



Tuesday, December 3, 2013

Volume IV, Issue IV

## Get Involved

### Sweet Treats Stop

First Wednesdays  
9:00-10:00 a.m.  
Student Life Center, 2nd Floor

### 2013 Office Christmas Tree Decorating Contest

Contest Period:  
December 2-6  
Judging will take place December 6. Winners will be announced by email on December 6. \*1 Christmas tree entry per office. For additional information contact Gregg Miles, Director of Student Life, at 903-463-8693 or email milesg@grayson.edu

### December "Late Night Food Event"

Monday, December 9  
9:00-10:00 p.m.  
Life Center Food Court  
A free breakfast will be served compliments of Great Western Dining Service and Student Life.

### Spring 2014 Student Leadership Series

Fourth Mondays  
(February 24, March 24, April 22)  
12:15-12:45 p.m.  
LA 107

Free to all students and employees. This 30 minute informal speaker series gives students an opportunity to listen and interact with business leaders in our community. Hearing their success stories and words of advice are inspirational and motivating to those who attend!

### BSM Christmas Open House

Wednesday, December 4  
11:30-1:00 p.m.  
All students and employees are invited. Free holiday snacks and special music provided.

### Student Government Association

First Mondays  
12:15-12:45 p.m.  
The HUB

### BSM Luncheon

Wednesdays  
11:45-12:30 p.m.  
Baptist Student Union

### BSM Bible Study

Mondays  
12:00-1:00 p.m.  
Baptist Student Union

### Fellowship of Christian Athletes

Tuesdays  
6:00 p.m.  
Viking Residence Hall Main Lounge

### Men of Distinction

Thursdays  
12:00-1:00 p.m.  
The HUB

### Sisters of Destiny

Mondays and Wednesdays  
4:00-5:00 p.m.  
The HUB

### Phi Theta Kappa

Wednesdays  
12:30-1:00 pm.  
LA 101

### Dental Assisting

Wednesdays  
1:00- 2:00 p.m.  
The HUB

### Speech Club

Every other Wednesday  
3:00-4:00 p.m.  
The HUB

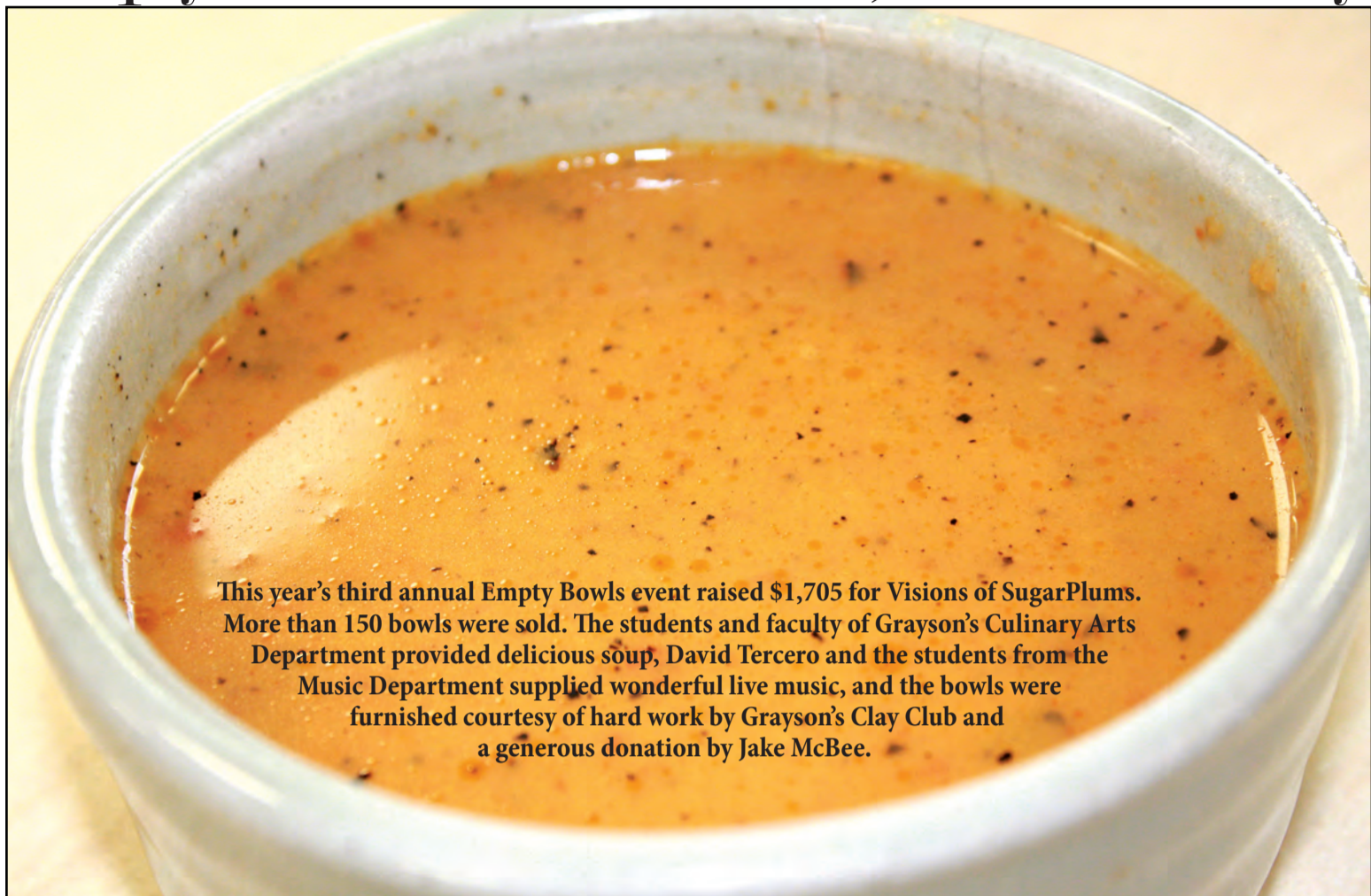
### Writers Unlimited/ Sigma Kappa Delta

Second and Fourth Fridays  
12:00-1:00 p.m.  
Writing Center (Lib 110)

### Mu Alpha Theta

Tuesdays  
2:00-3:00 p.m.

## Empty Bowls combines food, art and charity



This year's third annual Empty Bowls event raised \$1,705 for Visions of SugarPlums. More than 150 bowls were sold. The students and faculty of Grayson's Culinary Arts Department provided delicious soup, David Tercero and the students from the Music Department supplied wonderful live music, and the bowls were furnished courtesy of hard work by Grayson's Clay Club and a generous donation by Jake McBee.

## GC welcomes Regina Organ, new VP of Student Services

Rebecca Jones  
Editor



Grayson's new Vice President of Student Services, Regina Organ, received a warm welcome when she joined the Viking community in August. She has since settled well in North Texas and enjoys the weather.

"I think it has rained more here in the last two weeks than it has in New Mexico for 15 years," Organ says, "I'm loving it."

As VP, Organ is responsible for services "peripheral to instructional process." This means that she presides over everything from financial aid and admissions to housing and student organizations. She also oversees the registrar's office and the college's counseling services.

