as a part of their identity. One way that The Abbey has brought the community together is by bringing families together.

A unique aspect of Belmont Abbey is that students often become acquainted with both their professors and their professor's families, but another unique aspect is occasionally becoming acquainted in this sense by way of academic experiences at The Abbey. In recent years, The Abbey has begun hiring married couples—though the hires have often come at different times. While this is beneficial to The Abbey in a few ways, the way that it is most beneficial is through the continued building of our community. These couples are able to work together and build their families together around a community that loves and cares for them and they are able to share their experiences and build their home within the Abbey community. Couples on our campus work in a variety of locations from upper administration, to admissions, athletics, and academia. In order to better know our community and help grow in this aspect, I interviewed two of the couples who recently began teaching at The Abbey: Dr.'s Daniel and Hannah Kling and Dr. Gina and Mr. Justin Noia.

Prior to joining The Abbey community, both families knew people teaching here. The Klings were friends with Professor Watson in grad school and the Noias had previously worked with Dr. Rovati. Already being familiar with some of the faculty did help both of their transitions, but both noted feeling incredibly welcomed by The Abbey community.

When asked what factors were involved in their decision, the Kling's noted that there were numerous factors, but it really helped that The Abbey not only had multiple positions open in their prospective fields, but they were also willing to hire a family, and welcome them as a family, and not simply as individual faculty members. The Noia's were hired at different times, but have also felt welcomed as a family. One thing that both couples noted is their ability to work around their schedules and not teach at the same time—thus giving them more flexibility with their family life. Both couples also noted the levels of excitement and enthusiasm of students and faculty as their favorite aspect of The Abbey.

While building a community is a wonderful aspect of working together, there are other benefits as well. When asked what their favorite part of working together is, Dr. Daniel Kling responded that his wife is the best co-worker that he could potentially have and she responded that she loves bouncing ideas off of him. In the same respect, Dr. Gina Noia mentioned that she appreciates receiving critical feedback from her husband. However, the worst parts of working together were stated by the Kling's to be unsolicited advice and the Noia's to be too critical of feedback—though both are always well-intentioned. Both couples also love the overlap that occurs when working with their spouses. Dr. and Dr. Kling often learn from each other and the niches that their spouse is involved in and Dr. and Mr. Noia enjoy that they are both educated in each other's field, though they are professors of different subjects. Both couples also enjoy stimulating academic discussions that are easily held outside of the classroom and both have plans to become more involved in extra-curricular activities once things become a bit more normal.

As professors, you can guarantee that they have advice to provide for students. Both Dr. Daniel Kling and Dr. Gina Noia suggest that students take time to get to know their professors. Both stated that part of the reason they came to The Abbey was to build those connections with students. Mr. Noia suggests that students spend at least fifteen minutes in prayer each day as it will help students grow in unimaginable ways!

In addition, Dr.'s Daniel and Hannah Kling would like to announce that their son, Matthias, was born a few weeks ago and they would like to thank The Abbey community for all of their love and support.

New Faculty Members

Dr. Travis Feezell was hired as the New Provost

We now offering a new nursing program and a Master of Nursing Program which is headed by Dr. Carolyn Harmon.

New Faculty

Beekwilder, Quinn

Assistant Professor of Sport & Motorsport Management

B.A., Christendom College, 2004

B.A., Belmont Abbey College, 2010

M.P.S., Georgetown, 2018

Harmon, Carolyn

Associate Professor of Nursing

Director of Nursing Program

B.S.N., Bluefield State College, 1995

M.S.N., Queens University of Charlotte, 2003

D.N.P., University of Alabama at Birmingham, 2014

Lorence, Daniel

Professor of Health Informatics

B.S., Pennsylvania State University, 1982

M.Ed., Eastern Illinois University, 1988

M.S., Eastern Illinois University, 1986

Ph.D., Eastern University, New Mexico, 1997

J.D., John Marshall Law School, Chicago, 1997

Noia, Gina

Assistant Professor of Theology

B.S., The University of Scranton, 2010

M.A., Saint Louis University, 2015

Ph.D., Saint Louis University, 2018

Stratton, Mary (starts in Jan '21)

