

THE BAGPIPE

Friday, November 14, 2014 - Vol. 61.9

14049 Scenic Highway, Lookout Mountain, GA 30750

www.bagpipeonline.com

TVA and Money

BY ZACH JONES

Recently, The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) gave CEO Bill Johnson a million dollar raise, upping his current compensation to \$6.9 million. TVA, created in 1933 as part of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, is a federal agency that provides electric power, navigation, and flood control by using the power of the Tennessee River. According to their website, The Tennessee Valley Authority is "a corporation owned by the U.S. government, [which] provides electricity for 9 million people in parts of seven states at prices below the national average."

TVA is the nation's largest power provider. As a Covenant College student, you are most likely affected in some way by TVA's operations. According to statistics on Covenant's website, around 15% of Covenant students are from Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, Alabama, or Mississippi—all states in which TVA is a main power supplier.

At the end of fiscal year 2013, TVA was almost \$25 billion dollars in debt. The Authority finances itself primarily through the sale of TVA bonds and energy. Five years ago its debt peaked at \$28

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How Tennessee Voted: Midterms



PHOTO CREDIT: ONLINE.WSJ.COM

BY JENNY WASHBURNE

On Nov. 4, US citizens had the chance to vote in the nation's midterm elections—but not many of them did. Voter turnout for 2014 was bleak, with only 36.4 percent of the voting-eligible population showing up at the polls. For comparison, no midterm election has had quite so little representation of the general voting populace since in 1942. Tennessee's turnout was even worse than the national average, as a mere 29 percent voted. Texas

was the only state with a lower percentage than Tennessee, and even that difference was by half of a percentage point.

Republicans came out on top nationwide, taking the majority in the U.S. Senate and House (52-46 with two undecided, and 244-182, respectively) and also in twenty-four states (versus the Democrats' six). Even well-known Democratic states such as Illinois, Maryland, and Massachusetts elected a Republican governor. On a statewide level, the party also turned out a massive majority in

many State Houses and Senates. "The Tennessean" reports that the Republican majority in the Tennessee Senate is the largest ratio for the state (28:5) since 1959, and quotes Tennessee's Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey on the night of the election. He said, "For the past few years, the Tennessee Senate has been the most Republican east of the Mississippi. After tonight, we join an elite group of Republican supermajorities where the majority outnumber Democrats more than 4 to 1."

Not only was this election

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Will This Float?

BY LINDSAY PAGE

On Tuesday, Nov. 18, The Company Lab will host Chattanooga's 5th annual Will This Float? competition on the fourth floor of the Chattanooga Public Library.

Will This Float? is an annual business pitch competition that highlights new, local ideas. The theme for 2014 is Outdoor Recreation & Sustainability, but all proposals are welcome. Covenant students are encouraged to attend; it will provide them with opportunities to network, see entrepreneurs in action, and explore creative ways to glorify the Creator.

Submissions are whittled down to ten finalists that meet five crucial assessment criterion, of which "float" is an acronym for; a list can be found online at www.colab.co. The pitch must be "novel" and have few direct competitors, be practical enough for customers to use, enter the market at a suitable time, solve realistic issues, and have identifiable target customers.

Finalists are required to present their ideas in no more than three minutes. Participants are rated through feedback from

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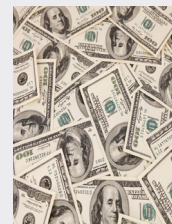
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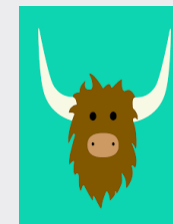
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Ice on the Landing

BY CARRIE WOODWARD

This Christmas season Chattanooga is once again proving itself adequately suited to provide holiday enchantment that is fun for the whole family—and college students from Lookout Mountain. From Nov. 28 until Jan. 4, Chattanooga will become home to “Ice on the Landing,” a temporary fifty-by-seventy foot open-air ice skating rink modeled after a New York ice skating experience at Rockefeller Center. The ice rink will be constructed on the Chattanooga Green of Ross’s Landing Park by Magic Ice, a company that has built ice rinks at locations such as Huntsville, Alabama, Charlotte, North Carolina, and Columbia, South Carolina. The location along the river will be the location of several special events and promotions through the season, including visits with Santa, and if the skating rink is a success, it will possibly be sustained through the winter.

The skate rink comes through a partnership between Volkswagen Chattanooga and

Chattanooga Presents LLC, a company responsible for producing events such as public concerts and festivals in Chattanooga. The opening day of ice skating comes in conjunction with Chattanooga Presents’ annual lighted boat parade, a holiday tradition featuring decorated boats floating down the river between the Walnut Street Bridge and Olgiati bridge followed by fireworks and the lighting of downtown buildings and monuments in celebration of the Christmas season.