Organ's current preoccupation is spring enrollment

## PTK leadership conference teaches management strategies

Cheyenne Arrington  
PTK Public Relations

Phi Theta Kappa soared to new heights in October by discovering their true leadership potential through the 2013 Texas Leadership Conference entitled "Maximizing You: Simply Because Leadership is Your Greatest Superpower."

Members of Grayson College's Omicron Psi Chapter spent the weekend alongside other Phi Theta Kappa chapters at Texas A&M University strengthening their leadership skills and building new friendships.

The weekend kicked off with everyone learning their "true colors" through a self-evaluation survey. Understanding one's own personality type helps to be a better leader. Students also learned to respect and appreciate different personality types because no single type is better than another and a balance of personality types helps to make a team stronger and more effective.

Students were given the option to choose two developmental workshops to attend. Seminars ranged from the very basics of Phi Theta Kappa to other areas such as empowering others, public speaking and fundraising.

Workshops provide valuable skills that students can take with them into their daily lives as well as provide

and GC's first winter graduation ceremony. Having set a high bar for enrollment in 2014 (5,000 enrolled), Organ is happy to relate that, as of 27 November, that goal has been 56.5% accomplished (2,823 enrolled).

"My personal goal for this position is to provide strength through leadership for the students at GC and the staff in student services, thereby allowing a positive impact on student success



leadership opportunities for students who design and present the workshops.

Phi Theta Kappans also participated in several breakout sessions. These small groups of 15-30 people provide opportunities for student discussion and leadership activities, as well as the building of new friendships.

Throughout the weekend, conference attendees heard many amazing speakers. One speaker heard was Toni Marek, the International Vice President for Division II of Phi Theta Kappa. Toni shared some of her accomplishments and her failures, reminding students not to be hindered by setbacks. Despite hindrances, keep going. Learn from mistakes and grow from them. She instructed students to "go out and fail your best."

Dr. Kim Dooley also spoke, teaching students the 5 step process to "Putting the Go in Your Leadership Goals." Maggi Jackson discussed the advantages and disadvantages of having a

at GC." The new VP lauded both the student services and instructional personnel for their part in this shared objective.

With her background and credentials, Organ is well equipped to take on her duties at GC. Before moving to the area, she lived and worked in New Mexico, where she also completed a doctorate in Educational Administration from New Mexico State University. By 2014 she will have almost three decades of experience serving community colleges in Texas and New Mexico.

"Throughout all of my education I was a nontraditional student," Organ says, meaning that, like many GC students, she did not begin at 18. "[I] can really relate to some of the struggles that [those students] are having

as they go through school."

Student services like clubs and organizations provide members of the college community the opportunity to get more involved in their education. "Many times we see that the students who are more involved do better, finish their degrees and go on to bigger successes," says Organ.

Regina Organ's office is located on the west side of the Administration building and her door is always open. Students are encouraged to share their needs so that GC can work to accommodate them, making the school more efficient.

In the meantime, Organ is just happy to be surrounded by so many friendly faces. "I just hope that I am able to give back and become a part of the Grayson family."

## Learning to live again

Michael Rains

Learning to live with End Stage Renal Disease, (E.S.R.D.) is becoming a common dilemma in the world we are living in. Unfortunately, my life is not an exception.

I spend a total of ten hours a day connected to a machine that removes excess fluids and toxins from my system. I do this process to stay alive, by compensating for the loss of kidney function with dialysis.

Finding out that oneself, or a loved one, has become another victim in the spiraling epidemic of renal failure is not a good day in anybody's life. I would dare to say that for most, it is the unrealized worst day of one's life.

Renal failure is a life changing, and often life ending event. The hardest part of this disease is the condition usually remains undetected until the damage has exceeded the abilities of

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**GC Fitness Center**  
GC students and employees are eligible to use the facility. Electronic check-in and valid GC ID required.

**Welding Association**  
Every other Tuesday  
12:00-1:00 p.m.  
The HUB

**Vocational Nursing Student Association**  
Tuesday  
12:00-1:00 p.m.  
South Campus

**Cultural Diversity**  
First and Third Thursdays  
1:15-2:15 p.m.  
The HUB

**Clay Club**  
Tuesdays  
6:00-6:30 p.m.  
AC 120

**Eta Sigma Delta (Culinary Honor Society)**  
Second Wednesdays  
2:30 p.m.  
CA 118

**Student Ambassadors**  
Third Mondays  
12:00-1:00 p.m.  
Lounge outside the HUB

**HALO (Hispanic American Leadership Organization)**  
Mondays  
2:30-3:30 p.m.  
The HUB

**Delta Phi Delta Art Club**  
First Wednesday  
11:45 a.m.  
AC105

**Grayson Nursing Student Association**  
Thursdays  
5:00-6:00 p.m.  
The HUB

**Psychology Club**  
Tuesdays  
12:15-12:45 p.m.  
CIS 202

**Table Tennis Club**  
Tuesday & Thursday  
12:00-1:00 p.m.  
The Life Center, 2nd floor

**Cosmetology Club**  
Mondays  
3:45 p.m.  
CTC classroom

**Criminal Justice Club**  
Tuesday  
12:00-1:00 p.m.  
CJ 101

**Future Educators**  
Every other Tuesday  
2:00-3:00 p.m.  
CIS 200

**TIPSS (Culinary Arts & Hospitality Management)**  
Fourth Monday  
2:00-3:00 p.m.  
CA Building

**Veteran Student Association**  
Contact Cindy Powell for details: 903-463-2606

**GC Music Club**  
Every other Friday  
12:00-1:00 p.m.  
Band Hall

## Stay Involved

# GC theatre students receive excellence awards

Shelle Cassell  
*Director, Marketing and Public Information*

Seven Grayson College students were recognized by the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) for their performance and behind-the-scenes roles in the college's October production of "Black Snow." The festival attracts theater departments from community colleges and four-year institutions across Texas and the United States.

After presenting the show to appreciative audiences October 17-19 in Cruce Stark Auditorium on campus, the GC theatre troupe traveled to San Angelo, Texas, for KCACTF's competition hosted by Angelo State University on October 24-26. Students competed with five other colleges during



Dustin Meadows, Jasmine Shannon, Krystina Burns and Ginger Roberts (L to R) were named to the festival's Honor Crew

sor of theatre and speech, received Excellence Awards in both directing and sound design.

The GC production also was selected to be "held" for consideration for advancement to KCACTF's Region 6 competition where six finalists will perform. To be held means that Grayson keeps the set, costumes and props intact until the finalist decision is made. Finalists will be announced in mid-December.

"It's a huge honor for the students who were recognized for their craft and to have our show held," said Robinson. "KCACTF is a wonderful opportunity for our theatre students to network with other schools and to be exposed to all genres of theatre. We are fortunate Grayson College supports this opportunity."

the festival.

The GC troupe as a whole received an Excellence in Acting Ensemble Award, and three students were honored as Irene Ryan Acting Nominees, including: Arron Hogue, Anna sophomore; Brandon Langston, Denison freshman; and Blake Rice, Savoy sophomore. They will compete with a partner in an acting contest during the festival's next phase at the

KCACTF Region 6 Competition in Shreveport, Louisiana, in late February.