Associate Professor of Education

B.A., Pennsylvania State University,

M.A., West Chester University, 1987

D.Ed., Widener University, 2017

Welcoming Back Dr. Travis Feezell

BY: SAMMY DAY

In March 2020, Belmont Abbey welcomed back Dr. Travis Feezell, a beloved faculty member. Dr. Feezell has a rich history at The Abbey as he worked here for many years prior to his leave and return. Past positions include: Chair of Sport and Motorsports Management, Interim Director of Athletics, Interim Chair Business, and Special Assistant to the President for Strategic Planning. Dr. Feezell also holds numerous recognitions from Belmont Abbey including the Adrian Faculty Excellence Award and the Spirit of St. Benedict Award. Now, Dr. Feezell is serving Belmont Abbey as our current Provost.

After leaving Belmont Abbey for a position as the President and CEO at Hasting's College, he knew he always wanted to return. When Dr. Feezell heard of the opening as Provost, he knew this was his opportunity to return home. One thing that he greatly enjoys about The Abbey is the community here and he loves getting to know students better. If you see him around, stop for a moment and talk with him!



ABBEY HIGHLIGHTS

Psychology Club Highlight

BY: REGINA AIZCORBE

Belmont Abbey College has a Psychology Club that is open to all students who are interested in psychology. The Psychology Club is a student-led organization, facilitated by Dr. Ann Calhoun-Sauls, and sponsors events every semester. In the past, the Psychology Club has had guest speakers come and talk to students about anxiety and stress management, ran a booth that raised mental health awareness at the Fresh Check Day event, organized conferences, and put together entertaining and informative game nights to help students relieve stress before exam week!

This semester has proven to be much different in all aspects of campus life, still, the psychology club is remaining active and serving the community by planning socially distanced and virtual events. Currently, the Psychology Club is working in collaboration with the Counseling Center, to bring a mental health awareness event to campus on October 23rd. Club officers and members are meeting regularly, and safely, to discuss how to make this semester successful. The club is always looking for new members with shared interests and a passion for psychology. For questions about the club or how to join, contact the club secretary, Layla Figueroa, laylafigueroa@abbey.bac.edu

Criminal Justice

BY: KIMBERLY SIERRA

Department Chair of Criminal Justice and Professor, Dr. Julia Foster Beeman
Assistant Professors of Criminal Justice, Mary Summa (J.D) and Stephan Ward (J.D)

The Criminal Justice major is for anyone interested in pursuing a career in law enforcement, legal work, or any interest in our legal system. Both a major and a minor are offered in criminal justice. The main required class is "Intro to Criminal Justice" and the other courses include courses focused on law enforcement, community corrections, criminal courts, research courses, and an ethics course. Most of the courses are focused on learning about "What if?" scenarios and then discussing what happened and why such action was or was not taken. This is a fun way to communicate with classmates with respect to each other's opinions. A criminal justice student has the opportunity to learn about the legal system from a historical perspective and see how history has impacted our current legal system. Overall, the classes under this major contain important and interesting information that will allow a student to build new perspectives, understand laws, and create a mature awareness of different situations.