As part of Chattanooga Presents’ mission of promoting Chattanooga as a “vibrant and livable city,” the ice rink seeks to draw families and Chattanooga residents out of doors and to the Chattanooga riverfront. Surrounding the ice rink will be food and drink vendors and various charitable groups will appear on rotation to gain support for their groups. “The concept of Ice on the Landing is inspired by successful outdoor ice rinks in Huntsville, Char-



PHOTO: NEWYORK.COM

lotte, Greenville, and Columbia, S.C., all of which have similar climates,” Carla Pritchard, the owner of Chattanooga Presents, told The Chattanooga. “An outdoor ice rink is an amenity we’ve long felt would have strong appeal for this community, and we are thrilled to now bring it to

Chattanooga’s riverfront.”

Tickets are \$10 per person including skate rentals and allow for up to two hours of skating, half of what it costs for an evening tour of Rock City’s Christmas Enchanted Garden of Lights and in a much more picturesque setting than Ham-

ilton Skate Place rollerblading. For southerners who rarely, if ever experience a white Christmas, Ice on the Landing provides a sense of traditional holiday cheer.

Chattanooga Elections

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unique in that Tennessee now holds a Republican supermajority, but it was also unique in that all four of the constitutional amendments on the ballot passed. Briefly, Amendment 4 allows legislators to vote for certain non-profit organizations, namely veterans, to host lotteries. Amendment 3 prohibits the creation of a traditional state income tax, as Tennessee currently only has Hall Income Tax, and prevents the traditional tax from

being added in the future. Amendment 2 changed the system for selecting judges: Legislature now has to confirm judges appointed by the governor, whereas previously the governor could make the appointment alone.

Amendment 1 sparked a fair amount of controversy in the weeks leading up to the election, and having passed with a margin of 53% to 47%, continues to be highly controversial. Amendment 1

is just two sentences dealing with the abortion policy in Tennessee that states that the Tennessee constitution does not give people the right of abortion or require funding for it, but that people do have the right, through election, to change abortion laws.

In 2000, the State Supreme Court of Tennessee removed its more strict regulations, such as waiting periods, regulated facilities, and informed consent laws.

This was nothing new, as Roe vs. Wade decided the same thing for the United States Constitution in 1973, but now it was being decided on the state level. Because of that change, Tennessee has had some of the most lax regulations on abortion in the south. Tennessee is ranked as being among the top twenty states for easily-obtained abortions by pro-choice activists, and roughly 25% of the abortions in Tennessee are from out-of-state patients.

Before Amendment 1, it would have been almost impossible to create regulations on abortion clinics. Now that the Tennessee Constitution allows for more restriction on the subject, lawmakers are much more likely to be able to impose heavier regulations on clinics. Voter turnout in Tennessee may have been marginal, but the amendments that passed, particularly Amendment 1, are likely to bring significant changes to the

Faculty Quote of the Week

"I don't care about your bodies, just bring your brains.

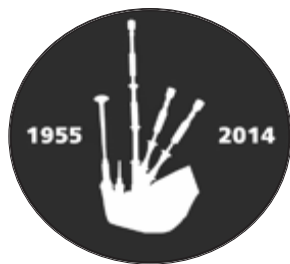
You could just be a brain on a stick in a chair." - Professor Morton

The Verdict

Yes, we see a light at the end of this semester.

No, we haven't slept in four days.

THE BAGPIPE



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This is a Covenant College student publication
The views expressed herein do not necessarily

Will This Float?

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judges and crowd sourced voting. Tianna Buckwalter, adjunct design professor at Covenant College and Creative Director at CO.LAB, says that winners tend to have lasting success. Past winners include RootsRated, an outdoor experience directory, and Granola, a company that designs outdoor gear. According to CO.LAB's executive director, Mike Bradshaw, "We've come into contact with a number of entrepreneurs who are pursuing businesses focused on outdoor recreation and sustainability. Our goal with this year's competition is to bring more of these entrepreneurs together to share ideas and pursue new business opportunities."

Other participants who did not win have experienced great success, like Bellhops or WeCounsel. "Do a search on any of these and you will see they are all active companies today. Many have gone through our accelerator program as well," said Buckwalter.

CO.LAB is seeking diverse business plans that represent advancements in outdoor recreation, technology, consumer products, social entrepreneurship, disadvantaged communities and neighborhoods, arts and creativity, design, and corporate spinoffs, to name a few. Since Covenant is a school focused on Christ's preeminence in all things, students should take

notice of Will This Float? The competition provides students with ways to tangibly establish connections and glorify Christ in Chattanooga.