Four Grayson students were named to the festival's Honor Crew. They are sophomores Taylor Ginger Roberts of Whitesboro and Jasmine Shannon of Rowlett, and freshmen Krystina Burns of Howe and Dustin Meadows of McKinney.

Robin Robinson, GC theatre director and profes-

# South Campus celebrates "No Shave November" with mustache contest

Kimberly Teel

The South Campus hosted our November Student Service Event on Tuesday, November 12th. In the spirit of "No Shave November," we hosted a mustache contest (both real and not so real) for our students, faculty and staff.

The students were served pizza and mustache shaped cookies for lunch, and winners of the mustache contest were awarded GC t-shirts. "No Shave November" is a way of bringing awareness to colon cancer, similar to the October events that highlight the need for more breast cancer research and funding.



# PTK update (cont. from pg. 1)

technology-driven world. Mr. T.J. Sullivan encouraged chapters by giving insight into "Motivating the Middle," even giving everyone in attendance an autographed copy of his book.

Other opportunities at the conference included a college fair and market place where everyone got the chance to find out more about transfer opportunities, as well as buy Phi Theta Kappa t-shirts and other souvenirs. The weekend also included a dance, complete with a DJ, a photo booth, and of course, costumes.

The Omicron Psi Chapter also came home with some exciting accomplishments. Two members, Laura McMeley, chapter secretary, and Genia Shipman, chapter president, came home with pins to recognize their completion of the Five Star Competitive Edge. This plan helps members to build soft skills such as communication, professional etiquette, team building and critical

thinking that help students in the future.

On behalf of the Omicron Psi chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, we are so proud to announce Professor Mary Linder's appointment as District II Coordinator for the Texas Region. This is a title that is gained only through nomination and election by Phi Theta Kappa advisors. She has the responsibility of overseeing 20 North Texas chapters, as well as assisting in the planning of our regional conferences. We have no doubt that she is going to do a wonderful job in making our chapter and our college proud.

For those who are tired of missing out on the excitement and opportunities that Phi Theta Kappa has to offer, we encourage you to visit us online at [ptkomicronpsi.org](http://ptkomicronpsi.org), or attend one of the weekly meetings held each Wednesday at 12:30 p.m. in LA 101. We look forward to meeting you!

# Music students compete locally

Dave Eubanks

"Build it and they will come" was the famous quote from the movie "Field of Dreams." Well, the facilities and equipment are in place. We have had an outstanding faculty for a while now. And, one of those faculty just took over the position of Head of the Music Department. He is our beloved classical guitar and music teacher, David Tercero. The "field" has been completed.

At the beginning of the fall semester, the students came. Our first year music class has a lot of talent in it. I am privileged to be part of the group. We have a cellist, a bassist, a pianist, two singers, three guitarists, a flautist and a budding sound engineer. Dr. Tercero and the rest of the faculty stand poised to challenge and teach these young men and women to help them be the best musicians they can be.

Brad Roberts, one of our guitarists, competed in the seventh annual Collin College Guitar Competition on Saturday, 16 November. This was a competition between classical acoustic guitarists. Brad is a first-year student in Tercero's music program.

Tercero did not expect that we would have anyone up to the task of competing this semester. But Brad got the music and put in hours of hard work. It paid off on Saturday, as he not only competed but took home third place in the Intermediate Division. Brad competed against five other guitarists from the Dallas Metroplex and as far away as San Antonio.

Brad played three pieces. One of them was a "set piece," meaning that all the other intermediate competitors played the same piece. The judges for the day commented that Brad played the best "set piece" out of all competitors. Many congratulations to Brad for his great playing and representation of Grayson College and its music department in his first competition.

Brad is a quiet, humble guy who lets his guitar talk for him. This writer feels that he, as well as his musical classmates, have the potential to go far and win many awards while they are studying here at Grayson. We hope they stay and bless our music school with their many talents in the coming semesters.



**SIX NINETY-ONE**  
GC'S STUDENT-RUN RESTAURANT

*Gourmet menus*



*budget-friendly prices*

Reservations for Wednesday and Friday lunch service:  
903.415.2605

# The voice of a child: Child Protective Services explained

Randi Troxteel

As an adult, when you are pushed around, bullied or neglected in some way, what do you do? You stand up for yourself. Children do not have that option when their parents or guardians are treating them badly. The Child Protective Services (CPS) here in Grayson County steps in and acts as those children's voices when they fall victims to such situations.

There are many different perspectives on when a child should be taken out of their home and also, how the job of an investigator should be done. Bill Pyles, a Denison resident who has been retired for four years as an investigator for the CPS here in Grayson County, explained the job of an investigator to be a difficult one. "Investigators protect children from abusive or neglectful situations," said Pyles.

According to the CPS, abuse is considered to be physically harming the body, usually leaving bruises, burns or scratches. Neglect is considered to be ignoring a child's needs. Pyles stated that most of the neglect he had seen was "plain ignorance of not knowing how to take care of

a child." In the case of ignorance, the investigator will find the guardian or parent the help they need, like parenting classes, to help show them what it is they need to be doing to take care of their children.



"CPS should take a child from their home when they are in danger or are being exposed to things children should never be exposed to," said Denison resident Lacy Hill, who has made numerous reports against a parent. To most, that should be a good enough reason to take a child out of their home. But every parent's view on how to discipline and raise a child is never the same as the next.

According to Pyles, the investigator is told to go in to the child's home and find the facts. Is the child being physically abused or are they being neglected in any way? In the case of Jameson

Beard, a student who was in the CPS system, along with her brother at the age of twelve, the case worker assigned to her became her legal guardian for a year. "... She [the case worker] explained everything to me. She was very open about the whole process and what my parents had to do to get custody of us again," said Beard. "She was a little tough and followed every single, rule. But, I knew she genuinely cared for me and my brother."

An investigator's job can be just as emotional as it is for the children and families. The day she was taken away from her parents, Beard was placed in a shelter for eleven days. "We didn't know why we were there...we didn't get to talk to any of our family. We didn't know anything! I was extremely scared," she claimed.

After those days in the shelter, Beard was placed in the care of her aunt. She stated, "It only took a few days to realize that being taken away from the environment I was living in was a huge blessing." Beard said that at first, when being taken away from her parents, she was extremely mad. But, she then began to understand that what the

case worker was doing was to protect her and put her in a safe environment. "It absolutely changed my life," proclaimed Beard.

The investigators in all of these cases are just as affected by every situation they come across as the children that are in them. Pyles said that the investigator has to go in to every case with a bright attitude. "You have to stay emotionally detached from the cases, or they will eat you alive," stated Pyles.

He also said that even when an investigator has that attitude, it is still very hard. "There will always be cases that you aren't satisfied with the way you handled the situation," Pyles regretfully explains, "I've lost sleep, and still to this day lose sleep, over cases I know now, I should've handled differently, had I had the resources needed back then." Pyles stated, and couldn't stress enough, "If you can handle the emotional aspects to the cases you are faced with, being an investigator is a very rewarding job. But, you cannot get emotionally attached to your cases. It will rip you apart."