The Grotto

Abbey Ablaze

BY: CALEB KUALII

If you have been a resident student at Belmont Abbey for any length of time, chances are you have become acquainted with the infamous peal of the dorm fire alarms. Though the relative frequentness with which the alarms are accidentally set off has acquired a sort of joke-like and annoying status around here, I am sure that many would agree with me when I say that fire alarm incident should never be treated in an entirely trite manner. Indeed, Abbey history shows us that our beloved college has an unfortunate precedent of seriously damaging fires. The Abbey has been struck by numerous fires throughout its history, with the most destructive of them occurring in the years 1886, 1899, 1900, 1960, and 1964. Notwithstanding the many minor fires, the destruction caused by these 5 major blazes is quite staggering. For example, the 1900 fire essentially destroyed two-thirds of Stowe Hall and necessitated closing the college for 4 months of reconstruction. Photos from the aftermath of the fire show the remarkable extent of the damage. Miraculously, there were no fatalities and no one was seriously injured thanks to the quick thinking and composure of the students and monks. Another notable fire occurred in 1960 and burned down a good portion of the now-razed northern part of campus. Once composed of O'Donoghue Hall, Jubilee Hall, and the Brothers' Clausura, this annex formerly extended north from the Basilica and provided a pleasing sense of symmetry to the front of campus. The fire in question destroyed O'Donoghue Hall and it was never rebuilt to its former state. Eventually, the remaining buildings of the annex were razed, leaving the Music Building the sole survivor of this former part of campus. To be sure, it has thankfully been quite a long time since the last major Abbey fire. If you happen to hear the fire alarms, perhaps it will serve as a reminder of this interesting yet unfortunate aspect of Belmont Abbey's history that, God-willing, will not manifest itself again.

Campus-Wide Marian Consecration

BY: CLARE RUEDISUELI

Belmont Abbey has always been a college with a powerful devotion to the Mother of God. Our basilica, Mary Help of Christians, invokes the name of Mary in her universal motherhood as our helper. This year, the Abbey has taken on an extension of this devotion. The Abbey began St. Louis de Montfort's 33-Day Consecration to Jesus through Mary on September 4th, the first day of the Freshman Retreat. Freshman were invited to join in the 33-day prayer to give them an encouraging welcome into the community. Every Saturday, the monks hosted a daily prayer in the grotto which included community members. Sharing this time of prayer with the monastery, provided a meaningful and united experience for the Abbey. On October 7th, the Feast of the Holy Rosary joyfully culminated the end of the consecration.

BAC Student Conference Presentations Fall 2020:

Clafin's 19th English and Language Arts Pedagogy Conference: Digital Literacies

"Understanding Digital Literacies Through Social Media" by Sammy Day

"Using WhatsApp To Communicate Across Countries to Complete Group Projects" by Isabella Bruno and Sarah Schmidt

"Engaging in Digital Literacies Through Using Twitter and Memes to Re-tell Short Stories" by Lauren Harper, Laura Denhard, Kira Zazzi, and Dr. Erin Jensen

"Quarantine Projects: How we Turned our Poetry Workshop into A Literary Magazine" by Mason Harrigfeld, Katie McCarthy, Elijah McBride

State of North Carolina Undergraduate Research and Creativity Symposium

"Flannery O'Connor and Her Influence on Both Catholic and Secular Cultures" by Sammy Day

Sports Updates

Broadcasting Schedule

BY: MADDIE MITCHELL

Did you know that even though our sports teams aren't competing this fall the Belmont Abbey Sports Network has still devised a full lineup of Crusader sports. The broadcast schedule is below.

Saturday Nov. 7 WSOC Carolina University 7p
 Tuesday Nov. 10 FH Red & White Scrimmage 7p
 Thursday Nov. 12 MLAX Black & White Scrimmage 7p
 Saturday Nov. 14 WBB Black & White Scrimmage 530p
 Saturday Nov. 14 MBB Red & White Scrimmage 730p
 Tuesday Nov. 17 WR Red & White Scrimmage 7p
 Wednesday Nov. 18 ACRO Black & White Scrimmage 7p
 Thursday Nov. 19 WBB Black & White Scrimmage 530p
 Thursday Nov. 19 MBB Red & White Scrimmage 730p
 Tune in to these events at
<https://conferencecarolinasdn.com/bac/>

New Bowling Coach

BY: BRYCE CATAHAN

Belmont Abbey recently hired Richard Gucwa to be the new head coach for the men's and women's bowling team. Gucwa has been bowling competitively for 30 years and has continued to coach the sport of bowling for 20 years. Gucwa has a degree in Business Administration from DePaul University. He was also the head bowling coach for Immaculate Conception Catholic Preparatory High School for 7 years and North Central College for 4 years. Coach Gucwa said "I truly feel blessed to have inherited a group of athletes that want to get better and want to compete and as a coach, that's all you can ask for. I think we have a really good foundation and there's some talent in the team that can be developed. Good chemistry and our goal this year is to create some stability, consistency and progress towards being a competitive team."

