

THE CRUSADER

Page 1

A Student Publication

Spring 2020

Issue 1

Abbey Info

What to do in Belmont

By: Mason Harrigfeld



Belmont and the surrounding areas have activities and events that students would enjoy. Within a short drive, Belmont has the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden which is a beautiful place to walk around and relax. Not too far from Belmont Abbey College is the beautiful Crowders Mountain, which has multiple trails for anyone from beginners to well-trained hikers. The Pinnacle is a high traffic trail that provides a clear view of Charlotte and even Belmont Abbey College's own Basilica. If kayaking and other aquatic sports are more of an interest to you, then the U.S. National Whitewater Center is for you. It has whitewater rapids, a flatwater river, biking trails, ziplining, and several high ropes courses. If you want to relax by a river and enjoy the scenery, you should consider going to Kevin Loftin Riverfront Park. This 10-acre park is alongside the Catawba River and is host to walking paths, picnic tables, fishing piers and no one is ever too old to play in its shaded playground. Belmont is also a town of having different events. April will have many events such as an Earth Day Celebration, Belmont Blooming Ball, and an Easter Egg Hunt at Stowe Park. Due to COVID-19, many of these places are closed.

Picture by Sammy Day

Combating Corona

By: Sammy Day

COVID-19 is a new virus sweeping the globe. While there have been many infections as well as numerous deaths, there have been even more people quarantined. We have all been keeping up to date on how to prepare for the Corona Virus—wash your hands for twenty seconds, don't touch your face, stock up on toilet paper, and share all the memes. In all seriousness though, this virus is a real threat that we need to take seriously. Be sure to have food, Vitamin C, and cold medicine on hand. Remember to stay hydrated and to get enough rest. During this time it is also important to remember your mental health. Quarantine is going to be tough on everyone as we desire social interaction. Here are some suggestions on how to combat boredom as well as continue to build community during this time.

- Virtual Trivia Nights
- Virtual Group Fitness Classes
- Crafting Tutorials
- Live Stream the MET Opera
- Online Board Games via boardgamearena
- Belmont Abbey Instagram Competitions via @abbeystact
- Group Facetime/Skype Calls
- Facetime Dance Parties
- Keep in touch through the Friendships At BAC Facebook group

THE CRUSADER

Page 2

A Student Publication

Spring 2020

Issue 1

Sports

Dear Athletes By: Kateri Brehany

On Thursday, March 12th, the NCAA abruptly announced the end of all in-season sports due to the quickly developing spread of the coronavirus. Though this might not have come as a complete shock because of the prior actions the country had taken to slow the spread of the disease, it nevertheless was difficult news. Belmont Abbey takes great pride in our athletic programs and the students that represent the mission and culture of our school through their sports. Around sixty-percent of the Abbey student population are members of one of our many athletic teams and work hard to achieve excellence and virtue both on and off the field.

In particular, we would like to mention and thank the seniors who put so much of themselves into their prospective sports. We know that this has been hardest on you, you are in all our prayers as you finish out your last semester here at the Abbey and prepare to enter life after college.



Senior, Collin Andres pitching at the mound

Baseball Recap

By: John Walker

The 2020 Crusader baseball season started off much the same as the weather in February with bad weather, but the team is increasingly playing better. After this first week in March, the team has improved to 9-10 in the season after a sweep of a doubleheader.

The Crusaders' first win came on the 9th, at Tusculum. The second game of a double-header, it clocked in at two hours and fourteen minutes, with the Abbey winning 3-2 in a truncated seven-inning game. Zach Ahlert, the catcher, went 3-for-4 with three doubles and an RBI. Ben Gobbel, the third baseman, went 2-for-3 with a double, an RBI, and a base-on-balls. Mitchell Keener earned the win, striking out two and walking one in two innings pitched. The save was awarded to Austin Hunter (his first on the season), having pitched two innings and recorded three strikeouts.

