Message from Dr. Doyle

Exactly what is the Honors Community at SMU? With the many programs across campus—President’s, Hunt’s, Hilltop Scholars, Lyle, Dedman, and Meadows Scholars Programs and myriad others—we are certainly a motley crew. Some of the community is found in Virginia-Snider, officially termed the “Honors Community,” and now with the arrival of the Scholars’ Den beneath Clements Hall this community extends beyond a residence hall. Going forward, let us use the model of the Scholars’ Den in how we conceptualize the Honors community on our campus—a heterogeneous crowd drawn to a life of the mind.

In its many events on and off campus the University Honors Program hopes to be as inclusive as the Scholars’ Den. The goal of our various Honors programs is to enrich the academic/intellectual dimension of the college experience. Toward that end, upcoming events include a dinner and book discussion of the Dallas-based novel, Strange Peaches, as well as a BUS TOUR across the city of Dallas on Sunday, October 16. On Wednesday, October 26 the UHP will unveil the Honors course offerings for the spring 2012 semester.

On October 27 and 28, the entire university community is invited to hear report-backs from the 2011 Richter fellows. Last summer UHP students traveled everywhere from Taos, New Mexico, to the Mexico/Arizona border, to Spain, Germany, France, England, and Switzerland to conduct their own independent research projects. Come and support your fellow Honors students and begin to consider what type of Richter project you would like to do. These presentations will be held on Thursday, Oct. 27 in the HT Ballroom (for those who traveled to Taos) and Friday, Oct. 28 in the HT Forum—both at 3:30 p.m.

As we seek to strengthen the Honors community, let’s not stop with these special events, Richter Research and Travel Fellowships, and special Honors travel courses—but move further and work on community each day. To be sure, Hilltopics is one way. This work written exclusively by your fellow students is here to enrich your college experience, broaden your intellectual horizons and aspirations, and to elevate the everyday. My hope is that the Honors Community will come together spontaneously and often—if in V-S Hall, the Scholars’ Den, or on the quad. The UHP vision then, is of groups of students in the Scholars’ Den talking about their Honors classes, world politics, upcoming events and projects, and pondering how all of our efforts could together change the world.

Hello Peruna IX, Farewell Peruna VIII

The Trinity Hall Irish Pub, located in Mockingbird Station, set the stage on October 10 for Peruna XIII’s retirement party. The outdoor hall felt similar to a pep rally exploding with spirit for SMU and Peruna. Alumni from various years packed the balcony in red and blue to support their Alma Mater and mascot. This retirement party/fundraiser was hosted by the Diamond M Club with help from SMU Giving. The Diamond M Club’s goal is to raise money to support the Mustang Band through scholarships and other venues. Louis Carpenter, who matriculated at Southern Methodist University in 1978 and was involved with the band during his undergraduate career, is now the Vice President of the Diamond M Club. He saw that this was a great way to fundraise with the UCF game and Peruna XIII’s retirement approaching to supplement the Peruna Fund & the Mustang Band Scholarship Funds. (The Peruna Fund is a recent creation that financially supports our beautiful mascots.)

We squished this picture of the Peruna VII retirement into the front page because those Peruna glasses are awesome. Pictured: Judith Banes (left) and Arlene Manthey.

Continued on page 2...
Hobbies may be closer than they appear

When I came to SMU last year as an awestruck first-year, I imagined that the next four years of my life would be spent continuing to do things I had done in high school. Back in Arizona, I was in a political club and active in my local church, so being in College Republicans and a campus ministry was a foregone conclusion. In essence, I would continue being the same person I had been for the last four years; nothing new and beyond my sphere of interest was on my radar.

Until that one Saturday at the Dedman Center.

I was walking out of Dedman when one of my friends, Megan, came walking up the stairs to attend a ballroom dance class, which she and others had been begging me to try with them. She asked me again if I wanted to come, and I refused but was nevertheless dragged against my will to one of the second floor studios. As I sat there, waiting with nearly 50 other people for the class to begin, I recounted to her all the reasons I had given for not wanting to come.

"I'm clumsy, I can't dance, I'd be too self-conscious to dance in front of others," etc.

Fortunately, she still didn't let me leave, and once the class started, I knew I would be stuck there for two miserable hours—except they weren't miserable. Despite knowing that I would butcher every move the dancers in the demo were executing, I wanted to learn how to do them. In fact, I left more interested in the Ballroom Club than my friend did, and was intent on joining the team that was open to those who could dedicate more time and effort to learning how to dance.

