

**This issue is dedicated to the memory of Dr. George M. Luckey, Jr. (1935-2020)**

# THE UNORTHODOX

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

I think everyone gets a bit nostalgic around this time of year. There is some enchanting element in the way autumn drapes her hearty filter over the landscape, especially here on campus (although the flowers outside of Fields may not totally agree). Coffee becomes a bit warmer, the leaves a bit crisper, and pumpkins are finding themselves in high demand once again. You'll be reaching for your sweater soon enough. Even in the midst of a pandemic, you have to admit that it just feels *nice*.

Or, well, I suppose you don't *have* to admit anything. If the semester isn't going how you planned, then you are likely not alone. Although I do have to say, it's probably lasting longer than anyone expected – I myself didn't hold out hopes for more than two weeks of any in-person classes. Yet here we all are, suffering together. There is a poetic beauty in that, if you want there to be.

Students find themselves in familiar arcs. Our seniors are either scrambling about with their applications and interviews or waiting to hear back from the same, or perhaps they are settling in just fine right now, pondering on what might be next for them. Our

freshmen, on the other end, are just now getting familiar with life on campus and chiseling out some prospective identity or academic pursuit, and the rest of are somewhere in the middle. We see it every year, just with new faces, which should be comforting to us all: at least you know that almost no matter the situation you find yourself faced with, someone else has likely encountered a similar one and can probably lend you a bit of conventional wisdom on the matter. Cheers.

And, if you're just *bored* like me, now is the perfect time to sink into it. Embrace boredom. See where it takes your mind to; whether you choose to be industrious or contemplative or creative or enterprising, you'll end up somewhere. Oddly enough, college is probably the right place for it.

Don't page through too quickly while you're reading – we've got some special features in this one. Stay sharp and please do enjoy this edition of the newsletter; we put it together with you in mind.

The Editor



# ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

## Mentor Program Launch for Class of 2024

The AHSA Programming Committee kicked off the first week of the semester with Mentor-Mentee Welcome Week: Zoom Edition. Programming Chairwoman Bethany Allen waded into uncharted waters as she came up with ways for freshmen and upper classmen to meet and develop lasting friendships via Zoom. Both Bethany and AHSA President Gabe O'Hara rose to the many challenges that came with the Honors Program's first time conducting large meetings via Zoom. While there were some hiccups along the way, freshman and mentors were able to conduct a virtual meet and greet and two rounds of "speed dating" via Zoom breakout rooms. Although the Mentor-Mentee events looked different than years past, the Zoom meetings led to great Mentor-Mentee pairings. They also set an example for how the Honors Program can adapt to the current situation and still remain a connected community.



"Reading is the key that opens doors to many good things in life. Reading shaped my dreams, and more reading helped me make my dreams come true."

-Ruth Bader Ginsburg

## BIRTHDAYS

### September

Austin Lytle / 9-17

Sarah Boden / 9-17

Kaitlyn Buttrey / 9-19

Kelsey Ball / 9-20

### October

Cali Clark / 10-2

Gabe Foit / 10-10

Madison Whitenack 10-11

Olyvia Neal / 10-13

Logan Pennington / 10-27

Brett Blair / 10-28

Austin Spradlin / 10-31

Abrial Read / 10-31

*Make sure to wish your peers a happy birthday this month!*

# QUARANTINE: THE MUSICAL

We asked students of the Honors Program to put a tune to their respective summers-in-quarantine: “What song would you use to describe your summer quarantine experience and why?”

Want to experience Quarantine: The Musical? Check out what songs resonated with your peers this summer on our **Spotify playlist**—you might even expand your listening horizons along the way!



Erika Howard, Junior Pre-Veterinary Science and Biology Major

Song: “She Works Hard for the Money” by Donna Summer

“The day we got sent home for the semester, I started working every day at the vet clinic. I would take breaks to attend my online classes and did my schoolwork when I got home. I chose this song because I worked Monday-Saturday while having online classes, so I stayed busy. But I racked up on the experience hours, and ‘worked hard for the money.’”



Jacob Tackett, Junior English and Philosophy Major

Song: "Spaces We Breathe" by Woo

“Because, like this song, it was full of quotidian, psychedelic, spiritual, ordinary-every-day-ready-at-hand-being-in-the-world adventures. Its mood and tone evoke melancholy, but like that good melancholy. It's not sad more like just existing. It reminds me, kinda like quarantine did, that our only duty is to exist.”