The second win came on the 15th, against Emmanuel at Abbey Yard, clocking in at just over two-and-a-half hours and amounting to a 6-0 slaughter. Mason Dodd, the second baseman, went 2-for-4 with two doubles and a base-on-balls. Ben Sneider and Nick Mauer both hit two-baggers of their own, while Johnson, Rhame, Overcash, Ahlert, and Moran all cashed in on RBIs. The defense was perfect, committing no errors and setting up Charlie Cochran to win in five-and-a-third innings pitched, striking out three and walking one, moving his record up to 1-1 on the season.

Before its abrupt stop, the baseball season looked like a promising one. With the momentum of the doubleheader wins in early March, the baseball team looked like it was gearing up for a great season.

Crusader of The Week

Categorized by the Month

By: Kimberly Sierra

The Month Of January

Dequan Abrom - Men's Basketball
Allie Downing - Women's Basketball
Dalton Green - Men's Bowling
Hannah Roney - Women's Basketball
Brennan Davis - Men's Volleyball
Maria Kuhlman - Women's Basketball

The Month Of February

Mike Siwiec - Wrestling
Keyanna Spivey - Women's Basketball
Noah Haas Men's - Lacrosse
George Barfoot - Men's Tennis
Kylie Eastman - Women's Lacrosse
Mitch Dean - Wrestling

The Month Of March

Dalton Green – Wrestling
Hannah Rooney - Women's Basketball

THE CRUSADER

Page 3

A Student Publication

Spring 2020

Issue 1

Sports Continued

The Belmont Abbey Rugby Team in the Making?

By: Jake Rybarski

Belmont Abbey recently hired Nick Whitrow as the head coach of the men's Rugby team. Rugby used to be a club sport at Belmont Abbey and just this year is being created as an NCAA team. Whitrow was hired in December after a lengthy interview process; over a year in the making. Whitrow has a degree in Sport Studies with a coaching emphasis. He started his coaching career when he was 15 years old and has continued to coach since then. He became a full-time coach in 2013 and has had college coaching experience. He has coached Clemson University Men's and women's teams, Queens University of Charlotte (Men's), and has also coached at the high school level with NC Allstars, SC Allstars, and is currently the head coach of Charlotte Catholic High School.

The Rugby team is still being assembled, but they do have 13 Applicants, 6 accepted and two scholarship offers out. Whitrow stated, "Many of our recruits are extremely good athletes. The type of student that is the best on the team are the ones who come in with a team mentality. Egos and individuals are typically short-lived. The best on the team is not the best athlete or rugby player, in my eyes, it is the best leader."

Practice space is still being determined, but Whitrow said, "We are confident that the area that becomes our home will become a great environment for student-athletes to compete and the other students to come support." It is likely the rugby team will have a group of athletes on campus in the fall and may begin to compete in the spring of 2021. In the future, Belmont Abbey may also see an expansion to have a women's team although the focus is on creating a sustainable men's program to start.

Highlight of Track Coaches

By: Logan Murphy-Redd

At Belmont Abbey College, the track and field team is currently in full swing with this weekend closing out their indoor track and field season at the JDL Fast Track in Winston-Salem, North Carolina for the Conference Carolinas Indoor Championships. The team this year has been led by many upperclassmen returning to take on leadership on and off of the track, including team captains James Thierfelder or Dominic Paulte, leading the team and providing crucial points for the team's success. Although returning runners are helping the team, this year has been highlighted by the new-coming freshmen on campus who have also added to the team's success. The freshmen's success on the team, like Samuel Wallick or Cristina Villanueva, can be attributed to the amazing coaches at the helm of the entire program. The program is run by Dan Finanger, a career coach and runner who specializes in long-distance running and marathon running. As a student-athlete, Finanger ran cross country and track at Division III Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. He was a member of seven conference championship teams, including the 1985 National Championship Cross Country squad, which serves as a testament to his dedication to the sport of running and advancing his athletes to the best they can be. Coach Finanger can be seen across campus either with a smile on his face from ear to ear spreading positivity or coaching his cross country runners to place as high as possible in the conference.