The Bowling team has been at Belmont Abbey for 5 years. Currently, there are 10 men and 7 women with more coming in next semester. Gucwa said his goal is "To establish our culture to create an environment necessary to succeed. With the current landscape that the pandemic has created, I think we should take this extra time and shortened season to grow and develop as a team so when competition resumes we are really ready. Progress rather than perfection."

Being an indoor sport, practice space has to be handled very carefully. It has been a requirement for the student-athletes to wear a mask during practice while they bowl. While there are no events for the men's team this Fall, they are tentatively scheduled to start competition in January. The women's teams have also been practicing and working hard on the lanes.



Belmont Abbey's Cross Country season is in full swing

COVID Track Season

BY: JOSE VILLARRUEL

Covid-19 has had a large impact on every sport this semester with most of the Fall sports having to push their season back to Spring semester. Some teams are still practicing, but haven't been able to compete. Track and Field has had to push their season back to January. Coaches and athletes are concerned as well with the large break from Thanksgiving to the return in mid-January and how such a break will impact their athletes and lack of team practices. Hopefully, everyone benefits from having a break.

New Field Hockey Coach

BY: MADDIE MITCHELL

The Field Hockey team has a new coach. Coach Meghan Smiga, who likes to be called Coach Meg, started her college field hockey career at Radford University and when they disbanded the program, she finished off her career at Queens University of Charlotte. She then graduated from Queens with a degree in Exercise and Sport Sciences and went on to earn an MBA in Healthcare Administration from Concordia University Wisconsin. Coach Meg has come to the Abbey in hopes of growing the game and being a part of a community where God is the center of our lives. She was motivated to coach college hockey because of her love for the game, and strong desire to compete and win while also making a difference in the lives of young athletes and women. When asked what her favorite thing so far about coaching at the Abbey was, Coach Meg responded: "There is so much to be grateful about at The Abbey. It is really unlike any other campus, community, or athletic department!" Since the field hockey team returned to campus in August, they have been pushed harder than ever by their new Coach and the team is feeling very optimistic about their success on the field in the Spring under Coach Meg's leadership.

Arts At The Abbey

Talley's Folly: A Social-Distanced Romance

BY: JOHN WALKER

Lebanon, Missouri. July 5, 1944. Matt Friedmann (C.J. Bradshaw) and Sally Talley (Katie Taylor) are two misfits with a strange connection. Set in the heartland of the United States at the peak of the Second World War, *Talley's Folly* tells the story of two lost souls forgotten by the world and discarded as unworthy of society's standards. The cast is only two characters, and the play itself is only ninety-seven minutes — perfect for a social-distanced evening.

The play itself is rather strange. I myself did not expect it to be what it ended up being, which for others may have been obvious just from reading the synopsis. It is oddly political at times, but never quite gets around to making a strong point in any direction. There are times when I could not tell if the playwright, Lanford Wilson, was trying to write a romantic comedy, a romantic drama, or a social commentary. The answer here can be inferred that he wanted to write a play with elements of all three. The only issue with this, however, is that he does it poorly, leading to a mostly enjoyable hour-and-a-half with moments of confusion every so often.

The cast themselves do a fantastic job. Bradshaw and Taylor are gifted actors who really put you in the scene and into their character's heads. Not only do they show the full range of emotions of Matt and Sally, but they do it in put-on accents the entire ninety-seven minutes. Simon Donoghue does a brilliant job with stage direction, and the set itself is very cleverly put together. The whole ensemble comes together for a well-done production.

Overall, the play is strange, different, and not really what most would expect (which is not a bad thing at all), but the production itself is top-notch and well worth a viewing.