That was over a year ago. Today, I can dance—although not always gracefully—the tango, cha cha, paso doble, tango, and waltz, and it is all because of Megan, who pushed me to do something in which I was not even remotely interested. Although I am far from being the most skilled member of the team, the most suave, or the most coordinated, ballroom is actually my favorite activity on campus because it pushed (and is still pushing) me to move out of my comfort zone. More than any of my activities, it has allowed me to grow as a person and experience new things, which is why deciding not to reject Megan and hightail it out of Dedman was one of my best decisions in college to this point.

Every student, in my opinion, whether a first-year or a senior, should attempt to find an activity, club, or organization that might not sound all too appealing at first and pursue it. Yes, you might not like it initially, but after a couple weeks, you might find you genuinely enjoy it. If not, quit and find a new one. The important thing is to try something different from what you already know so you can develop new interests and become a more diverse, cultured person.

The amazing thing about college is that it presents us with opportunities to try new things and expand our horizons more than most other times in life, and unfortunately, most don't take advantage of it. I almost didn't, and it would be such a shame if I had left Dedman for my dorm that Saturday. I can't imagine college without ballroom, which is where I met many of my friends, made many great memories, and was able to move past some of my fears and self-confidence issues. Although the semester is half way over, there is still time to drop by an organization and sit in on a meeting. Don't be like me and be afraid to try something new. Who knows? You might find something you love.

Shane Hand
Entertainment Ed.

Peruna VIII, continued from p. 1:

Peruna XIII has been one of our longer serving mascots, at 14 years. But he is definitely not the longest to have served. A complete history of all our previous Perunas can be found in the Peruna coloring book on sale at the Dedman Recreational Center's main desk for a mere $5. Take it from somebody who owns one: it's awesomeness. You don't have to like coloring, but to have this piece of history on your shelves is a great way to learn about your mascot and donating to the Peruna fund all at once. Or you could help out by buying stellar Peruna shades! But remember, Peruna XIII may not be galloping across the field anymore, but he'll be out on the Boulevard for the rest of the season as Peruna IX takes the reins on the running.

If you are interested in donating to the Peruna Fund, visit smu.edu/giving and type in “Peruna” into “Other.” If you would like to donate to a new Band hall, visit smu.edu/giving and type in “Mustang Band Hall.” And always remember to Pony Up!

Zobra Samji
Staff Writer
Hilltopics staffer greets us from Belgium

It would be hard to look forward from a year ago and try to connect the dots to how I ended up in Brussels. Looking back the path seems quite understandable, but it is hard to look forward and know where your life will lead. You can believe in some force guiding you and helping you, choice, or simple chance. Somehow, my path of dots led to Brussels.

I imagined Belgium would be quite Germanic and rule-based, so you can understand how surprised I was to realize that showing up on time in Belgium is a miracle. Well, public transport always provides a great excuse for tardiness.

There is much more to this tiny country than waffles. It is essentially two countries one in, with an intense culture and identity on both sides. There are Wallonia and Flanders, both with one language they adore and detest for the other. Somehow this country unified and the separate nationalisms were left brewing over the years. Now there is a serious desire to split the country in two. Whether this will happen is questionable, but the feelings are there.

Normally, in such cases, you could say a government and certain culture hold the country together, but Belgium, unique as it is, has no government. Most people attempt to break Guinness World Records for things such as “longest human chain,” or “most basketballs juggled at once.” Belgium appears in the record book for “longest time without a government.” It impresses me how the country still works and the general consensus is accepting towards the lack of a government. I have realized that I truly can feel the love in Belgium. On a solitary metro, a small park café, or on a gentle stroll the world, it not unusual to see a couple kissing sweetly in the distance. While this is unusual in the U.S., and even in some cases illegal, here it is seen as sweet and almost encouraged.

Whether you realize you are different because you are American is irrelevant, because this is affirmed in the reactions of others. Simply saying “Bonjour je vousdrais…” in your heavily accented French leaves no doubt you are different. In some cases, Belgians will react with excitement at the fact that an American, and in my case a Texan, is even attempting their language. But, in other cases, they give you a hard time and reaffirm their disdain for the U.S. To those I just give tried to use it to my advantage.