Investigators, or case workers, for the CPS are not always viewed as nice, helpful, people. "Most people

don't understand, investigators do their homework," said Beard, "my brother and I had an interview with an investigator—after three reports—where we were asked numerous questions about our lifestyle, our home, and of course, our parents." While she was terrified at first, Beard knew the investigator was only doing their job and wanted to help.

Haley Caldwell, a student at Denison High School said that even though her niece was taken from their home six years ago, she still sees the system as useful. Caldwell stated, "I feel like people see investigators as bad people and fear them. But they serve a purpose and really save a lot of children." Pyles explained that most people see investigators as bad people who just come in and take children away from their homes. But, he stated, "We try to get help for the parents and give them consequences if they don't show progress." Investigators try to do everything to help the parents or guardians keep their families together before they remove a child. "We aren't bad people," said Pyles "we try to help parents keep their children."

## The Impact of Social Media on the Job Search

**Social media**

Media for social interaction online communities to share personal messages, inform networking and microblog Web-based or mobile tech

Gretchen Huff, Job Placement Specialist

From The Masahble:  
You've heard it before: "The Internet is forever." So you should know that when your friend posts a picture of you staggeringly drunk on Facebook, it may come back to haunt you.  
Businesses are now using social networking sites to scope out applicants, and that embarrassing picture – and other bad behavior found on your profile – may make your job search more difficult.  
In a recent survey of employers, over 40% of companies said they reconsidered candidates based on the content of their social profiles, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Google+.  
Employers are more likely to view a candidate negatively if there are signs of illegal drug use or posts of a sexual nature on their profiles. Positive posts can influence decisions as well. Over 60% of companies involved in the study said that evidence of volunteering or other charitable acts reflected well on the applicant.  
Pictures aren't the only pieces of content that can change an employer's mind – text is also a major factor. Nearly two-thirds of participating companies said that profanity and spelling and grammar mistakes in statuses and tweets reflected poorly on job applicants.  
What can you do to ensure your social media use doesn't ruin your chances for employment?

## Say 'goodbye' to financial aid woes

Alex Garrison

Grayson College offers many financial aid opportunities. 63% of students at Grayson receive some form of financial aid. Students can apply for scholarship, apply for loans or grants, or participate in the work-study program.

Tina Dodson, Director of Annual Giving, says, "As long as students meet the requirements, there is usually some type of scholarship they can receive." Grayson offers has plenty of scholarship opportunities to students. Some available are targeted towards specific majors, and others are general. Dodson stated that anybody could apply for scholarships as long as they meet the requirements of taking a minimum of 12 credit hours and having a GPA of 2.5 or higher.

One scholarship available is called the T-STEM scholarship. In order to receive this, you have to have 3.0 GPA in science and math high school courses and be majoring in a specific field, such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Math programs. Students may now use their scholarship money to purchase a computer from Dell.com.

Scholarships at Grayson are funded in various ways. Various donors, such as community members and businesses, give their money to the foundation

to help students earn their degrees. "People know that it is financially hard for students to further their education," stated Dodson. Many of the donors want to help students because they know that having a more educated population betters the community.

On the college's website, there is a list of all the scholarships available for students to apply for. To be considered first to receive a scholarship, students need to turn the scholarship application in with all the necessary documents, such as your transcript and the application, attached by March 15; however, not meeting this deadline does not mean you cannot receive a scholarship. They are still awarded until the next semester starts.

Another form of financial aid is student loans. Because of the high cost of a college education, most students have to take out loans in order to finance their education. Donna King, the Director of Financial Aid at Grayson, stated, "We encourage people not to take out loans." Due to the rising interest rates of student loans, it is becoming harder and harder for students to pay them back.

King feels that most students do not know all there is to know about financial aid. The federal government is moving towards a sort of information system called the "College Shop-

ping Sheet." These sheets will show students what type of financial aid they will receive from their colleges of choice so they can compare and pick the best options.

At Grayson, the most common grant is the Pell Grant, which is a federal loan. Federal Pell Grants usually are awarded only to undergraduate students who have not earned a bachelor's or a professional degree. The perk to a Pell Grant is that you do not have to pay the money back, unlike with a loan. Amounts can change yearly.

The maximum Federal Pell Grant award is \$5,645 for the award year. The amount you get, though, will depend on your financial need, cost of attendance, your status as a full-time or part-time student, and your plans to attend school for a full academic year or less, stated Jeff Scott, Financial Aid Counselor.

Work-study is another form of financial aid. Most work-study positions are clerical work in the different departments at Grayson College, "but there are also tutors at elementary schools, campus police, science labs, and student life, to name a few," stated Scott.

For more information about scholarship opportunities, visit the Grayson County College website, or call Tina Dodson at 903-463-8716.

## Free X-Rays and Dental Impressions

**Fridays: 8, 9, 10, & 11 a.m.**  
**Call for Appointment**  
Wendy Renfro,  
Director of Dental Assisting  
903.415.2529  
renfrow@grayson.edu

## Writing Center hours:

Monday-Thursday 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
Friday 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Bring a copy of your assignment so the tutor can help you.

## Math Hub Hours:

Monday-Thursday 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
Friday 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Saturday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Room 113 Success Center

## Editorial Information

The Viking is published by Writers Unlimited and Sigma Kappa Delta as an ongoing service project to the College. Participation in the production of The Viking is open to all students, faculty, and staff at Grayson College. The newspaper is provided as a forum for public opinion, and views expressed in The Viking do not necessarily reflect the policy of Sigma Kappa Delta, the Board of Trustees, the administration, or the faculty and staff at Grayson College. Material for publication may be submitted to The Viking office (LA105E) or through email to Marlea Trevino: TrevinoM@grayson.edu. Volunteers for production and writing may also visit The Viking office.

## Planning your transition from student to professional?

GC Career Services can help!  
(in the Advising area)

Assistance is available for:  
resume writing, cover letters,  
completing job applications,  
preparing for interviews,  
job leads & more.

Contact: Gretchen Huff, 903-415-2544 or huffg@grayson.edu.

# Student learns about Mexican traditions through Day of the Dead celebration

Luke Baio

I am currently enrolled in Professor McKelva's Spanish class and during the semester she recently offered an opportunity for students to be involved Mexico's holiday Day of The Dead.

One thing that I was most intrigued about was the Day of The Dead altars. I decided I would build an altar to honor my wonderful mother who suddenly died March 11, 2011 at the age of 43.

In the Christian Church they normally celebrate All Saints Day, where you honor those who have passed away. The Day of The Dead is very similar to this, but celebrated in a unique way.

The Grayson College Art Department, along with the Denison Arts District, planned a weekend event for the celebration. I joined those celebrating Day of The Dead by walking a small altar in the parade held on 2 November. Then I built the altar in our classroom as we learned about the tradition, prepared and ate authentic food for this occasion.

Students prepared *mole*, *pan de muerto*, *tamales*, *frijoles*, *tacos* and *arroz con leche*. It was a great experience to learn more about the culture and the significance of it.