However, Coach Finanger could not be doing his job as an incredible head coach alone; alongside him are assistant coaches E.J. Cederias and Tomas Cederias. Both are brothers and alumni of the Track and Field Program at Belmont Abbey (respectively classes of '16 and '18). With both of them being runners in their own right and doing so at the Abbey, they both share the needed experience to help grow the program to heights it has never before seen and hope to do so in these current seasons. Coach E.J. holds a bachelor's degree in Theology from the Abbey and decided to come onto the staff and coach in 2018. He specializes in the sprinting aspect of track and middle-distance runners, given that this was his specialty during his career in college and high school. His younger brother Tomas Cederias specializes in the jumping aspect of track and field and works with our field athletes like Dominic Paulte, Andrew Bryant, and Tori Whaley. He himself holds Belmont Abbey's decathlon record, given that he has expertise in many events and provides said knowledge in advancing our field athletes to success.

THE CRUSADER

Page 4

A Student Publication

Spring 2020

Issue 1

Sports Continued

E-Sports at the Abbey

By: Mason Harrigfeld

Belmont Abbey is bringing its 40th sports team to the College in the form of an E-Sports team. Some of the games that the team will be competitively playing are Madden, Fifa, NBA 2K, League of Legends and Rocket League. The new E-Sports team will be coached by Nathan Berggrun, a competitive Madden player and lifelong game enthusiast as well. The team will compete against nearby colleges with their own E-Sports team and possibly private tournaments. This team can bring a new variety of students to the college and is a really exciting time for Belmont Abbey College!



Turf at the Abbey

By: Maddie Mitchell

Have you ever been to a sporting event at Alumni field? It is a beautiful field but very different from most other NCAA colleges in a few distinct ways. It is grass as opposed to artificial turf, has no lights and limited stands for viewing.

Athletes from a variety of different teams, male and female, have been wanting a turf field for years. The type of surface makes a huge difference to the quality of the sport being played on it. Field Hockey, for example, is a sport that is not commonly played on grass as it decreases the speed of the game significantly. Belmont Abbey, in fact, is the only NCAA Division II field hockey program that does not have a turf field. This being said, Field Hockey is not the only sport that is interested in a turf field here at the Abbey. Men's and Women's Lacrosse would also play on this surface if we were able to have one.

The quality of play is not the only reason a turf field would be beneficial to the athletic teams at the Abbey. It is not possible to practice or play on grass when it is too wet because it gets muddy and destroys the field. It is unfortunate that our teams lose practice time and have to delay or cancel games based on the condition of our grass fields. As turf is an artificial surface, it can be played on when it is raining as the condition of the surface does not change the way grass does.

More recruits would also be drawn to the Abbey if we had a turf field and stadium. There is limited space for spectators at Alumni Field and there are also no lights which means we can't play evening games. A proper stadium with turf, stands, and lights would be very attractive for recruits and also improve the community at the Abbey as more people would be able, and willing to go see games.

The school recognizes the need for a turf stadium here at the Abbey and is open to the idea; however, it is an expensive expansion that we currently can't afford. The Abbey is in search of donors that would be interested in helping to fund this endeavor and help to increase the quality of athletics at our school.

THE CRUSADER

Page 5

A Student Publication

Spring 2020

Issue 1

Abbey Community



Belated President's Day Cartoon by Katie McCarthy

Dorm Recipe

By: Amanda McLaughlin

Lucky Charms Milkshake

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cup vanilla ice cream
- ½ cup milk
- ½ cup Lucky Charm cereal
- ¼ cup marshmallow fluff
- Whipped cream
- Extra Lucky Charm marshmallows for garnish

Directions:

1. Blend ice cream, milk, Lucky Charms, and marshmallow fluff in a blender until you reach desired consistency.
2. Top with whipped cream and marshmallows.