In the past, when I would mention studying abroad in Brussels or even hint at Belgium, I always heard, “You HAVE to visit Bruges.” So I did. I was able to visit Bruges on my first trip here. It is probably one of the most beautiful cities in the world and definitely one of my favorites. It is such a quaint, picturesque Belgian city. I would look at an old woman walking her dog on the shores of the stream and ask myself whether she sees her life as unusual at all. Living in a bustling urban city, it seems so relaxing to live like the people I observed in Bruges. They were sitting in a side café have a coffee or a pint and just

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Our Mission:
To publish a distinguished newspaper that elevates the everyday, promotes societal engagement, and builds a strong Honors community. We are student-read, student-led.
Leadership and community engagement are built into the fabric of the SMU community. Promoting these qualities helps to develop students into socially responsible leaders that are equipped for and committed to positive change.

At the Community Engagement and Leadership Center (CEL), our mission is to provide intentional learning opportunities and facilitate mutually beneficial relationships that support the development of students who have a lifelong commitment to ethical leadership and engaged citizenship.

This semester the CEL helped students connect to non-profit agencies through our “Service Wednesday” programs. For three weeks, we brought in 10 to 14 agencies per week in order to provide students with an array of volunteer opportunities. We are also using MustangTrack to post upcoming service opportunities; students can create an online account that will help direct them to their interests, and aid in facilitating relationships with organizations.

Joining one of our 15 Alternative Break trips is another way for students to engage in service. To help ensure that all students have the opportunity to attend a trip we offer breaks in the fall, winter, and spring to areas around the U.S. and abroad. Alternative Breaks is a great way to “experience a new community, provide direct service to some of the neediest populations, and develop personal leadership.” These trips are designed to promote a lifelong passion for service, and connect students to people they may have not had the chance to meet otherwise.

For those looking for a unique, service-based residential experience, the SMU Service House provides just that. The House serves as the home of up to 28 students who are committed to helping others in and around SMU. In addition to being a great way to serve the community, the Service House provides a close-knit base of friends that share in the experience.

Leaders are further developed through our Leadership Certificate Program, a program that provides “tangible skills that can be used for leadership in academic, professional and civic capacities.” Leadership Education, Activities & Development (LEAD), another one of our student organizations, focuses on “developing future leaders for campus and the global society.” Throughout the years, LEAD has been able to “create networking opportunities, hands-on workshops and many other great programs.”

Through our programs we strive to create a more inclusive and service oriented campus culture, helping students develop the skills they need to lead the way for progressive change.

Heroes partner with Dallas orgs

Mustang Heroes is a community service organization dedicated to providing students with sustainable, engaging, and impactful service opportunities in Dallas. It was founded at SMU in the summer by some of the passionate students of the class of 2014. Their vision was to see service carried out at SMU in more meaningful and intentional ways. Furthermore, this group has made it possible for its members to develop sustainable service projects, forever increasing their engagement with the people they serve.

We currently have three strong service partnerships, two of which are educational programs. Mustang Heroes’ Head Start, with the nonprofit Head Start of Greater Dallas, entails weekly visits to the Science Place Monday, Thursday, and Friday from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. HSGD is dedicated to serving low-income youth and their families. Participants are given the opportunity to spend playtime with and develop educational lessons for the three- to five-year-old kids in the program. KIPP Truth Academy is Mustang Heroes’ tutoring and mentoring partnership with a charter school serving low-income middle school youth. Members are given the unique opportunity to be a part of a Mustang Heroes-initiated tutoring program for middle school and graduated high school students. The third partnership is with a family homeless shelter, Family Gateway. Through this partnership, participants have the opportunity to spend time with homeless children across a wide age range, as well as their families. Participants also “adopt” a family by providing living space resources.

If you need more information on how to get involved in Mustang Heroes through its partnerships or use this organization as a resource for volunteer opportunities, please contact Daniel Poku at Danielpoku1@gmail.com or Carissa Grisham at Cgrisham@smu.edu. You can also join the Mustang Heroes facebook group: “Mustang Heroes (SMU GROUP)”

Daniel Poku
Contributor

The “Engagement” page is a place for students to inspire other students to reach out to SMU and the surrounding community through relevant, ambitious community organizing, activism, and service projects.

Please write the staff at SMUHilltopics@gmail.com if you would like your project to be featured in the paper, or if you would like us to publish more information on a particular topic/area of engagement.