Besides, "The competition is open to anyone with a startup idea, including students," says Buckwalter. "In fact, last year's winners were still in college. In addition to winning prizes and business services, it's a great opportunity to get visibility and support for a new idea. It's also a great chance to meet people in the startup community and make connections for internships and future work."

The Company Lab, or CO.LAB, originally began as a project of CreateHere, an organi-

zation that encourages creative, economic growth in Chattanooga. In September of 2010, CO.LAB was launched to take CreateHere's programs and pair them with mentorship-driven company accelerators. CO.LAB regularly hosts and sponsors events such as Co.Startups, Accelerator, and GigTank, but they warmly invite fresh ideas on any day. CO.LAB's fact sheet reads, "Operating under the belief that entrepreneurial thinking is the foundation of our society's future, CO.LAB has devised an organized system to foster the startup spirit, which can be used as a model for entrepreneurial communities across the nation."

TVA Economics

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billion, and since then it has been declining. CEO Bill Johnson, hired in November 2012, has helped the corporation bring that debt down and bring revenues up.

Under Bill Johnson's leadership, TVA recently made the final \$10 million payment to the U.S. Federal Government on Congress' original \$1 billion investment in 1933. TVA began repaying this investment in 1961.

In 2014, TVA almost doubled its income over 2013. Net income for fiscal year 2014 was \$469 million, up from \$271 million during fiscal year 2013. TVA has a 3-year cost-cutting initiative to cut \$500 million in operations and maintenance costs.

In the midst of this progress for the Tennessee Valley Authority, last Tuesday the TVA board of directors voted to give Johnson a raise. With a base salary of \$950,000 but a total compensation package valued at \$5.9 million, the TVA Chief Executive Officer will now receive an additional \$1 million in salary and performance incentive payments.

Johnson is already the highest paid United States federal employee, topping President Obama. However, he met all of his performance targets for the 2014 fiscal year, which is one of the primary reasons for the raise. His salary before the raise was in the bottom quartile of top utility CEOs, and TVA chairman Joe Ritch said in a statement that TVA needs to pay a competitive salary to keep him on board. The board's vote to raise his salary was a unanimous.

Some people, including U.S. Congressman John Duncan (R-KY) have criticized TVA for the \$1 million raise. However, it appears that this raise will do more to ensure that such a talented CEO will stay with the Tennessee Valley Authority. Trends in TVA's financial standing since Johnson became CEO suggest that the recent progress in reducing operational costs and reducing debt are a direct result of his leadership. According to Congressman Duncan's spokesperson, the United States Representative believes that "you don't have to pay these kinds of ridiculous salaries to get good

people to live and work in East Tennessee."

One possible reason for public criticism is that the public believes that the raise will cost the company in a time of already-tough financial operation and debt. However, the TVA Board of Directors seems confident that it is necessary: "We're not going to apologize for the compensation we give our CEO," Ritch said. "This may seem like a large number, but in my view he's still underpaid in the results he's delivered for TVA."

The Tennessee Valley Authority is enormously influential in the economy of the Southeast. The multi-million dollar operations that TVA runs employ thousands of people in the area. Additionally, TVA provides crucial wholesale electric power that enables companies to operate more efficiently and at lower costs.

Recently, Congress has seen proposals to privatize TVA, which could

potentially reduce the U.S. national debt by as much as \$35 billion.

At the time of its creation in 1933, TVA was fully financed by the United States government through federal appropriations. Since then, appropriations have been gradually phased out, and, according to tva.com, the corporation is now fully self-financing.

For now, TVA looks like it is moving in a positive direction by reducing debt, increasing revenue, and continuing to provide wholesale electric power.



First Aid Kit Grows Up Golden

BY MOLLY HULSEY

With the release of a sylvan-set cover of Fleet Foxes's "Tiger Mountain Peasant Song", the Swedish sister duo, First Aid Kit, carved a distinctive niche in the chamber folk world and filled it with dreamy lyrics and soaring harmonies reminiscent of 70s folk-rock. The sisters' first record, *Drunken Trees* (2008), was produced during their teenage years and featured an earthy lyricism further developed in the next two albums.

Featured in the album were melodies driven by the strum of an acoustic guitar or autoharp and underscored with the haunting swells of a keyboard, conjuring up landscapes from the American West in "Emmylou" to Scandinavian snows in "The Lion's Roar." However, with *Stay Gold*, their first record on the Columbia label, First Aid Kit is no longer handing out band-aids. The tone of this album is one of questioning, longing, and unfulfillment in light of the wide-eyed

idealism of the band's past. Departing somewhat from former folk-derived simplicity, lush orchestrations define *Stay Gold* and make the Söderberg sisters' sound appropriate for their experienced lyrics.