Recap of Agora

BY: LAUREN HARPER

The *Agora Poetry, Song, and Story* night of September 15th, 2020 was a unique take on the Poetry nights of the past. Previously, they had taken place in Grace Auditorium at St. Leo's— this year, however, the event would be different.

COVID-19 has affected most aspects of student life at the Abbey, and the *Agora Poetry* Event is no exception. With limited space, reduced meetings, and a changing of hands this year, the usual look of the event was simply not going to happen. Thus, the event took place outside the William Gaston Science building underneath a temporary canopy, with all of the speakers, microphone, and chairs brought from the Grace Auditorium. Instead of a usual array of snacks and beverages that the attendees could browse and serve themselves, there was a table in the back with individual servings of chips, snacks, and water bottles that were handed out upon request. Chairs were situated according to social distancing guidelines with plenty of space in between, as well as attendees being encouraged to bring blankets or chairs of their own to spread out on the grass.

The event itself had a great turnout—usual student events have had an expected attendance rate of around 20% of what it would have been before the Coronavirus outbreak. This year's *Agora Night*, however, remained at about the same attendance. Students were volunteering and continuing the ages old Poetry night traditions like nothing was different, even despite all of the changes. When the sky outside grew dark, the sound and light crew turned on their phone flashlights for those with papers or instruments to play. Those with phone screens of their own were illuminated to the audience by eerie blue glow, an effect that would not have been achieved in the Grace Auditorium. The evening was finished by a tribute of Dr. Munro to the Poetry nights of the past and the new Poetry nights under the future leadership of Dr. Hren, a symbolic "passing of the torch."

Though the event looked different this year, the same fire of community spirit and joy of literature, love, and poetry lived on.

The History and New Direction of Agora

BY: ISABELLA BRUNO

If you have ever been to one of the open-mic nights in Grace auditorium or picked up one of Agora's many literary magazines, you have only gotten a glimpse of what Agora means to our campus. For the past thirteen years, Dr. Munro has been the sole faculty director of Agora. Last May, she relinquished her duties to Dr. Hren, an English professor who works closely with the Honors college. We are all thankful for the work Dr. Munro has done and all that she has accomplished. At the same time, we are excited to welcome Dr. Hren to Agora. Recognizing the new direction that Agora is now under called to mind some questions about how Agora got started in the first place. Dr. Munro agreed to answer a few questions about how she came to be the faculty director and about the history of Agora.

When Dr. Munro began her career at Belmont Abbey in 2005, Dr. Weir was the faculty director for Agora. As Dr. Munro stated, "When I heard there was a literary journal for which I could take the job of faculty advisor, I almost jumped out of my seat!" By Fall of 2007, Dr. Munro became the faculty director. Every issue of Agora from Fall of 2007 to Spring of 2020 has been compiled, promoted, and distributed under her leadership. This past issue's distribution was quite different due to COVID-19, but Dr. Munro and her team of students were able to email digital copies in anticipation for students returning this Fall.

As for the history of the literary magazine, it is believed that the first group of students to compile the Agora magazine formed sixty years ago! Those students created the first edition and published it in 1961. Dr. Munro has estimated that including Spring 2020's issue, there have been fifty-nine publications of Agora since 1961. As for its unusual name, Dr. Munro says, "the name 'Agora' refers to the public space in Athens where people of all sorts would gather to discuss the ideas and issues of the day." When Agora first formed, it was more of a commonplace for ideas, "than solely art, photography, and literature." Dr. Munro also states, "By the time I took leadership, Agora had evolved into a literary and artistic journal. In 2012, the Elves and I finally got around to changing the inscription so that it reflected our content and purpose, but kept our wonderful name Agora." Also, for those interested, the library has every issue of Agora published from 1961 to the present Spring 2020 issue. Previous faculty advisors include Jean Moore, for whom the literary award is named after.

A big thank you to Dr. Munro for all of her work with Agora over the years, and a warm welcome to Dr. Hren as he takes on this role. Hopefully, this brief look into Agora's history on our campus will encourage you to pick up a copy of the newest edition or even participate by joining the group of student editors. You can also participate by sending in your literary work and/or photography; submissions are welcome up until December 3rd! Be on the lookout for Agora's next open-mic night!