Altars are meant to be fun, joyful representations of the duality of life and death.

**About my mother's altar:**  
**Arch.** Above the altar is usually a large arch made of flowers or other offerings. It represents the entry into the world of the dead.

**Earth** is represented by crop. The Mexicans believe the souls are fed by the aroma of food most recognized *Pan de Muerto*-Bread of the Dead.

**Wind** is represented by a moving object. Tissue paper is commonly used to represent wind, I chose to decorate with streamers.

**Water** is placed in a container for the soul to quench its thirst after the long journey to the altar.

**Fire** is represented by a wax candle. Each lit candle represents a soul, and an extra one is placed for the forgotten soul.

**Flowers**, the most popular used are Marigolds. These yellow-orange flowers, called *cempasúchitl*, symbolize death. Their strong fragrances also help lead the dead back to their altars. Marigold petals may also be sprinkled on the floor in front of the altar, or even sprinkled along a path from the altar to the front door, so that the spirit may find her way inside.

Four white Candles represent the **four cardinal points**.

Other candles are lit to welcome the spirits back to their altars.

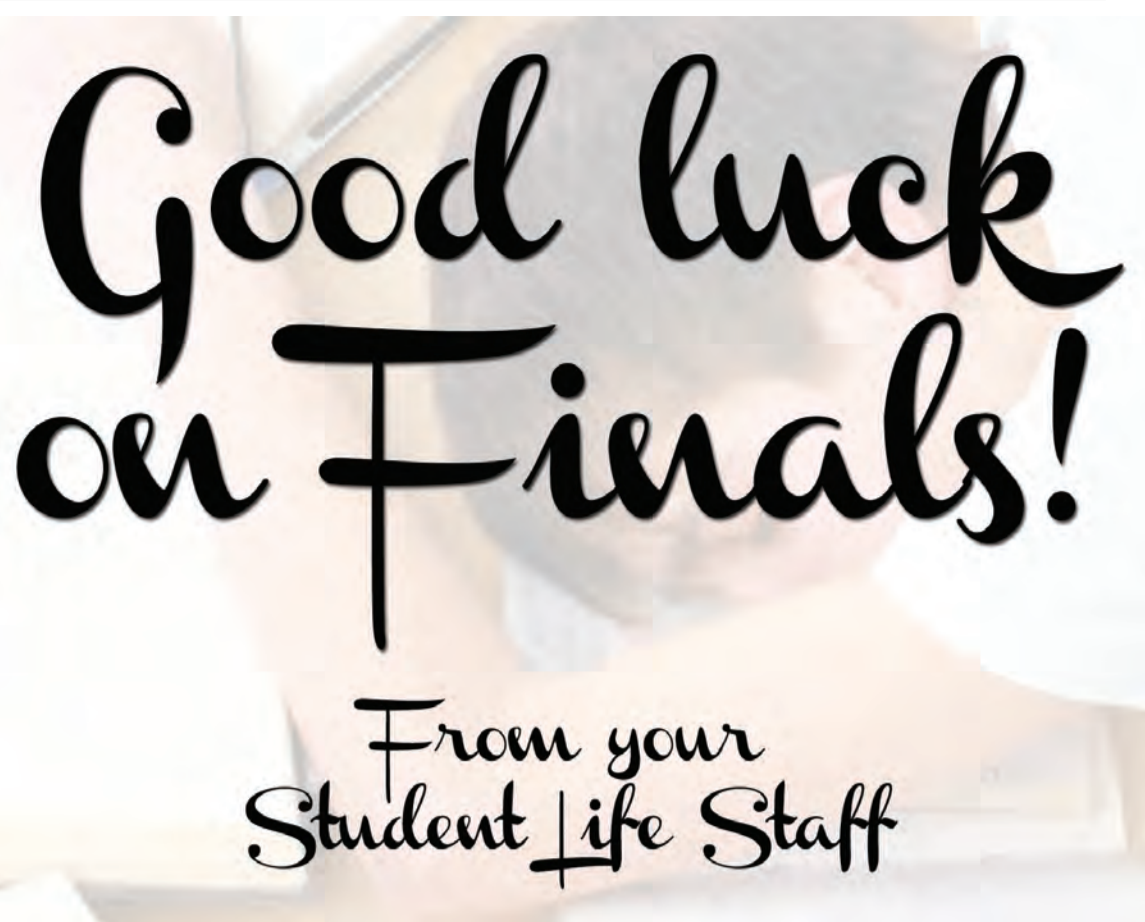
**Salt.** A small container with salt for the souls who visit. They can use the salt in case they can't taste the flavor of foods.

**Images of saints.** Various pictures of my mother are placed around the altar, one including the program from her memorial service.

**(Sugar) Skulls**, decorated confections of sugar and egg whites which are exchanged as gifts or incorporated into *offrenda*, the altar.

The **quilt** in which everything is set up on was one of my mother's favorite

The "H" **emblem** was from my mother's high school letter jacket.



## GC honors veterans on and off campus



Many gathered to show respect the morning of 11 November, Veteran's Day. As a man in a distinct American flag polo belted out "Taps" on the trumpet, students, staff and faculty in attendance looked on. The GC community assembled again at 10:40 a.m. under the bridge to share patriotic songs and words of encouragement from President McMillen.

## Students want to know: are crime rates at GC on the rise?

Elisha Silva

Colleges have a reputation for many things. Education, wild parties and sports teams are among these, but what about crime? How common are crimes on college campuses? How common are they at Grayson College? Crimes are being committed at our college and students need to know what they are and how to prevent them.

Grayson College Chief of Police Andy MacPherson says that the most common crime reported at Grayson is theft, followed closely by car accidents. "I would say that the number of alcohol related incidents have seen a reduction over the past two years with the closing of Jenson Hall." Crime rates have otherwise stayed about the same in last couple years according to MacPherson.

Are students at Grayson really aware of the crimes at Grayson? Paige Lester, a current student, believes

that the parking tickets are the most common offense at Grayson. Jessica Vermillion, also a student at Grayson, feels that under aged drinking is the most common crime on campus.

Violent crimes are less common than minor ones. "We don't really see any assault here at Grayson," Chief MacPherson says. Self-defense instructor Michael Beber, owner and operator of the Legacy Martial Arts Academy in Bonham, Texas, and Sergeant at a Collin County jail, cautions students to be aware and pay attention. "If you feel a negative presence, keep an eye on him," Beber says.

If you are being followed and can't call 911, create distance and keep moving. "Call out for help. Get something in between you and that person, a door, a table, anything." You can circle around a car all day, he said. If the person is after your belongings, ask yourself what they are worth to you. "You

can call and report credit cards stolen," Beber says.

If a student finds himself in an unavoidable confrontational situation, there is only one option left. As a last resort, fight. It is you or that person at this point, Beber says. Beber, who has a black belt in Tai Kwon Do and Hop Ki Lo, a Masters in Control Force, and a Green Belt in Judo, says, "Go for the eyes and the throat, and the lower abdomen in males." Find something to use as a weapon, a stick or your car keys, he says as he forms a fist around his keys, the front protruding between his knuckles. "Keep your hands up casually, ready to deflect and and protect," says Beber. Chief MacPherson says to walk with someone else when possible. "It serves as a deterrent," Beber agrees.