Feed Our Families

By: Katie McCarthy

Before the coronavirus this Lent, the Abbey began a campus-wide initiative with the intention of getting both faculty and students involved in helping outside community members through food donations. Each week in Lent, different food donations would have been accepted, with all donations being given to Catholic Charities in Charlotte at the end of each week. Drop-off spots were to include Holy Grounds, Res-life, the Dining Hall, and the Commons.

We encourage you to take the spirit of this initiative into your local communities as the States and country work to combat the coronavirus. Please make sure to follow all advice from the CDC, local and federal governments, as well as your parents, to ensure yours and others' safety.

Guest Editorial: Bird Nerd

By: Paul Reinecke

From an early age, I learned to love birds of all kinds. My father always had more than one bird book laying around the house. By bird book, I mean bird encyclopedias. One was Peterson's Field Guide to Birds of North America and the other was Peterson's Field Guide to Birds of the Southern United States I believe. I studied these books page by page for years.

There were great illustrations of all the birds, both male and female, that were native to these areas. I realize that this is totally nerdy, but I absolutely loved the details. Birds were categorized by the general family of birds, such as birds of prey (my favorites), Woodpeckers, Songbirds, Warblers, Sparrows, Waterbirds, etc...

Every bird illustration in the body of the book was cataloged by number and at the back of the book, there was a Glossary that contained detailed information such as the migratory range, what the bird's song sounded like, and information about other physical traits of the birds. You could learn the height of the bird and the description of any unusual behavior that the bird might display.

My father loved the bird details just like I did, and we both were constantly going outdoors with binoculars to look for any new birds that might be migrating through New Orleans. We took family trips to state parks, to the Alabama Coast, and an amazing City Park in New Orleans (Massive Inner-City Park with countless lagoons and marsh areas). Wherever we went as a family, birding was always part of our activities.

My top bird sightings were my first time seeing a Bald Eagle when I was in my 20's in North Carolina. I can't describe how exciting this was to spot our national symbol flying out in front of me at about 50 yards. Then there was the time my Dad and I heard that there had been a sighting of a Caracara along Bayou St. John near City Park in New Orleans. This is a massive colorful bird of prey that is native to Mexico as well as parts of Texas and California but is rarely in Louisiana. For the next couple of days, we went out and watched the bayou for hours until on the third day we spotted the magnificent creature standing on the shore of the bayou.... I wish I could paint a picture here!

Over the years of my youth, I saw many birds that I knew of from the book, but there are many that I have never seen. To this day I am still looking every time I'm out in nature. You can bet that if I spot something new or something unusual or something that I just can't identify, I will pick up the phone and call my dad in New Orleans to share.

THE CRUSADER

Page 6

A Student Publication

Spring 2020

Issue 1

Faculty and Staff

Dr. Zdansky Highlight

By: Theresa Wilson and Kate Weaver

I am pleased to present Dr. Hannah Zdansky! She is one of our newest English Department faculty members, along with Dr. Erin Jensen. Hailing from Texas, Dr. Zdansky is ecstatic to return to the South from her studies in the Midwest at Notre Dame. She is especially excited to be a part of the monks' home due to her great passion for all things medieval. She is at home in the liberal arts, coming from training in Great Books as an undergraduate, and she carries this over into her seminar-style teaching. This style allows her to personally learn from her students and the contextual insights they have, apply what is being learned to what is necessary beyond the classroom, and cultivate open discussions. She seeks to be a guide—a Beatrice—through the literature she loves, rather than a lecturer, since such a method does not as readily condition a student to “hunger for” the complexity of intertextual allusions and interdisciplinary reading of the most worthwhile and life-giving texts. Her two favorite courses she has taught here include “The Doctors of the Church” and “History of the English Language.” In future semesters, once she has more freedom in developing her classes, we can hope for courses on linguistics, Chaucer (you think you know him, but do you?), and medieval Celtic literature. Dr. Zdansky also hopes to become more involved with helping students communicate with fellowship programs. Are you interested in going to Ireland? Ask her for tips on where to go and what to see to become a prepared insider. For example, if you wait until you are twenty-five (that’ll come sooner than you think), you can rent a car and avoid the tourist traps and see what is truly fascinating. Stay tuned for information about a talk on Ireland from a visiting scholar on March 11th. Not only is a study abroad trip good for academic pursuits, but also being skilled in other things has its benefits. Would you like to learn how to fence? Stop by her office in 117A in the science building and ask her about her experience in that sport along with any other medievalist questions you may have.