Cody Evans, Senior Biomedical Science Major

Song: “High Steppin” by The Avett Brothers

“During the daunting long hours of studying for the MCAT I found myself in sheer isolation. When the times got tough, this song inspired me to get tougher. I utilized the upbeat sound of this song to brighten my mood and help me see that the grass was greener on the other side. I'd hate to know the hours this song blared from my speakers, but it continuously helped me establish hope during this very irregular summer.”



Olyvia Neal, Sophomore English and Convergent Media Major

Song: “Stay Alive” by the Original Broadway Cast of Hamilton

“I honestly just tried to survive and ‘stay alive’ mentally, socially, and physically... with the help of Hamilton.”



Belinda Candra, Sophomore Biology Major

Song: “One Summer's Day” Joe Hisaishi

“This is a soundtrack for a movie that I've watched several times since I was a kid. It is a very nostalgic song, and my summer in quarantine has been one where, despite being away from my hometown, I reconnect with some things from my childhood.”



Reese Helton, Junior Biomedical Sciences Major

Song: “Passenger Side” by Smallpools

“I listened to it every single day over the summer. It's a bop and got me through every single day.”



Taylor King, Sophomore Spanish and Traditional Music Major

Song: "I'm Gonna Be the Wind" by Laurie Lewis

The song is about self-empowerment and overcoming obstacles to take control of your life. This summer I have learned a lot about myself and my life goals, and I have had the opportunity to grow as a person. I heard this song a few weeks before coming back to Morehead and as I listened, I realized that it basically summed up everything I had discovered and come to value and appreciate. It's not just a great pick-me-up song, and it has since become one of my favorites!"



Abby Staab, Senior Political Science Major

Song: "Sunflower" by Rex Orange County

"Alexander O'Conner, the singer and songwriter of the song 'Sunflower', candidly expresses a changing point in his life through an enchanting and uplifting melody. I listened to this song very frequently over the course of my summer in quarantine. While this particular summer has had its ups and downs, I was able to spend a lot of quality time with my friends and made it a memorable experience overall. This song perfectly expresses how beautiful life can be, without sugar-coating the trials and tribulations that may come with it. 'Sunflower' comes highly recommended, and I plan on allowing it to bless my ears well into a time where COVID is nothing but a distant memory."



Braydon Dungan, Junior English Education Major

Song: "Summertime Sadness" by Lana Del Rey

"It was honestly just a summer full of sadness. I was supposed to do my overseas experience in Europe and go to 7 different countries but was unable to because of the virus. I also had to stay inside the first month or two of quarantine, and I never thought I'd say it, but I was getting sick on Netflix and baths at 5 in the morning. I watched a lot of RuPaul's Drag Race though, so at least there were some positives...Overall, 6/10 and would not repeat this summertime sadness."



Logan Pennington

Song: "In My Room" by Frank Ocean  
"I listen to health experts and scientists."



Rachel Turner, Junior Psychology Major

Song: "Can't Get Happy" by Only Real  
"Been super bummed."



Alynn Findley, Sophomore Social Work Major

Song: "Stressed Out" by Twenty One Pilots

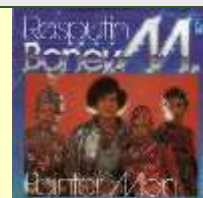
This was my song mainly due to the fact that I missed the "good old days" when I could hang out with friends in public. I had to wear a mask up



Calista Dean, Junior Chemistry Major

Song: "Ain't It Strange?" Dr. Dog

"This was the first time that summer didn't feel like—well, summer. I went 3 months without stepping foot in a store, got some ducks and chickens, and spent an unhealthy amount of time Face Timing. This song perfectly encapsulates my summer because, ain't it strange?"



Annie Monfalcone

Song: "Rasputin" by Boney M

"Because it's fun, but unexpected, and a little tragic."



## STUDENT OF THE MONTH

### Matt Tackett

Matt is a sophomore Biomedical Science major from Stanville, Ky. Amongst the many questions queried within our interview, I asked Matt simply, “How are you?” A question I think becomes more significant each day we further into this unprecedented semester. Yet, Matt’s response was truly refreshing...

“I’m doing great! I have sacrificed my social life, but I’m doing very well in my classes. It’s also been really fun meeting all the new freshmen; I love them to death and they’re my new children. Yeah, I’m just doing really good, having a great time, and its good to be back.”

*So what inspired him to pursue Biomedical Science?*

He found his passion to become a doctor from his community in Eastern Kentucky. “I’ve always been one to want to help my community... I’m from a very low-income area and we don’t have the best health care, so I want to become a doctor and come back and help my community.”