The title track invokes Frost's poem, "Nothing Gold Can Stay," along with its theme of temporality, but as the album progresses it turns a shade greyer and implores if anything is as it's cracked up to be: "What if our hard work ends in despair? What if the road won't take me there? I wish for once we could stay gold." There is certainly a sense of finality in the lyrics that belies their youthful faces and the album's lilting rhythms.

One could easily envision phrases such as, "Our lives are a story told, coming to an ending" and "My work is just a web out spun; my life is a setting sun," spoken from someone standing at the brink of their days. Perhaps these words simply expect what is to come

and accept it with dignity. Many of the tracks reference past relationships in order to grapple with the consequence of time and dead ends. Drawing from the sisters' experience with the rootlessness of touring, these cuts constantly reference stark hotel rooms, endless highways, and the sacrifices made for a nomadic existence.

While listening to this album, one quickly learns that the escapism romanticized by our footloose culture, as well as First Aid Kit's last record, *The Lion's Roar*, has its downfalls. In an escalating country-esque ballad, "Cedar Lane", the sisters lament the loss of their home and a relationship discarded for new horizons. World-weary, they warble that "Coast after coast, cities and states; my world's an empty map, nothing remains. The place we belong was quietly gone, while we were making plans, it drifted away."

"Shattered and Hollow" echoes

a similar frame of mind with spine-tingling resonance as it traces the path that leads to disappointment, invoking the memories of a time when, "we stood here looking out at this city, with minds so bold and thoughts so clear. We said we're gonna get out of here... run from all our fears." Despite the assumption that traveling allows one to escape the banal and familiar, "The Bell" proclaims between triumphant piano bridges that "The world is an empty frame, and you are just a name."

These musicians even daydream about having an everyday, anonymous existence in the buoyant "Waitress Song." However, even after expressing their disappointments, it's agreed that, "I'd rather be striving than settled.

Oh I'd rather be moving then static."

The beautifully tragic paradoxes handled with care in *Stay Gold* are not trite enough for the duo to provide any immediate answers, but this monumental album does not wallow in hopelessness. As the first shimmering cut claims, even when "these shackles were made in attempt to be free... a song's never just sad, there's a silver lining."



1989 Review

BY CONRAD MEEK

In 2008, Taylor Swift released "Love Story" and quickly got her first taste of crossover success. Looking back, Swift's swift climb to super-mega-stardom, which started six years ago, seems like it must have been inevitable, but it is more likely a result of the compelling brand and style Swift has created for herself and how she rigorously controls every aspect of her music and her career. With 1.287 million copies sold in just the first week, the best-selling week in the industry since 2002, 1989 is a fantastic example of what Swift has done and can do. It is also a fantastic album to listen to.

Musically, the sound of 1989 is as carefully constructed as her career. For several tracks, Swift recruited the help of Max Martin and Shellback, the Swedish producers behind several of your favorite hits released in the past decade. Under their careful direction, the album is predominantly electronic. Drum programming and synthesizers carry

nearly all the tracks. 1989 just feels processed, much more so than anything else she has recorded. These instrumental choices give the album the 1980s feel Swift was looking for. This helps make her new sound radically different from *Red* and also different from most songs on Top 40 stations today; many similar singers are singing hip-hop or borrowing heavily from it, but not Swift. There is not a single rap on 1989.

This processed feel works best when the music contributes to what Swift was trying to communicate lyrically. The seedy themes of "Style" are matched by the musical choices that make the song sound cool and dark and sexy. The driving, heavy drum beats in "Bad Blood" bring home Swift's anger. However, on tracks like "All You Had To Do Was Stay," the same choices do not connect as well, leaving the track sounding fake.

Vocally, the strongest performances come when, despite of the

new sound, classic Taylor shines through. Tracks like "How You Get the Girl" could never be mistaken for another artist because of how true she remains to the Taylor Swift voice that made her famous. Conversely, as much as I personally enjoy "Wildest Dreams," it is impossible to listen to the song without hearing an imitation of Lana Del Rey. Her vocals have never been her strong suit, but she has always found success by using this weakness to convey meaning and develop her unique brand.

One of Swift's trademarks has always been writing her own songs and writing them about her own life. Decoding Taylor Swift lyrics is one of America's favorite parlor games. You can't just listen to her music; you have to listen for something. She knows this is part of her success story and wisely continues her biography in 1989. But, as it always has, her songwriting habits have benefits and detriments. "Cause you know I love the players/And you

love the game" perfectly sums up everything Taylor wants to say in "Blank Space." But her biographical themes can yield clunky lyrics. This is particularly clear on tracks like "I Wish You Would."