Dr. Zdansky



Dr. Pizza

Get to Know Dr. Pizza!

By: Isabella Bruno

Dr. Joseph Pizza has been with the Abbey for nearly ten years and has taught multiple classes, most recently: Western Literature, Rhetoric, Transatlantic Modernism, and Contemporary Poetry. His literary interests include Modern and Contemporary Literature, African American Studies, and Writing and Rhetoric. Dr. Pizza comes from a big Italian family in New Jersey and has been educated at Rider University, Ohio University, and Oxford University.

What about the Abbey has inspired you to stay on?

Originally, the Abbey had hired both Dr. Pizza and his wife, Ali, nearly ten years ago. Ali performed very extensive work in the Library as the Director of Preservation and the Curator of Rare Books from 2010-2017. Dr. Pizza credited the monks for the vow of stability they take, their commitment to the Abbey, and the culture for drawing him in. In his own words, “my passion for teaching, supportive colleagues, and, most of all, my wonderful students have inspired me to stay and continue to do so today!”

How would you explain your approach to teaching?

Dr. Pizza’s style of teaching is called critical pedagogy, in which professors intentionally lean more toward discussion rather than lecture. The classes are structured as discussions in which he is the moderator guiding the students along as they set the pace for the conversation. Through this more democratic approach to teaching, Dr. Pizza can let his students know that they have a “stake in the material” and what is taught so that “students have some ownership in the place.” Some take-aways that Dr. Pizza hopes his students understand is education for freedom, that they can have a say in what is taught and allow it to change them as they find their places in the world.

Fun Facts:

1) Dr. Pizza is left-handed and plays guitar in some pick-up jazz bands. Interestingly, he credits being left-handed and learning how to play right-handed guitars for how he views the world and the different perspectives he is able to uncover.

2) Dr. Pizza is a father of three and also coaches his son’s baseball team in his spare time.

3) His areas of expertise include Contemporary and Modern Literature, and interest he picked up in high school as he discovered his passion for literature from Beat Poets.

THE CRUSADER

Page 7

A Student Publication

Spring 2020

Issue 1

Recaps!

The Agora Strikes BACK

By Theresa Wilson

Twice each semester, the Agora Literary Club puts on an event where the attendees read poetry and flash fiction stories, act out scenes, and sing traditional songs. During the February 17th installment, we learned how to tear a gator open and sought to understand Van Gogh. Our ears were “Graced” with hearing many sonnets recited as well as original works from attendees.

Machiavelli spoke up not once, but twice. An eclectic mix of songs over the course of the evening received audience applause. The Agora Literary Magazine compiles the literary and visual submissions from current students, former students, and faculty. To whet our appetites for the 2020 issue of Agora, Mary Lang and Dr. Munro read poems from previous editions. One of the poems was from the 90’s about every book we’ve ever read at the Abbey and another one was a “shaped” poem based on Dr. Munro’s experiences in Nigeria. Dr. Seuss also raised his voice to make clichès about love a little bit less clichè. Join the “Elves” (the official title of the editors of the Agora magazine) at their final event of the year in April when the Elves unveil this year’s literary journal on which they have been working all year. There we will solve the mystery of who at the Abbey can express beauty best in word and likeness.

Crusaders Take a Stand for Unborn at 47th March for Life

By: Julia Iseman

On January 24, 91 Abbey students and faculty embarked from campus on a bus to Washington D.C. This unique pilgrimage was for a singular purpose, to attend the “March for Life.”