Religion

Ora et Labora During Quarantine

BY: ISABELLA BRUNO

When our campus life came to an abrupt end back in February and the campus was vacated, the monastic community also had to respond to this “new normal” under the pandemic. Prayer (ora) and work (labora), on which the Benedictine monks center their days around, changed as measures were taken to protect the most vulnerable confreres.

The monastic community exercises an oversight capacity to ensure the college continues in its Catholic identity and Benedictine tradition. The first 100 years of Belmont Abbey College existence was run by the monks who lived in the monastery. As Abbot Placid explains it though, the monks realized they were a little out of touch with the expertise and knowledge necessary to run a college. Instead, the monks all voted to include the college as a separate corporation. While there are some reserved powers belonging to the monks, the President and the Board of Trustees primarily run the inner workings of the college. The administration of the college is made up of the Board of Trustees, the President, the Chancellor of the College (who is always the Abbot), and the Board of Members (who are all of the solemn professed monks). Therefore, deciding to reopen was the college administration and boards’ decision. As Abbot Placid said, it was everyone’s hope and plan, including the monastery’s, that the college open again in the Fall.

ORA

The monks had to make changes to the rhythm of prayer they build their day upon to accommodate the sanctions made by the state and, more importantly, to protect their community. Initially, there was no public Mass. However, as students returned to the campus this Fall, Mass was opened again to the wider Belmont community. The monks have not been able to receive guests to the Divine Offices to sit with them in the choir. The Divine Offices, or Liturgy of the Hours, is a set time of prayer throughout the day. People are still welcome to participate by listening in the usual seating. The monks have added prayers to the existing rhythm of their day. Each morning, the monks pray a devotion for everyone in the world affected by the virus. Each Saturday night, they sing a Marian Antiphon asking Mary to intercede for them on behalf of the college. A morning prayer for the college community has also been added to the monks’ prayer routine. As Br. James stated, “We may not be as present in the college, but when you pray you are united at a deeper level and since our prayer has significantly increased for those students, faculty, and staff that have contracted the coronavirus or struggle with the problems in their life because of this pandemic it has united us in substantial ways.” Students, faculty, and administration can take comfort in the fact that our college community continues to be protected and unified through the prayers and support of the monastic community.

LABORA

As for the element of work in the monks’ lives, their days are structured around the six times a day that they gather to pray and the work they do is to be an extension of their prayers as well. The monastery acts as a family unit with each person assigned specific duties. About eight of the monks work closely in the college and some, like Fr. Elias and Fr. Chris, also teach as professors. When students were sent home in February it seemed more comparable to the wintertime because even in the summer, classes continue and staff remain on campus. As Br. James explained, when students return home- either for breaks or a pandemic- it gives the monks an opportunity to look more inward and cultivate the bonds between their brothers. It is a break for them as well, in so far as they regain the strength of their fraternal bonds to then minister to students when they return. It is through ministering to students and working with each other that the monks of Belmont Abbey can live out their monastic call. Monks who are also professors, like Fr. Elias and Fr. Chris, had to figure out how to switch to Zoom and plan for the Fall as well. There are also about eight monks who actively work within the college and with students. Just as students must do daily check-ins through Campus Clear, the monks must also do active checks in the monastery to ensure the safety and health of the community as a whole. Within the monastery there has also been a necessary separation between those actively working in the college and those monks who remain in the monastery. For instance, they sit at different tables during meal and recreation times, and they sit at different places in the choir for prayers. The monastic community is acutely aware of the sacrifices needed to maintain a safe and healthy community during a pandemic. Br. James offered some encouraging remarks, “We do things not because they are easy to do but because they are worthwhile doing and that’s the ministry that makes us suffer in front of a Zoom screen just like everyone else—not because anyone wants to do their class via Zoom, or do ministry over Zoom, but because it is the class and the ministry that is worth accomplishing that we are certainly willing to engage in that fashion.” He also stated that similar struggles allow us to grow in empathy for each other while we endure the necessary inconveniences of things such as Zoom and wearing masks for the greater good of protecting the most vulnerable of our community.