Perhaps the biggest overall theme of 1989 is how she has matured. This album is not Taylor the Victim, at least not entirely. More than anything, she makes fun of the victimization that has been a hallmark of her career. This is particularly evident in the two music videos she has released so far from 1989. In "Shake It Off," Swift inserts herself into a variety of subcultures, all of which do not seem to quite fit her, but she isn't complaining about that anymore; she's shaking it off.

In "Blank Space," Swift takes on the break-up/boy-crazy trope that has always characterized her song writing. The lyrics alone speak to this, but the craziness Swift brings to the music video is fantastic and even uncomfortable. The video shows her

picture perfect love story (rendered with painstaking detail, as usual) that descends into jealousy, rage, and destruction; this is classic T-Swift. What sets "Blank Space" apart is her flippant acceptance of this cycle, because by the end of the video, she has a new boytoy to fill her blank space. Is this how Taylor Swift really runs her love life? Based on her recent lack of romantic interests, the answer is probably no. Rather, she is lampooning the narrative that has both propelled her to fame and boxed her in.

Overall, 1989 achieves most of what Taylor Swift was aiming for. More than that, it's a fun album for the listener. It's fair to describe it as the perfect pop album, not because it's perfect, but because Swift has given thought to every last detail. She has always been an artist in full control of her sound, her career and her image, and 1989 is perhaps the best example of this so far.



Interstellar Review

BY GARRETT SISSON

Here's the bottom line about *Interstellar*: It is grand science fiction, conceptually brilliant and entertaining. However, because of its flaws, especially in the ending, it lacks the cohesiveness necessary to make it a classic for a wider audience outside its genre.

The first trailer for *Interstellar* came out a year ago, and built huge expectations for a smart, meaningful space drama with epic spaceship launches and a voiceover about the expansion and scientific triumphs of mankind. A slew of physics research inspired the film, which promised an old-fashioned "family" adventure across wormholes, black holes, and time itself.

The good news is that this movie delivers on all of those promises. Every moment of the liftoff, dimensional travel sequences, and

exploration of the vast unknown of space is a joy to watch. Never before have planets been rendered so beautiful, and the intricacies of the cosmos have never felt so tangible as in the hands of Christopher Nolan. Everything feels big. The drama is rife with intensity. It was even shot on 70mm film.

This is a high concept piece. The science is rigidly documented, theoretical and fun, while uncertainty abounds. Nolan draws on the model of classic science fiction movies such as *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *2001: A Space Odyssey* to take the audience on an adventure, without ever letting them know where they are going. It is the thrill of discovery that fuels *Interstellar*, rather than the destination itself. This kind of sci-fi movie has been sorely lacking in recent years.

Interstellar also proves that it can tackle big, thematic ideas maturely. Amidst the desperate race to colonize space before Earth dies are motifs of destiny, humanity, and willpower, as well as more narrow topics, such as family loyalty, the fears of abandonment or wasting your life, and of course, love.

These themes are carried largely due to the movie's praiseworthy acting. Matthew McConaughey is a convincing and exciting lead in every scene throughout the movie—even the hokier bits, and Jessica Chastain, though not billed highest, has a presence that practically steals the second half of the show. Those two keep the movie emotionally relevant. Also notable is a brief but impressive appearance from Matt Damon, which keeps things lively.

On a conceptual level, the movie works. However, there is also a list of things that weren't great about it.

Unfortunately, Nolan likes words, even when too many of them make for clunky writing. The movie's beginning, though imaginative, is terribly slow and heavy on exposition. Thematic material tends to be delivered in sequences of memorable lines, rather than character action, and a consequence of this is that some of the movie's great themes do not converge in a satisfying way. *Interstellar* can also be too smart for its own good, bordering on pretentious and leaving the audience behind in a wake of scientific technobabble. Perhaps most problematic is the movie's ending, which is rather misguided all around. Finally, I should mention that the entire movie is overlaid

with an obnoxious *Inception*-esque blaring sound.

Ultimately though, none of these issues are insufferable. They are confined problems in a script with many awesome, wonderful merits.

As stated earlier, sci-fi is often about the journey, not the destination.

So to conclude, though it's not his best film, if you like Christopher Nolan, you should see *Interstellar*. If you like sci-fi, you should definitely see *Interstellar*, because the movie is excellent. Though maybe not for everyone, *Interstellar* is a rare treasure of a movie, and a refreshing reminder of why we enjoy classical science fiction. Three and a Half out of Four Stars.