Matthew Gayer
Contributor
**WORKING Definitions**

This week’s word: **beast**

**Formal synonym:** renaissance man, Rude Boy

**Formal use:** "he was quite the smashing beast"

**Informal use:** "you boasted that test," "man, Keanu Reeves is such a beast!"

**Definitions:**
1. (1) appropriate comment at a tremendous achievement
2. character in Rachel’s favorite Disney movie

**Synonyms:** 666 (see: Revelations), Nicholas Cage
**Antonyms:** lamesauce, amoeba, Beauty, Chip, Mrs. Potts, Emma Watson
**Formal antonyms:** square, failure

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**Dear Peruna**

Introducing Dear Peruna, the official Hilltopics advice column. Please write in to: SM UHilltopics@gmail.com with your questions, and a kind and loving horse will answer them.

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**Draw Eruna-Pay**

Submit your drawings of Eruna-Pay, the misfit of the SMU horse family, by November 1 to get your artistic interpretation and your name in Hilltopics! (Drop in Scholars’ Den)
**Plot 'n' Potatoes**

**How it Works:**

- The Golden Fry: Good
- Twice-Baked: Average
- Spud: Below Average
- Mashed: Below Below Average
- Rotten: Bad

**Example:**

Contagion

Contagion, released on Sept. 9 and directed by Steven Soderbergh, presents a horrifying infectious disease scenario with technical grace but only moderate narrative depth. The film's best scenes occur when the limited availability of antidotes sparks class conflict, which hits close to home for CDC personnel. Receives a TWICE-BAKED potato.

**More Nuanced Example:**

What's Your Number?

Although a formulaic romantic comedy, What's Your Number?, which stars Anna Faris and Chris Evans, is an enjoyable film that offers a number of laughs. Ally Darling (Faris) is a recently-fired Bostonian who discovers that her number of past lovers is nearly twice the national average and that her prospects of finding “The One” are dwindling the higher her number gets.

After meeting one of her awkward exes, who turned out quite well, she decides to hunt down all of her exes with the help of her neighbor, played by Evans, in attempt to see what went wrong and which one might have been the one for her. It’s obvious from the start who she ends up with (need I say it?), but I still enjoyed it because of the comedic strengths of both actors and recommend it to those who are heading to the theaters. But be quick! Low box office numbers might kick it out of theaters early.
I’m walking around campus wearing a pair of holographic diffraction glasses that were handed out at a recent physics conference. Where you see lights and oak trees, I’m seeing hundreds of rainbows as light splits through the prism that is my yellow paper glasses. Before coming to SMU, I received an email from the physics department wishing me success as I learn about the “privilege of being a physicist.” I am now discovering that rainbow vision is one of those many privileges.

On my first day of physics class, I introduced myself to Professor Jodi Cooley-Sekula. I told her I wanted to be a physics major, so she invited me to the society of physics meeting that night. At the meeting, I opened my big fat mouth and mentioned that I was interested in undergraduate research. Upon my next meeting with my professor, we filled out a Hamilton Scholars application which was due the following day. After my first weekend at SMU, my application was accepted. SMU, among other universities, is searching for dark matter by using detectors stored deep underground in the Soudan mines in Minnesota. My professor recruited me to investigate the history of various detectors to calculate how much radon they have been exposed to. I couldn’t believe it. I’ve been a student at SMU for three days and I was involved with dark matter research? As a first-year, I would never have anticipated the abundance of opportunities for students at SMU. Chances are this would never have happened if I attended any other college. Moral of the story: SMU rocks. Let’s talk to your professors about your interests as soon as possible. You never know where you will end up.

In the past weekend, the SMU physics department invited students to attend the Joint Fall 2011 Meeting of the Texas Sections of the American Physical Society, American Association of Physics Teachers, and the Society of Physics Students held at Texas A&M in Commerce, Texas. Most of the conference attendees had at least a bachelor’s or master’s degree in physics. As a first-year, I have just begun to comprehend the fundamentals of introductory physics – Newton’s Laws, projectile motion, and work. Here I was bombarded with the latest research updates on astrophysics, high energy physics, and biophysics. Apparently, spandex can be used to simulate an alternate universe with the reciprocal two-dimensional geometry of our own universe. The expansion of the universe is accelerating, which is counterintuitive, since one would think expansion would slow down as masses separate after the Big Bang. (The speaker said that this is like a ball that accelerates as you toss it up instead of slowing down due to gravity and falling back down). One project uses treated nanospheres of gold that adhere to cancer cells better than healthy tissue and may someday prevent the metastasis of cancer. During poster presentations, a flying robotic shark swam around in the air, coming up to random people’s faces.