The march is a gathering of substantial size (an estimated over 100,000 attended this year) of people from across the world, who all want to see an end to the legalization of abortion.

Of the about 90 Abbey students who attended this year, a large majority had already attended the march in the past. Veteran marcher, freshman Zoe Lamborn, said of her experience, “The march was such a beneficial and beautiful experience for me. It was great to stand with so many who were speaking out for the same pro-life movement, for which I feel so strongly for.” First-year marcher, sophomore Lauren Hamilton, who went on the early bus, described her first-time experience saying, “It was so powerful and amazing to march with people who love life and desire to be a voice for change.”

History was made at this year’s march, with President Donald Trump making an in-person showing of support and giving a speech at the preceding rally. He is the first president to ever make an in-person appearance at the March for Life Rally.

Director of Campus Ministry, Wesley Nelson, overall, thought this year’s march was a success. He said, “The march for life trip this year went so well. I was very excited to see the number of students who signed up to come on the early bus to experience the full day of pilgrimage. We got to go to the John Paul II Museum and celebrate the National Mass for the Vigil of Life that day in D.C. It was so great to see the students’ enthusiasm in making that day of pilgrimage a big part of the experience.”

The Cave Recap

By: John Walker

On Saturday, February 8th, a gathering of students braved a surprise snowstorm and pilgrimaged to the Basilica for the Cave. The Cave is a spiritual event reminiscent of Saint Benedict's own experience living as a hermit after having left college to follow his calling as a servant of God. It is modeled after Saint Benedict's period of hermitage both because of the Abbey's roots in the Benedictine tradition, as well as the event's provision of a necessary escape from the stresses of college.

The event began with a talk on trust and confidence in God from Sister Faustina of the Sisters of Life in New York City. It was peppered with touching anecdotes from Sister Faustina's service to the people of New York, specifically young mothers staring down the abyss of helplessness and considering an abortion. “These women are just looking for someone to tell them, ‘I believe in you. You can do this,’” she said.

Sister Faustina continued, asserting that we should all choose to be like Saint Peter, walking through the surging winds and the crashing waves, the rolling thunder and the violent lightning, our feet held up by faith alone, to reach out and touch the hand of Christ. “Trust is God’s love language,” she concluded. Following the passionate speech from Sister Faustina, there was an opportunity for confession and Eucharistic adoration, as well as a community prayer of the Compline with the monks.

To conclude the evening, Sister Faustina and Sister Monica answered questions from the attendees. The questions ranged from, “How did you know you were called to be a sister?” to, “Were you allowed to choose your name?” Even the men in attendance were able to gain insight into their own spiritual lives from the sisters. No matter the expectations a student had coming into the Cave, it was decidedly better than anything they had hoped for.



Pictured:
Abbey
Students
at the
2020
March
For Life

THE CRUSADER

Page 8

A Student Publication

Spring 2020

Issue 1

BACK to the Past Saying Goodbye to Friends Sports Bar & Grill

By: Katie McCarthy

A new semester brought with its commencement news that Friends Sports Bar & Grill in downtown Belmont will be closing its doors this February. The announcement occurred over Facebook on February 4th, leaving many students saddened by the loss of the campus favorite. One of these students was Senior Kaitlin Moore, who has attended Friends regularly since her first months at The Abbey. When asked about the effect Friends has had on her college experience she wrote, "Friends has impacted my college experience in a way that I would never have thought a little hole in the wall bar/restaurant would have. Friends has brought me out of my comfort zone, especially during the hours of karaoke. There have been many times where my friends and I would go to Friends for late-night orders of the famous 'Friendly Fries.'"

Abbey alum Martin Aucoin, who graduated in 2013 and has since returned to the Abbey as Director of Admissions, also recounted fond memories of the bar, stating, "I didn't have a car until the end of my Junior year, so when I wanted to spend some time off-campus, that usually meant walking to downtown Belmont. Friends was the only place that had NFL network, so I was there most Sundays after Mass watching my New Orleans Saints on the path to their first Super Bowl."