A Path Through The Jungle

BY JUSTIN JANTOMASO

Money management. This combination of words can invoke feelings of panic, confusion, and pure aversion. Money is a heck of a ton of fun to spend but a real pain to manage. However, Christ reminds us throughout the Bible that all that we have has been given to us and as we understand this and seek to respond in thankfulness, we are called to manage our money wisely, in a way that will bring glory to God. As with all of God's commands, this exhortation is for our own good. God knows that financial trouble is the cause for a large percentage of disputes and that we can often avoid financial trouble through wise stewardship. As college students, we are most likely not falling asleep atop large piles of hundred dollar bills. However, this principle of stewardship still applies to us. As our hard work in school begins to pay off, we will most likely find ourselves receiving a paycheck each week and the habits that we set now will have a huge effect on our future management of money.

As students, we realize that money management is important

and yet it is often a confusing topic. If you Google "money management" you will receive 377,000,000 individual results. This plethora of information can lead to an apathetic attitude as we are overwhelmed with the large amount of information available to us. In my quest to find tools to help steward my money, I have come across a few tools to use and guidelines to follow in our quest to create positive money management habits.

First, you must resolve to follow a few guidelines: live within your means, exercise patience in your spending habits, begin to save a small portion of your income, tithe weekly and look for ways to multiply your savings. These are only a few basic guidelines out of a jungle of practical advice available to you on the internet and in print. As you begin to think through managing your money, it is important to research what the Bible says about money and to look at practical money management sites such as moneymangement.org in an effort to formulate your own list of financial principles which, as

they become habit, will guide your positive stewardship of money.

In the 21st century, financial stewardship can be made easier through the use of technology. However, the overwhelming amount of tools available can make it feel like you are searching for a needle in a haystack and ultimately discourage your use of any of them. During my personal search for an efficient, accurate financial management tool I have tried a myriad of different apps and websites. This journey through the world of financial management technology has led me to buxfer.com. This site is an excellent tool that allows the user to accurately track transactions, budget, and plan for the future.

After creating a personalized account, Buxfer will sync with your bank, uploading transactions to the site. You can sync checking accounts, loans, credit cards, savings accounts, and multiple other financial accounts. After adding all of your financial accounts you will be presented with a concise, organized presentation of your financial situation. This will

allow you to better understand and manage your financial situation.

After adding financial accounts, whenever you make a transaction, (income or expense) you can add it directly to the specific financial account through the site. You can also store receipts on the site, an important action to insure accurate financial records in case of an IRS audit or other financial inquiry. Having all of your student loans, banking accounts and other financial accounts in one place will allow you to efficiently reconcile and monitor them to insure accurate records and to reduce wasteful spending.

After finishing adding accounts and transactions you can next create a budget. The site will take you through a series of questions to setup a custom budget that will work well with your financial goals and current financial situation. Having a budget in place will put guidelines on your spending, allowing you to make wise choices. In addition to these two essential tools; account recording and budgeting, the site allows you to set bill payment reminders and to split

payments between different parties.

I encourage you to check out buxfer.com and then to do your own research to find a financial management tool that will best fit your needs. Decide on a tool and then make a list of financial principles that you will seek to follow as you attempt to make Christ preeminent in your finances. Ask a friend or parent to provide accountability until these principles are habit. Even though managing your money may appear inconvenient at the time, well organized finances reap benefits far outweighing the small amount of work it takes to organize them.

As we seek to be faithful with the resources God has entrusted to us, let's remember that true joy is not found in even the best organized finances; it is found in the fact that we are redeemed children of God. God calls us to sow the seeds of good stewardship and He will bring the increase, as we trust in Him. "You (God) have put gladness in my heart, more than in the season that their grain and wine increased." Psalm 4:7



Curses From Behind a Curtain

BY ANNA DOVE

“Dear Black Person: I can down vote your yak because I’ve never asked you to dance or said I’m blacker than you. You’re including me in something because of my race. Aka being racist.” Hiding securely behind the curtain of technological anonymity, an irritated white person posts these spiteful words on Yik Yak, throwing more wood onto the fire ignited by a stream of “DearWhitePeople” posts authored by one or more black people. “DearWhitePeople” posts appear to be an understandable attempt to raise awareness for the injustices, historical and present, that black people undergo. While standing up for one’s race is not only proper but commendable, doing so by criticizing the race of

another via the cowardly medium of anonymity is to stand on the soapbox of a fool.

The anonymity of Yik Yak in this situation provides people of both races the ample opportunity to tear each other down without experiencing any ramifications. It provides a cover so that Yakkers can smile at each other during the day and then spit hate by night. How devastating it is, that in a place like Covenant that strives to bolster the best community it can, based on the ideals it has embraced and proclaimed as its own, that those who form the community would attack the fundamental principle of loving one’s neighbor as oneself, through hate speech towards and vehement

condemnation of another group of its members.