Crime prevention comes in many forms. Do not leave valuables unattended, MacPherson continues. Grayson policies on pep-

per spray and tasers indicate that only properly trained officers will be allowed to use them. The Grayson College Police Department Annual Security is available on the college website, providing safety tips and crime reports that are beneficial to students. Vermillion says she feels safe, but will not let her bag out of her sight, while Lester says she feels comfortable enough to leave her bag at the desk when she goes into the restroom.

Students often get complacent, thinking "it could never happen to me." Safety tips from the Annual Security Report here at Grayson tells students to hide your valuables if they must be left in the car. Resources for students are abundant, many unknown to students. Grayson has a Safe Walk Campus Escort for instance, allowing students to call the Campus Police 24 hours a day to have an officer meet them and walk them to their car, if perhaps they are un-

comfortable walking across campus alone at night.

Campus Police do not just issue parking tickets, they perform a wide variety of services to Grayson students. These include car and dorm lock-outs, flat tire and motorist assist, battery jumps and alarm calls, among others. Located between the Culinary Arts building and Baptist Student Ministry on the east side of the campus, the Grayson Police can be reached at (903)463-8619. Students should save this number for future reference.

Crime reports, emergency procedure guides, parking regulations and more safety tips can be found on the Grayson College homepage under the College Police/Safety tab. Students are encouraged to become familiar with these procedures. In conclusion be aware, know what to do, and prevent crime. Most of all, be safe in college.

# Rains shares struggle to reclaim his life with ESRD

(cont. from pg. 1)

medical intervention. From this point on, life becomes a balancing act between nutrition, fluid consumption and dialysis to remove waste and toxins from the body. Body weight is now measured in kilos, and fluids are likewise measured in milliliters. The underlying concern at all times is the protection of the access port, and the treatment time required to maintain the highest degree of health possible, for as long as possible.

For millions of people in society today, these are the unwritten rules by which life is made possible. Every aspect of the patient's life must be re-evaluated, and made to conform to the requirements of the prescribed dialysis treatment.

Every meal, every drink, every outing, everything, becomes centered on the dialysis machine and the supplies to conduct treatments. As a victim of renal failure, the only choice that remains is what type of dialysis would be most effective, and

provide the greatest degree of enjoyment of life.

With few exceptions, renal failure patient's choices are limited to two options: transplant of a donor organ or dialysis. Initially, upon renal failure, when natural kidney function falls below 15%, hemodialysis is begun as a way to stabilize the patient and regain some level of homeostasis.

Accomplishing this task requires the implantation of a medical device called a "Tessio." This device is essentially the "life-line" of the patient until an access port can be surgically implanted and allowed enough time to heal, prior to use. The access port may be either a "Fistula," a large horse-shoe shaped vein, implanted in the arm or leg, or a catheter in the lower abdomen.

The "Fistula" allows access to the bloodstream of the patient, with sufficient flow to allow for hemodialysis to be conducted. The Fistula implantation procedure is usually healed within four

to six months.

The patient may also choose to use a different type of dialysis called peritoneal dialysis. This method removes waste and toxins from the body, using the peritoneum as a filter, in place of the failed organs, and osmosis as a means of flushing these waste products and toxins from the body.

The "Tessio" is a medical device that is surgically implanted in the artery in the side of the patient's neck, and is burrowed beneath the skin to an exit site in the upper chest area of the patient. The "Tessio" device has three connection fittings, one for out, one for in, and one to administer drugs through, during treatment.

The major difference between the two treatment types is hemodialysis filters the blood and peritoneal dialysis flushes toxins and waste out in a chemical solution that soaks up the toxins like a sponge, and then the sponge is replaced

several times during treatment. Either option chosen represents a complete and absolute conformity to set conditions, requirements, and consequences. Toxins continue to accumulate when the kidneys function diminishes, and must be removed from the body to continue living.

Hemodialysis is a method of filtering waste products and excess fluids from the blood stream of the patient. Hemodialysis is a very efficient and fast way of removing waste from the body, but it has hidden dangers that can be deadly! Most prominent is the risk of blood-borne pathogens or infectious diseases.

Dialysis patients are very vulnerable to infections. This is an inescapable side effect of immune-suppression therapy. Unfortunately, most kidney disease is both incurable and progressive.

The only prescribed therapy or treatment for the disease is to slow the progression as much as pos-

sible. Often homeostasis is accomplished by suppressing the immune response to the invading organism, and thereby limiting the "spread of the battlefield," or the area of destruction or damage to the organ tissue.

Unfortunately, this method of therapy results in a severely diminished acuity of immune response to other pathogen's entry into the system. Dialysis patients are at extreme risk of viral infections, bacterial infections and diseases of the blood like Hepatitis, AIDS and Tuberculosis.

I have had many such infections in the period that I have been a renal patient. In the short term I was forced to use hemodialysis, I was hospitalized numerous times for infections that were spiraling out of control.

...To be continued in the February issue of the Viking



Write for the Viking!

Submit articles, flyers (jpeg format), poems, cartoons, and photos with captions to [trevinom@grayson.edu](mailto:trevinom@grayson.edu).



Next Deadline: 29 January

Doet's Corner

"Divinely Damaged" by Jamie Wagoner

Life has damaged me, now covered with cracks and scars.

I'm emotionally unstable trying to battle these alcoholic wars.

I've been undoubtedly beaten although no fists have been thrown.

What's the word I am looking for to describe what's left that I own?

God must have a purpose for all the pain and the stress.

I've no doubt that he loves me, because my family's been blessed.

So, why all the heartache and why pass it on to my child?

We are both confused and troubled yet continue smile.

Through the tears and the anger our hearts still beat strong.

Although every decision we make just feels wrong.

What's the word I am looking for? It describes God's reason for pain.

It's the reason for life's storms and the reason for these years of harsh rain.

I still know that he loves me and I know that he cares.

He gave me a family and trusts me to make them aware.

I want them to know that God loves them too.

I don't want them angry for all I've been through.

What is that word that describes God's perfection in me?

My son and I have it thanks to the struggles we've seen. I know what it is now and why we were chosen.

The words I've been searching for to describe why we're broken.

God gave us the strength to continue to carry this baggage.

God purposely made you and I *Divinely Damaged*.

GC ART "Duality" by Rebecca Jones



Got art? Send to [jonesre@grayson.edu](mailto:jonesre@grayson.edu)

## "A Hill to Die On": a story of murder and bad luck

Cecelia Pletan

To be fair, they didn't know the house was bad luck when they moved in. No one told them that a homicide had taken place on their front lawn not but a few years before. They alone were left to discover the handprints of the killer's children molded into their new garage floor, an eerie memorial to the sadness that lingered in the home.

No one had enlightened them about how sometimes—on cold, dark nights—mysterious lights could be seen burning brightly inside, even though the house had been vacant ever since the murder. They didn't know the house carried secrets with it, but then again, we didn't know they held secrets either.