We as a college are indebted to the faculty, staff, administrators, food and cleaning workers who have made reopening possible. They have set the wheels in motion, though remaining open is largely dependent on everyone following the guidelines out of charity, care, and respect for one another. As Abbot Placid said, “The people are taking a higher risk to serve the greater good of the college community and particularly its helpful for those who are at low risk to realize we can still transmit this even though it doesn’t affect us. Out of respect and concern for the people who are making this possible we need always to be mindful and careful.” May we all continue to work toward a good completion to the semester, under the monks’ protective prayers, and be prepared to come back in the Spring with renewed hope for another great semester.

Information gathered from conversations with Br. James and Abbot Placid. If you would like more information, feel free to reach out to any of the monks.

More About The Abbey

All Things Freshman Retreat 2020

BY: JULIA ISEMAN

Despite the adjustments that were necessary, thanks to the over 30 student staff members' help, the annual Freshman Retreat was able to take place this year over Labor Day Weekend. Typically, the retreat is held in the mountains at the Camp Kahdalea grounds. However, due to COVID restrictions, the retreat was held at Sacred Heart Campus this year. Even though there were unforeseeable changes, staff and retreatants still spoke positively of the experience.

According to Morgan Castro, senior and head student coordinator of the retreat this year, 22 freshmen attended. Castro described overcoming obstacles and adapting to changes saying, "At the beginning of the summer campus ministry simultaneously worked on two possible plans, because there was no telling where the semester would take us! It was decided the Sacred Heart Campus version would be safest for students and staff, so we worked to retain as many elements of the mountain weekend as possible."

Such elements that were retained included small groups, each headed by an upperclassman, talks given by upperclassmen, and outdoor adoration. The staff also worked to transform the classrooms into various landscapes, each room having a different out-of-doors theme, in efforts to maintain the mountain feel.

The retreatants were shuttled over or drove themselves to Sacred Heart Campus for all retreat activities. This was a staggered schedule, inspired by the March for Life trip, with busses leaving at different times so as to accommodate social distancing. "We scheduled a different shuttle for each small group and they each began at a different time. Some of our retreatants were in quarantine Labor Day Weekend, so a special Zoom small group was created for them," explained Castro.

Retreatants spent significant time with their small groups. Junior, Brigid Lipari, was one such small group leader. In terms of her experience leading the group, Lipari said, "I loved having the opportunity to be a small group leader because I was able to interact and welcome the freshmen to the Abbey while sharing my love for the Lord with them." Retreatants listened to the talks, participated in bible studies, and had discussions in their small groups. They also received an opportunity to attend adoration under the stars and an outside Sunday morning Mass.

Freshman, Annie Outman, who attended the retreat, speaks on highlights of her experience. "I was able to get to know my classmates on a deeper level, and find peace in waiting to see what God had in store for the next four years. At first, all I could think of was the homework I had left, and how I was disappointed that we weren't going to the mountains. But, as the weekend went on, I was so happy that I took time alone to focus on God, explore Sacred Heart Campus, and nurture the friendships I've made."

All in all, the Freshman Retreat showed an example of silver linings that can arise out of trying times. Castro was ultimately pleased with the outcomes it produced for her and those who participated. "I witnessed and experienced the fruits of friendship during this retreat. Some of the most wonderful moments were when I heard laughter fill the small group rooms at the end of the night. I felt joyful knowing the retreatants began authentic friendships. Even after the schedule was done for the day, some groups stayed later to finish their conversations. I hope the authentic friendships that I witness continue to blossom."

Launch of GET Mobile Food Ordering App

BY: CLARE RUEDISUELI

Belmont Abbey Dining is happy to announce the official launch of their mobile food ordering app, GET Mobile. Students, Faculty and Staff are now able to order food from Diner 1876 right from their phone, skipping the line! Holy Grounds Café will be added to the app in the near future, so you can order ahead and have your latte waiting for you. Additionally, with the app, students can create a virtual student ID card that can be scanned at the registers of all dining locations on campus so the checkout process will be completely contactless! The GET Mobile app is available in both the Apple App Store and the Google Play store for free. After downloading the app, use your campus user information to create an account.