Fortunately, the statements of a few people do not apply to the majority. The majority of white students on this campus are not defined by the rash words spoken by the minority of white students who have posted racist Yaks. Similarly, the views of the majority of black students are not accurately represented by the harsh words of the “DearWhitePeople” authors. These posts, actually, portray a distorted representation of the covenant community, and in doing so, breed distrust, anger, and aversion between black and white students, which is exactly the opposite of what both races desire. Identity is a word thrown around

recklessly, often applied to cliché statements and made less important by its frequent use. As Christians, though, identity is a word that highlights our entire being, our joint nature in Christ. Compare the worth attributed by color of skin, in all varieties of brown, to the worth given us by Christ’s acceptance. Christ hung mutilated on a cross for all of us, and we bicker and tear each other down about skin pigmentation.

Dear White People, Dear Black People, Dear People Of All The Diverse Races On This Campus, don’t make the mistake of hating your neighbor through your speech. We are sadly aware of the years and years of mistreatment and animosity between races, and the

consequences this has bred. Rather than ignoring it, take these serious issues to an appropriate forum where we can have intelligent, honest, open conversation with each other. This will prove so well how we as Christians are able to put our identity in Christ first and our ethnic identity second. Don’t spit curses from behind a curtain; close Yak on the issue of race and see all your brothers and sisters standing by you.

State of the Yak

BY CONRAD MEEK

Since the publication of Mr. Jones’s article on Yik Yak last week, usage of the app has skyrocketed. I had been using the app for about a week before the article was published, so I was (along with other earlier adapters) able to witness how the Yak community was transformed following the free publicity. But before I discuss what happened after last week’s article, I want to briefly summarize my experience with Yik Yak.

I actually heard about Yik Yak last spring from a friend who attends a public university. I downloaded the app to see what might be going on at Covenant, only to find a few posts that had accumulated over the course of a few weeks. When I re-downloaded the app this semester, it was mostly to see what all the fuss was about. I was intrigued to see more positive content than I was at first expecting. There were still some offensive yaks, but not that many.

I wrote a few yaks in the days after I downloaded it. I’m addicted to likes and retweets;

upvotes are less gratifying but still fun. My first few yaks went over well but one of them was quickly downvoted, to the point where it was no longer visible on the feed. Looking back, I realized that I’m glad it did. What I posted wasn’t actually funny or helpful at all.

Following the publication of the Bagpipe article, Yik Yak at Covenant enjoyed an influx of new users. Several yaks last weekend expressed gratitude that Covenant Yik Yak was growing in popularity. For the most part, the new and old users seemed to take seriously the recommendations of Mr. Jones’s article. He wrote “I hope to see this app become a positive, attractive forum in which users have each others’ backs and hold each other accountable” and I think the potential is there. From what I’ve seen, the content has improved in its quality and its kindness since the app has started to grow more and more popular.

I agree with Mr. Jones’s thoughts on the problems of anonymity.

The anonymity dictates much of what people are willing to say in a yak. One example of this was the extended discussion on race on the app last week. People were able to say unhelpful things I doubt that they would have said if we had known who they were. But even in this, there were people who wrote condemning such action. It was not pretty, but voices of reason prevailed.

Yik Yak has several built in measures that show how seriously they take the possible abuses of their app. If a yak receives enough downvotes, it will no longer appear when you scroll through yaks. In addition, all high schools in the US have been geofenced, meaning that high school students will not be able to yak on their campuses. Along with the downvote, there is also the option to flag a post. Yik Yak reviews these and plenty of them are taken down. The app is constantly monitoring for abuse, looking specifically for racist, homophobic and threatening speech. Users who post these

extremely offensive yaks can be blocked from using the app, temporarily and permanently.

The problem is, what might be “extremely offensive” for the world might not be the same as what is extremely offensive at Covenant. That is to say, we maintain high standards for how we create community here at Covenant, standards that might not be enough get a user blocked. The key to what makes Yik Yak an option for Covenant students is the power of the vote. The only real disagreement I have with last week’s article is the idea that “there is virtually no accountability for what users say.” There is accountability on Yik Yak. I know that my posts were not wildly inoffensive and yet they were voted down. Its not perfect or complete accountability, but it’s there.

I hope that Yik Yak does not get blocked at Covenant and that students here can continue to show that we have the maturity to use technology in a way that honors God. I also hope that some of the

real issues that sometimes come up in yaks (depression, social anxiety, and concerns about race come to mind) will not remain in the sphere of anonymity. Yik Yak can be a place where you realize you are not alone in your struggle, but this realization cannot be the end and this confession cannot be the remedy.