The Ss (our dear friends of two years), like the house they moved into, were mysterious: rough around the edges and weather-beaten with the little details that accumulate and cause one to deteriorate over the years.

Their new home's build was strange. The maze of misplaced closets, doors and hallways that led to nowhere in particular gave one the idea that it had been constantly rebuilt and added to in order to accommodate another room.

The Ss were odd that way as well. I couldn't quite put my finger on it, but the family's whole personality brimmed with unnecessary complexity and complication. And just like their home, being around them was comfortable and welcoming at first, but there soon lingered something unsettling, perhaps stashed away in one of those awkward closets.

Ultimately, their future in our town did not prove to be a long one. It became fraught with worry and constant paranoia and was rumored to have been shaped by a mental breakdown of

sorts.

Theirs was a destiny of cruelty and insensitivity, abruptly severed friendships, of loneliness and isolation, finally culminating in their packing up and moving out of state. I don't think anyone on the street, or maybe even in our town, ever said goodbye to them; they simply vanished like dandelion seeds in the breeze.

Sometimes I ride my bike down their road, chasing the wind that bid them away, and in doing so I ride back to that carefree summer when everything seemed so perfectly, blissfully happy.

The house is full and has new life; and while not beautiful, it possesses a charm all its own with the chipping red paint on the cabinets, boxes of yet unpacked items stacked high and the constant smell of scrambled eggs, salty bacon and fresh-baked bread.

The Ss' white 15-passenger van is parked in the carport, and Joy, their boxer, barks in her kennel. I hear the children's delighted echoes as they play in the backyard where they have built a fort, fashioned with ropes and bed sheets, beneath the trees, and I spy them daydreaming under the canopy of their playhouse.

I glimpse the long-gone nights we spent in front of their fireplace, our two families telling stories and playing Charades, teasing and talking between one another. I imagine all the laughter that could have made its way into these walls.

I go farther down the road that I still call "theirs." Although it's been what seems like a lifetime since they called this street home, I can still see our long line of sixteen bundled-up figures traipsing along the ditches for a brisk and exciting Thanksgiving Day walk. Eager for roast turkey and pumpkin pie, we smile comfortably and laugh free-

ly. The wind is chilly, but warmth rises up within us as we mingle, as if both of our families are somehow related and have the very same blood coursing through our veins.

I turn around and see Christmas, all of us exchanging cookies on the back step, wind whipping through hair and tiny intricate snowflakes falling effortlessly and covering everything with a magical white freshness and beauty. A tiny, rippling laugh rises in my throat when I notice snowmen on the front lawn, who with their crooked rock smiles and carrot stub noses, stand watch over the old bricked home that has become theirs.

But suddenly I blink, and the mesmerizing charm is lost. I am left to witness what comes after Christmas. Decorations are being torn down, their Christmas tree is chopped up and stored as firewood, and the once-happy snowmen no longer grin back at me—instead, they lie in a melted pool of pebbles and carrot fragments.

Our friendship, much like the snowmen, starts to deteriorate little by little. Neither can withstand the intense heat, and so they both melt, leaving everyone burned. We no longer spend long nights in front of their fireplace, and any laughter that has started to seep into their walls vanishes.

More red paint chips off the kitchen cabinets inside, and the yeasty smell of baking bread slowly disappears. Finally, I see a moving van, their little fort in the yard being dismantled, and boxes—more boxes—appearing on the same back step where we had once stood trading Christmas cookies.

Tears of confusion, of hurt and heartache, blur my vision and trickle down my flushed cheeks. Through the mist in my eyes, all I can make out are dandelions floating away, their soft, white silhouettes fading into the horizon.

# Spelling bees offer young Ghanaians life-changing opportunities

Victoria Sicking  
Peace Corps Volunteer

On 1 November I hopped on a tro-tro (public transportation that consists of a mini van full of benches and about 20 people) heading towards Cape Coast. I was on my way to volunteer at the spelling bee for Ghana's central region.

Spelling bees are held in all ten regions of Ghana for students from grades five to seven. The top five participants are selected from each region to attend the national spelling bee in Ghana's capital, Accra.

The Young Educator's Foundation is the NGO responsible for bringing the spelling bee to Ghana, and they foot the bill to host the bees in all the regions, and the national bee in the capital every year. The most exciting part of the bee is, of course, that moment when the victorious speller is declared.

The winner of the national bee will continue on to the U.S. to compete in the annual international competition. They will receive a week-long all expenses paid trip along with several thou-



sand dollars worth of cash and material prizes. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for any Ghanaian, as it is extremely difficult for those from African countries to acquire an American visa at any point in their lives.

According to the organizers, this year's central region bee was exceptional to the rest. The students were well trained and the competition was tough. What really separated them from the seven other regions of bee contes-

tants this year was their ability to engage the audience. They were able to show us what the bee meant to them through their emotions as they progressed through each round.

The star of the Bee was a fifth grade boy. When his name was called to move on to the third round of the bee he flew up from his seat with hands raised and proceeded to run back and forth across the stage gesturing for the audience to make some

noise. Anyone who had fallen asleep in the audience was now awake and fully engaged in the action.

The boy misspelled his first word in round three and sadly moved back to his chair where he sat like a statue praying that he would not be the only one, and would get a second chance. We were all praying with him.

Thankfully our prayers were answered. When his number was called, he cautiously moved up to the mic and took his time to spell his next word. As the announcer said "thank you," signaling that the spelling was correct, he fell to his knees in tears of joy. Three of the top five contestants had already been selected and if no one else was able to correctly spell their word, he would take one of the remaining two seats.

Unfortunately for him, two other people were also successful. They proceeded to the final round.

He was victorious! He was the only one of the three to correctly spell his word in the final round. As he took the fourth seat he was overwhelmed with emotion and sobbed into his arms. This

was his first spelling bee, and he was the youngest contestant to win a place in the national bee.

I went home feeling so proud of a boy I have never met before. The majority of the students I have taught in my village don't give two cents about their education. You will suffer the whole day to teach them and they would not write a single note, do the homework or study when they return home. Some days it is very discouraging. I question how can this be, what am I doing wrong? But those rare occasions when I come to class and a small handful of people are interested in what I have to say and are excited to learn, make all the difference.

That small 5th grade boy encouraged me to press on and give my students the best I have to offer for my final nine months.



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## Giving up our "safe haven"

Kayle Koberowski

I have to hide! Mammy has already counted to five, and I still do not have a good hiding place. I cannot hide in her closet or Pa's. Those spots would be too easy. Oh! Under the dining room table! But I hide there almost every time; she will surely look there first.

"Ready or not—here I come, Kayle Anne!"

Too late. Heart racing, I fly down the stairs and skid across the polished white tile floor, seeking the safety of the soft purple carpet that houses the oblong marble table.

Carefully wedging myself in between the criss-cross table legs, I fear I have already been spotted. My breath echoes around the room, bouncing off the 18-foot ceiling and snow-white walls. The advantage of my position is that I can see Mammy's feet in between the gaps of the stairs when she decides I'm no longer on the second floor. Turning around, I look through the glass wall that lets gallons of sunlight in during the day.