Feed Our Families Food Drive

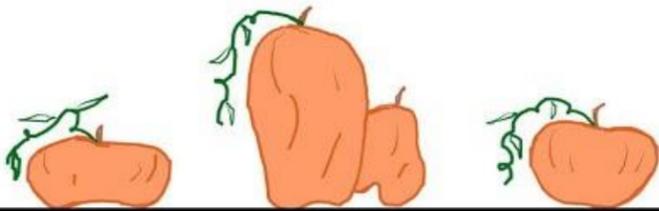
BY: KATIE MCCARTHY

The Feed Our Families Food Drive is a campus-wide initiative with the intention of getting both faculty and students involved in helping outside community members through food and paper product donations. With many families suffering losses this year due to the Coronavirus pandemic, small acts of stewardship and kindness, such as donating a can of food, can go a long way in helping a family get back on their feet. Donations will be accepted now until November 16th, with the hope of helping families gear up for the upcoming holiday season.

Faculty and students can donate at the bench in front of Campus Police, Holy Grounds, and Campus Ministry. Additionally, students living in the CA apartments can make donations in the CA Laundry Room. Bins will be set up there for each corresponding apartment building. The apartment with the most donations will receive a pizza for each resident. All donations will go to benefiting local non-profit organizations in Gastonia. Some of which include: Catholic Charities, The Salvation Army, Bread Inc., and others! Donate today!

Step 1: Pick out the perfect pumpkin

(CAUTION: sizes may vary, not all pumpkins are created equal, pumpkins not guaranteed to last to Halloween)



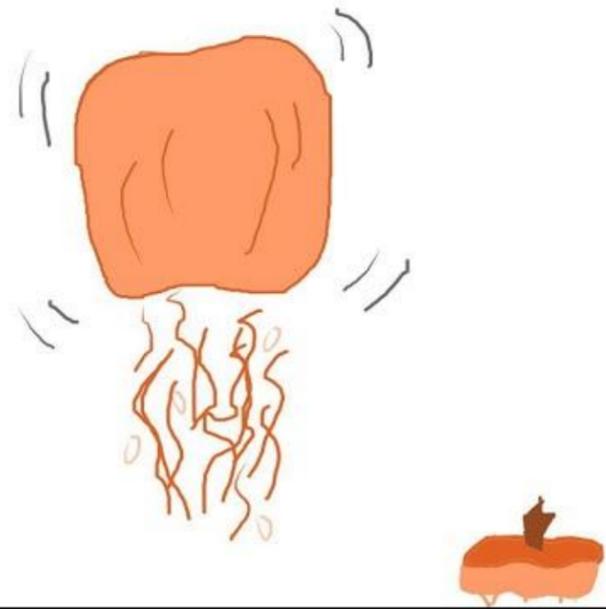
Step 2: Gather your tools



Step 3: Cut a hole out of the center of the top of your pumpkin



Step 4: gut your pumpkin



Step 5: coffee break (but keep it spooky)



Step 6: Carve something scary



Cartoon by Katie McCarthy

Meet the Editors

Sammy Day

Sammy Day is a senior at Belmont Abbey College. She is an English major and has too many minors to count. If she's not on campus, she can often be found at a local coffee shop where she'll claim to be working on homework but will likely be laughing at memes with her friends



Mason Harrigfeld

Mason Harrigfeld is a junior at Belmont Abbey College and is a Psychology Major and an English and Philosophy minor. He has an arsenal of puns that he uses when the time is right...or it is not right (which is the majority of the time).



Madison Mitchell

Madison is a junior at the Abbey, she is a marketing major with an accounting minor and also a member of the field hockey team. She comes to us all the way from Canada and is still trying to figure out how not to melt down here in the south.



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