Yik Yak can be a legitimate place for community to grow at Covenant, I think. Our grand experiment with the app has lasted less than a semester. Perhaps we have not used it enough to see its abuses fully. If you have never used Yik Yak, I would encourage you to at least give it a try. If already use it, please continue to consider how what you say affects community. Yak on.

Conference Champions

BY SCOTT MCKNIGHT

Champions! The Covenant Mens Soccer Team returned from Martinsville, Virginia this weekend with hardware in tow. The guys won the USA South Conference Tournament in only their second year in the league and returned home with a conference championship for the first time since 2004 and for the first time as a member of the NCAA. Ten years is a decent drought, but the Scots have upheld a level of excellence on the pitch throughout that time and their performance has reached its crescendo this year.

It's something the players and fans have seen coming for a while now. Senior Joel Friesen said he could recall being a freshman and seeing the influx of talent around the program and thinking, "We could have a really great team". Friesen couldn't have been more correct. The Scots went 15-4 this year and 8-1-1 in the USA South while boasting a 9-1-1 record at home in front of the Scots fans. Scots senior forward Snoopy Davidson was named USA South Player of the Year. Three seniors, Davidson, Friesen, and Builder

Brock received All-Conference First Team honors while another three, Hunter Harrison, Ian Meredith, and Daniel Kubin received second team or honorable mention honors. That's seven players...seven players on an eleven man team were recognized for their contributions on the pitch for the Scots this year and a case can be made each of those left out. The team obviously has great first eleven talent, but Friesen added that "we have a lot of talent coming off the bench. I don't worry when we make substitutions because I know those guys are going to give us a lift". But talent is only part of the equation when it comes to having the type of success that the program has exhibited this year. So what else does it take to reach the goals the team had coming into the year?

Coach Pifer brought in the talent and developed the skills, but when asked about what made this year's team special he was quick to attribute that to the players themselves. He said that this year's team came in fitter and stronger than the previous year which shows



a commitment to excellence. That commitment is what Pifer believes is the "next step in the process of becoming a consistent national contender". Pifer and Friesen were also quick to point out the loose atmosphere and Christian fellowship amongst the team as key factors in their success. Before Saturday's big game against Maryville the captain's called a meeting in their hotel room where the players discussed what the game meant to them in preparation

for the match. Coach Pifer says normal preparation for a big match includes joking around, playing a little music, and praying for strength and wisdom. But let's be real. Coach and player can't always agree. When asked to describe this year's team in three words one used "Brothers Glorifying God" and another used "Less-hairy, aggressive, never-say-never". Six words, one formula for victory and the ultimate glorification of Christ. But in all seriousness, the 2014-15

Scots have developed a chemistry that is nearly tangible to the fans and it's paid major dividends in the form of Covenant's freshest title. For Friesen and the rest of the Scots this championship was a dream come true, but it's not where their goals end. This Friday the Scots will look to recognize even larger goals in their first round matchup against Whitworth University (no. 13) in the NCAA Division III Tournament in Atlanta.

Scots Spotlight: Kaitlyn Sirmons

BY NATE FRIERSON



Name: Kaitlyn Sirmons
Year: Sophomore
Hometown: Havana, FL
Sport: Softball
Position: Middle Infield/OF
Major: Sports Administration

Q: What is your best memory with the Scot's softball team?

A. My best memory was last year when we were stuck in a fog/rain/snow delay. We played hangman drawing on a softball and rolling it back and forth between our dugouts in hilarious ways. Or when we went to Canada, that was a ton of fun too.

Q: What/who got you to start playing softball?

A. I have an older brother who played baseball so I was raised at the ball field. We went to all the FSU games and I used to run the bases after every game and since then, I was in love with the sport.

Q: What's your favorite tradition of the Scots' softball team?

A. My favorite tradition that we do is when we cross arms and hold hands to pray before and after every practice and game. It's just a cool experience.

Q: What do you do to get pumped up for games?

A. Jam out in the locker rooms/on the bus.

Q: Do you have any cool nicknames?

A. Most of my teammates call me Kait or by my first name, Brenda. However, Coach Russell calls me Blondie because last year I was the only blonde on the team.

Q: What is something about you that most people don't know?

A. I've played the piano for my whole life and I'm a voice minor here at Covenant.

Q: Who is the best dancer on the Scots' softball team?

A. Kendall Whann. Hands down. She's got some sweet moves.

Q: What is the most exciting thing you've ever done?

A. Well, my dad's a pilot so I've gotten to fly some small planes before. That's exciting, right?

Q: What is your favorite sport other than softball?

A. To watch, baseball or football but if that answer doesn't count, then to play, I would say volleyball (and cheerleading, although I am aware it is not a sport).

Q: What is the best song on Taylor Swift's new album?

A. I haven't heard it so I cannot give an educated answer to this question. Sorry.