*What are his plans for the future?*

Matt will most likely apply to medical school. Although he doesn’t necessarily know what to specialize in, he’s currently considering radiology.

*What is his favorite thing about MSU?*

For Matt, the size is just right! “I truly like the size because its small enough where you know a lot of people, but its also big enough where you have a lot more opportunities than a smaller college.”

*What is his favorite thing about the Honors Program?*

Matt felt his favorite thing would have to be “the sense of community we have.” The sense of family, how Honors students all get along and work together in their classes, and “how we all come together to make the program better and make each other better is just a great experience.”

*What extracurriculars is Matt involved in?*

Matt is involved in many organizations on campus. He is a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon, Phi Sigma Pi, and the Biology Club. Matt was also elected as the Sophomore Representative for the campus Student Government Association. Most recently, he has joined a new organization on campus called Students for Change. “Basically, we are wanting to come and fix the not-so-progressive policies the university has and make it a better environment for everyone, including people of color, the LGBTQ community, and just making sure everyone is safe on campus.”

*What are his favorite hobbies and interests?*

Matt truly enjoys “crafty stuff.” This includes sewing, embroidery, crocheting, knitting, and anything DIY related. However, currently his favorite thing to do is to cook, especially on campus. Talk of cooking also prompted the pertinent question, *what is your favorite snack?* With careful consideration, Matt responded assuredly with “Hot Cheetos.”

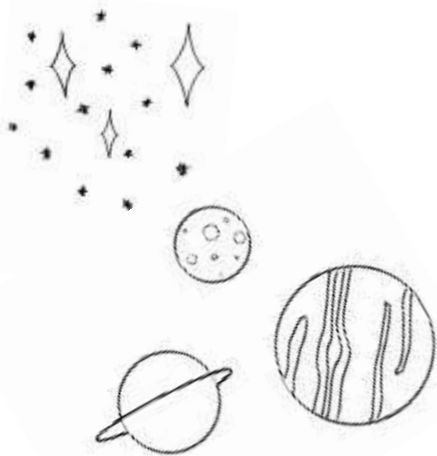
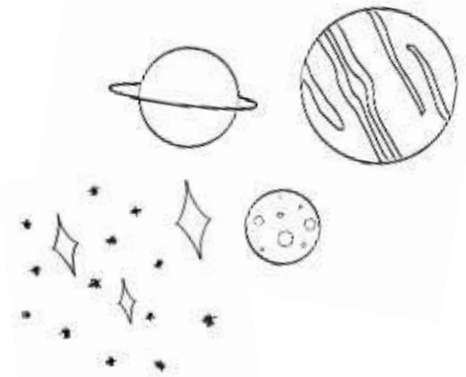
Olyvia Neal



# A THOUSAND WORDS



*Mercury by Abby Claire Hall from her Solar System collection*



*Mars by Abby Claire Hall from her Solar System Collection*

## An Invitation to the Artistic

If you're reading this and you've got a photo, a painting, a collage, or anything of the sort that you're proud of, then please do submit it. We'd *love* to dedicate this section to the appreciation of your work.

The Editor

## AHSA EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT

Bethany Allen



Bethany is a senior Agrobusiness major and current Chairwoman of the Programming Committee within the Academic Honors Students Association. After receiving her undergraduate degree, she plans to take a gap year to work and save money for graduate school. Once her gap year is over, she plans to go to graduate school, but she is still unsure whether she would like to go to law school or to graduate school in her major, agriculture economics. At the beginning of the year, she started her own business doing wedding flowers and wreaths. She started it in January, and it has taken off ever since, to her pleasant surprise.

Her favorite thing about Honors is the community. She loves how everyone is so welcoming and open to new people and new ideas. Even though she is not on campus all the time, she still feels welcomed whenever she is.

The pandemic has been a challenge for the programming committee, which is usually responsible for hosting in-person events. When she was running for the position, she thought that the pandemic would be over before the semester starts. Although a bit disheartened by the current situation, Bethany maintains a positive outlook. She believes that the challenges can help us all grow and find creative ways to continue. It could also be an opportunity to explore new ideas with virtual events.

As the Chairwoman of Programming, she is hoping that the pandemic would be better contained next semester, so there could be less restrictions as far as events are concerned. She would like to have at least one in person event before she graduates. However, if in-person events are still subject to strict restrictions next semester, she hopes that we can continue to learn more about, and adapt more to, virtual events to keep people included as a part of the Honors family.