Other than just being another reason for students to get off campus, Friends has played an instrumental part in cultivating a sense of community at Belmont Abbey. As Aucoin put it, "cultivating a sense of community is what Friends was all about." He continued, "Nobody was ever there for their beer selection. Friends has always been a gathering place for my peers just to spend time together or celebrate a special occasion. I always enjoyed meeting more people from Belmont and Gastonia on the nights they had live music, bingo, or karaoke."

When asked what she will miss most about Friends, Moore said that she would mostly miss Bingo nights and the Friendly Fries. Aucoin, a Louisiana native, thought back to the first time he arrived in Belmont. He remarked, "Bentley's was the name of the sports bar on Main Street, before changing ownership and becoming Friends. I remember a lot of upperclassmen being concerned that it would never be the same. They changed the name, freshened up the facilities, added some more TVs, and it turned out to be a success. I'll always have fond memories of the times I've had at Friends and I'm excited to see what will come next." He also thought back to the fraternity and sorority dances held in their upstairs loft, remembering these as his favorite memories from the sports bar. Moore recounts her favorite memory as "Homecoming, where it was so crowded with students and alumni from The Abbey, because I was able to enjoy time with everyone all in one place."

When asked if he had anything else to add, Aucoin left current students with a note of advice: "We're so fortunate to be neighbors with such a vibrant community and I hope everyone at the Abbey takes time to explore all that the town of Belmont has to offer."

*Since this article has been written, there has been word, but no confirmation, that Friends has only changed owners and has not completely closed its doors for good.

Liquid Assets: The History of the Belmont Abbey Beverage Tradition

By: Caleb Kualii

When thinking of Belmont Abbey College, it is likely that we associate our beloved school with the excellent liberal arts education it offers. We probably do not think of the Abbey as a purveyor of an assortment of fine beverages. However, as it turns out, the Abbey has quite an interesting history in this respect. The story starts in the 1880s with the Belmont Abbey vineyard. The vineyard was planted under the leadership of Abbot Leo Haid, who desired all of his monks to be familiar with the art of making wine. The Abbey winemaking tradition continued until the vineyard was leveled to make room for the Haid Theater building. For those not inclined to alcoholic drinks, the monks, with the assistance of students, bottled and sold milk produced by the cows of the Abbey farm. Though the farm and its products would be a significant aspect of life at Belmont Abbey for over seventy years, milk bottling ceased when the farm was eventually closed in the 1950s in response to the college acquiring accreditation as a four-year institution. Another notable Abbey beverage was the simple necessity of bottled water. The property which Belmont Abbey occupies offers plentiful and pure groundwater sources. As such, the monks dug wells at several locations around campus to tap into this water supply. The story of Abbey water culminated in the 1990s when an arrangement was made through which Belmont Abbey water could be bottled and sold commercially in stores. Though you can no longer buy Abbey water at your local supermarket, the monastery and college still draw from these underground water sources, evidenced most notably by the prominent water tower near the Basilica.

At the present time, the long line of Abbey beverages is still occurring as the Abbey engages in the thousand-year-old monastic tradition of brewing homemade beers. Indeed, the monastery's own Brother Tobiah is reported to be the skilled principal brewer of the Abbey's craft beers. Unfortunately, those wishing to taste these home-brews will be out of luck. At present, Brother Tobiah's Abbey brews are crafted almost exclusively for the consumption of the monks of the monastic community. However, Belmont Abbey beer has been distributed outside the monastery walls in very limited quantities in the recent past. The beer has usually been offered at a selection of local eateries, among them the "String Bean" of downtown Belmont. Additionally, the Highland Brewing Company of Asheville has bottled and sold Abbey beer commercially. Regardless of its availability (or lack thereof), it is certainly the case that Belmont Abbey's craft beers continue in the long and interesting tradition of Abbey beverages.

THE CRUSADER

Page 8

A Student Publication

Spring 2020

Issue 1

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Picture by Kateri Brehany