One can never be too safe. Mammy could walk out her other bedroom door, step onto the patio by her window, then descend the tight spiral staircase. Once there, she could proceed to walk along the porch and see me right through the glass. Maybe this spot is not such a good place to hide after all; I'm too exposed. At the same time, it is night, and neither Mammy nor I like to be outside when it's dark.

"Kayle Anne, where are you, you Pistol Pete?"

She's in the living room. My breathing is back to



normal, so she must have skipped over the dining room. The dining room is a curious thing; it is twice as big as the "living room," yet that is where the T.V. rests.

A faint scent then begins to float in the air: Mammy Cookies. So that's her plan, to flush me out with cookies. Why not? I can smell them no matter what part of the house I might be in. The stairs end by a catwalk, so I can look over the three foot wall and spy on the inhabitants below, or throw stuffed animals over the ledge and into the dining room. It sure is easier than just running up and down the stairs to bring all my favorite toys down onto the carpet.

On the left is Mammy and Pa's room; its trademark is the bathroom nestled in the corner. A large, stained-glass window covers one of the walls to the teenie tiny "room" with the toilet. Across from that stands the shower, which is very big; there are two shower heads inside. It has five times more glass to clean too. But my favorite part is the sinks. When on, the water comes down like a waterfall and is so good I can just drink that instead of creeping across the scary house at night.

"Found you!" Next thing I know, Mammy is looking down at me with her warm and loving smile standing out against her Native American skin. Her black hair is always kept short and

reminds me of parentheses enclosing her small face.

No! She found me again. I'm not very good at this game, but Mammy will still let me play anyway to improve my skills. Pa rests in his chair, waiting for us, keeping an eye on the game on T.V. and running his hand through his short gray hair. He doesn't seem to play with us all that much anymore; he is always so tired.

Resting beside him is a white Wal-Mart bag, and he has his nut cracker in his hand. I run as fast as I can at the sight of the familiar bag, eager to do our nightly routine. He already has a bowl ready with pre-cracked pecans I can retrieve without his help.

Like a well-oiled machine, we begin cracking and de-shelling the pecans I collected with Mammy earlier that day. Pa cracks a nut, then passes it to me with a wrinkled old hand. I look up at him with his bottle cap glasses, and I pick out the gut.

I already have 15 nuts when Mammy comes over with our T.V. trays holding the night's milk and cookies; Pa's cookies have pecans in them, while mine do not. After handing over the tray, Mammy goes around the bar. I am not allowed back there because there are millions of multicolored glasses and drinks, but it is weird to see her walk back there and return with a wine glass full of grape juice, or so she says it's grape juice.

Fifty nuts later, I am half asleep in Pa's arms with my limbs at awkward angles. With a laugh that turns into a cough, Pa lifts me up and walks me upstairs to the sea-

Dear Grayson College Students:			
Honors sections are open to all GC students wanting to learn and receive recognition for their excellence. These courses are capped at 25 students so that the classroom experience may be active and allow more participation than traditional lecture or limited discussion formats. Honors education gives students an opportunity to enjoy the full college experience with classmates who have a similar attitude toward success.			
Look for the HRS suffix for core and elective courses listed below that will appear on your transcripts as honors classes so that future employers and four-year schools where you want to transfer will know that you are the kind of person who wants the job, wants the best scholarship, and has the documentation to prove it. You may enroll yourself in these sections using Campus Connect.			
The faculty members teaching these classes look forward to seeing students succeed and encourage students to fulfill their potential. If you haven't tried honors education at Grayson College, this spring semester is the time to check out one or more of the courses listed below.			
Enjoy college!			
Honors Sections for Spring 2014			
ENGL 1302.HRS	Composition 2 Honors	MWF 8-8:50	Dr. Trevino
HIST 1302.HRS	US History 2 Honors	MWF 10-10:50	Dr. Kumler
GOVT 2306.HRS	Texas Government Honors	MWF 11-11:50	Prof. Linder
PSYC2301.HRS	General Psych. Honors	MW 11-12:15	Prof. Thompson
GEOL 1403.HRS	Physical Geology Honors	R 1-3:15	Prof. Lynn
ENGL 2323.HRS	British Lit. 2 Honors	TR 9:30-10:45	Dr. McBee
HIST 2322.HRS	World Civ. 2 Honors	MW 11-12:15	Dr. Machen
COSC 1301.HRS	Intro. to Computers Honors	TR 8-9:15	Dr. Graves
PHIL 2306.HRS	Intro. to Ethics Honors	MW 1-2:15	Dr. Sorensen
Students taking 12 credit hours in honors courses with a B or better, an overall GPA of 3.2 or better, and having no violations of GC's academic integrity policy may apply for honors graduation when they graduate from Grayson College. Their transcripts will indicate <i>Honors College Graduate</i> . In addition to good grades, those students participate in activities benefiting others by volunteering or being active in GC extracurricular events. In summary, these dedicated students may transfer into the honors programs at four-year schools and receive even more benefits as they complete their bachelor's degrees.			

horse room for bed.

The seahorse room is always cool, just how Mammy and I hate it, with the blinds always shut and the light purple and blue splatter wall to remind me of the ocean. Off in the corner a wooden purple seahorse nightstand rests with an antique on its circular top. Mammy already has the trundle bed made up; all it is missing is me.

Within a minute Pa has me wrapped up under the covers and kisses my forehead, his giant nose kissing me as well, before he tip-toes out with Mammy. Later that night, a storm hits the Oklahoma area, one with giant clashes of thunder and streaking lightning. I am running down the catwalk and into Pa's arms moments after the storm jolts me awake. Mammy goes downstairs and returns with a cookie and milk, the bits of lightning highlighting her face flash after flash.

That was when I was five. A year later I return to Mammy's when I am six, but the house isn't quite the same. The bright walls are now gray, the house sags with grief and the clicks of shoes on the tile floors sound out of place in the still winter silence. Mammy spends her time in her room, and I wander around the cold house. Tuning the corner to the kitchen, I see Pa in my mind's eye, holding me up, jerking his head around so I

can't steal his sunglasses and hat.

In the dining room Pa is sitting down, offering me hot chocolate while I am bundled up in two comforters by the Christmas tree. Shaking my head, I eventually make my way back upstairs to Mammy's room wanting to be with her now that she is alone.

The door is locked. In the past, the door was never locked. Tears slowly welling up, I drag my feet back toward the seahorse room, my head dropping with a new weight of sorrow and realization. That was the last time I curled up on the trundle bed; that was the last time I walked the house's familiar paths; that was the last time I would ever be in the house now that its essence was gone.

I can tell anyone every single detail about that house to this day; it was my grandparents' dream house. Mammy kept some of the furniture from the house on Bison and moved it into her new home here in Texas. When I walk around the small house, I cannot help but run my fingers along the lines of the furniture, willing the memories to return. A glimpse of the past will spring to life from time to time, but the flashbacks have become less frequent. Even though the house is now gone, its memory is still held in small pieces for Mammy and me to enjoy together.