I learned much at the conference, but I also learned that I have a lot more to learn – and that realization is the greatest privilege of being a physicist. Science is an ever evolving field. No matter how much I learn, I will always have to catch up to emerging mysteries - not to mention, I need to catch up to those master’s degrees at the conference! If I had the chance, I would ask the poster presenters for an “for dummies” version of their presentation that a first year could understand. But by being involved early, I hope to force myself to learn at a faster rate than otherwise possible. I am grateful to SMU for giving me the opportunity to be involved with physics early and attend the conference over Fall Break. I am more grateful to SMU for giving me a lot more I have yet to learn.

Mayisha Nakib

Mustang or Say

Mayisha Nakib on studying physics at SMU

"Read this," assert Hilltopics staffers

When I say everything, I mean everything... school appropriate, that is. Here is where I’ll get blank stares and a face asking for an explanation when I ask for contributions to the Opinions section of Hilltopics. “Okay, that sounds like fun,” I’ll get. Then comes the big question: “Now tell me. What should I write about?”

The problem is that there is no problem. As long as you aim for ‘school-appropriate’ you’ve got a good shot at publication. There’s no hidden trap or a teacher lurking behind me just waiting to mark your article over in red and send it back to you with a letter grade on it. Regarding format, the biggest suggestion that I have for you is keep it to around five hundred words max. Other than that, we’re cool with whatever you have to say.

So how can you give Hilltopics your opinions? Write an article on whatever you want to tell us. Do you have a suggestion on how to make the UHP a better community? Have an idea that you want to share with everyone? Want to tell us about some phenomenal meal you had on campus or in the greater Dallas community? Did you attend some event on campus and want to tell us about it?

Yes, this is where the Opinions section will overlap a little with other sections, and if needed we’ll help you submit it to the appropriate section. In fact, we want you to submit articles to other sections. We want you to submit your literary work and art and event coverage. We the editors are here to tell you what is going on in the Honors Community. You are the ones that feed Hilltopics. This is the Honors Community paper after all.

(To give you a point of reference for how long articles are, the word count of this article, not including this sentence or the title, is 322 words.)

Crystal Chen

Opinions Editor
UHP Travel Courses This Year! Full or partial scholarships available for each experience

1) SPRING: Prof. Kathleen Wellman, History, will teach an Honors CF on the Italian city during the Renaissance that will travel to Venice and Florence, Italy for 10 days over Spring Break. Full and partial scholarships available.

2) J TERM: Prof. Philip Van Kuilenburg, Art, will teach an Honors Arts Perspective, “the Art Colloquium/New York,” that will take students to the art scene of New York City—museums and art galleries will be studied in person. Scholarships available.

3) MAY TERM: Profs. Bonnie Wheeler, English, and Jeremy Adams, History, will teach an Honors CF on Joan of Arc that will spend 3 full weeks in France visiting the sites associated with her life. Full and partial scholarships available (scholarship will not include SMU tuition for the May term).

4) SUMMER: Profs. Dennis Cordell and Kathleen Wellman, History, will offer Honors credit for students who enroll in the SMU-in-Paris summer program. Some scholarships available to UHP students.

5) JUNE: June is the Honors semester at SMU-in-Taos. Most courses taken in June can be taken for Honors credit—including a Richter CF that allows a student to undertake an independent project on any topic related to Taos or New Mexico. As the student pursues this independent work he or she will meet with Professor John Mears each week to chart progress. Scholarships available to UHP students.

Participate in the Greater Dallas Experience!

Strange Peaches...

"Strange Peaches is not only one of the best-written American novels since World War II, it entertains." -United Press International

"When anybody asks me what Dallas was like during the Kennedy assassination, I always refer them to one book: Edwin 'Bud' Shraire's Strange Peaches." -Don Graham, Texas Monthly

Email Dr. Doyle at ddoyle@smu.edu for a copy! The discussion will be held at 7pm on Tuesday, October 25 in the Scholars' Den.

This has been Hilltopics: "If The Onion smelled like knowledge."