Belinda Candra



## LOCAL LITERATURE

### That Summer of Quarantine

I race upstairs, careful not to make a sound, as I approach my master's study. Dust shimmers as the light exposes its musty atmosphere. The master used to frequent this room often. The sound of his pencil against crumpled papers illustrated with abstracts from the night before would lull me into my second nap each morning. I meet the others at the bay window. The sun soaks into its rested wood and fades forgotten coffee rings. They greet me with a nod; we begin. I look to Skittles as he stretches from head to tail, "What's the status today?"

"No change. The master continues to lumber around our territory, his fur unkept, shabby, and unbathed... it is unsightly."

I shuddered, subconsciously licking my gray paw and rubbing it against my temple at the notion of little hygiene, "It's been months. This is unacceptable. Has the... scent... improved?"

Monet scrunched her pink nose, "Unfortunately not."  
"Then it is time."

Our tails flicked in agreement and we bounded down the stairs.

I perched my front paws against the metal screen door and searched through the backyard, careful not to wake my master as he snores on the sofa, covered in what I hoped were only last night's Cheetos. But then I saw it.



The galvanized tub. He hoped it would become an herb garden one evening after creating a Pinterest account. Now abandoned, it sits and holds the rainwater from our months of dreary weather; a factor I might also relate to the master's excessive bond with Cheetos and estrangement with the outdoors.

"Gandalf, are you ready?" Monet asked as she and Skittles assumed position at the head of the sofa.

With one last glance to the tub, I nodded. It was time. Monet's hairs stood up as she began her role. With a hiss and a scream, she and Skittles began to cause havoc across the living quarters. Papers flew into the air, pizza boxes scooted across the floor, and our master finally awoke.

"Monet! Skittles!" he commanded in vain as they aggressively pushed past the weak screen door.

In zigzags they pretended to fight and flee from one another, slowly leading their beloved but now blundering master towards the tub. I followed slowly, calculating. Skittles and Monet began circling the tub. It was time. I placed myself right below his approaching foot, my fluffy tail elongated just before the metal surface. Like any good master, he stopped mid-step in fear of hurting his feline. His fatal flaw, as he fell into the water.

It was done. Three tails flicked in agreement at the success. Phase one was complete. Thus, began their mission throughout that summer of quarantine.

Olyvia Neal

### An Invitation to the Literate

While the primary purpose of this newsletter is to inform our readers of the many goings on in the program and on campus, that does not have to be its *only* purpose. So, this page is for those of you who are inclined to the legible arts. Fiction or non, preferably in English. If you've read or ever plan to read anything at all, here's something for you.

The Editor

## FRESHMAN FEATURE

This semester of social distance and rather virtual socializing has left little opportunity to mingle and meet our new fellow freshman, but fret not. Each month we plan to feature a few members of our class of '24! We know each of these budding individuals have their own interesting story, personality, and contribution towards our growing program and cannot wait to learn more about them. Perhaps this will even offer you a fitting ice breaker for when we get the opportunity to properly intersperse and introduce ourselves. After all, what item would *you* take with you on a deserted island? Let's find out what Hannah, Yusup, and Julia said...



**Name:** Hannah Phirman

**Major:** Mathematics

**Hometown:** Foster, Ky

**If you could only take one thing with you on a desert island what would it be and why?**

"I'd probably take a hammock. Sleeping under the stars is one of my absolute favorite things to do. Also, it could double as a bag to carry practical things like wood, food, etc when I find them."



**Name:** Yusup Seyido

**Major:** Biomedical Sciences

**Hometown:** Mary,  
Turkmenistan

**If you could only take one thing with you on a desert island what would it be and why?**

"A Hammer. My choice fell on a hammer because of its physical utility. It will enable me to break or chop some hard material that could be of great importance (e.g. trees that could be "modified" to make a makeshift tent). Likewise, it could serve as a first-hand weapon to protect against uninvited guests."



**Name:** Julia Fitzpatrick

**Major:** Biology

**Hometown:** Nicholasville, Ky

**If you could only take one thing with you on a desert island what would it be and why?**

"It would be an herbs and spice rack because I'm going to get tired of eating plain fish or bird or monkey (if I can catch that stuff in the first place). Even if I'm reduced to eating some bugs and leaves, my experience would be more enjoyable if I had some lemon pepper or ginger."

# UNFUNNY FUNNY BITS

Abby Claire Hall

Do you want to buy a  
broken barometer?



No pressure...



*And that's that.*

Thanks,  
The Team



## MEET THE TEAM



Olyvia Neal



Jeremy Copley



Victoria Nash



Belinda Candra



Calista Dean



Abby Claire Hall



