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NEWS

The Eyes of Love: Serving and loving Nashville through food

Page 2

Students recall damage caused by flooding in hometown

Page 6

SPORTS

Baseball team makes school history

Pages 4-5

Lacrosse to be added to women's sports line-up

Page 5

FEATURES

Religion professor serving community through foster care

Page 3

CONNECT



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TNU Events App



Trevecca students at the Celebrate Nashville event at Centennial Park.

Trevecca opens Office of Global Engagement

BY CLAUDIA VILLEDA
CONTRIBUTOR

In the past six years, the number of international students attending Trevecca has more than tripled causing university administrators to restructure services for the growing population.

The Office of Global Engagement opened on campus in June and is a centralized place where recruiting, admissions and advising for international students takes place. The office also works with international partnerships and manages study abroad trips.

The university had about 35 international students in 2015. In 2021, there are now around 130 international students at Trevecca, according to Micheal Newland, the director of the new office.

"We had seen all of this growth in the number of students, but in the last four or five years, we hadn't really changed the structure in which we dealt with international students. And so what we saw was the growth was outpacing our ability to recruit and support them in a way that we needed," he said. "We created

this Office of Global Engagement, to kind of take what was already happening in two or three different locations on campus, and centralize it into one place on campus to really provide a centralized customer support place for international students where they could go for anything that they need," said

The office of global engagement works to be a support system for international students.

"I believe the office of global engagement is great and they are very inclusive of all students. They've answered all my questions and helped debunk any confusions I had," said Onyedikachi Dimobi, a freshmen psychology major from Nigeria.

The office works with students to be a resource for any issues they may come across. For example, Visa advising, on and off campus work authorization, social security card information and receiving vaccinations that may not be available in their home countries. The office of global engagement also schedules transportation for Walmart

trips where students can get groceries.

"My goal is just making students who come all this way to study in the United States to give them just kind of like that holistic Trevecca experience where they're able to feel a part of the Trevecca community as well as kind of like the greater Nashville-American community as well, while they're also able to kind of share where they're from, with the other students that are here, too," said Katie Miller, coordinator of the office of global engagement.

Miller is a Trevecca alumnus, a member of the Nazarene church and a new faculty member at Trevecca. She taught English in South Korea and Ukraine for a few years, before getting her masters in cross-cultural and international education at Bowling Green State University. There she worked as a graduate assistant at the global education office.

"I graduated and was really interested in starting a career in higher ed, like international student services, study

CONTINUED PAGE 3

Fewer parking spaces during construction

BY MIRIAM RIXON
CONTRIBUTOR

Ongoing construction projects on campus are limiting the amount of parking spaces available for students and employees.

Around 100 fewer spaces are available this fall.

The construction of the new health and science building attached to Greathouse, the new dorm behind Georgia Hall and

CONTINUED PAGE 2

the renovation of the Jernigan Student Center amplifies parking issues on campus, said Greg Dawson, head of security.

Due to the renovations taking place in the Jernigan student center, the cafeteria has been temporarily shifted to the Boone convocation center. This caused an uptick of students driving to Boone for meals and taking up spaces in the commuter parking lot in between the Greathouse building and Boone.

"In 2020 we had a total of 1,603 parking spaces and in 2021 we have a total of 1,496 parking spaces," Dawson said.

Construction on campus in full swing

BY LINDSEY WHITE AND GRACE BECKNER
CONTRIBUTOR, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Trevecca has three current construction projects underway: Jernigan student center, the health sciences building, and new apartment housing and if everything remains on track, the Jernigan building will be open for use in Spring 2022.

"We started it three months ago, so we don't know if it's on time or on budget yet," said Monzu.

The building was having continuous issues and desperately needed updates, said Monzu.

"It's not fair to Sodexo to do their work

in that facility," said Monzu. "If you don't provide better equipment, there's no way to provide better service."

When Jernigan is finished the plaza with the seating areas and fireplaces will continue downhill to an outdoor video wall and will have a new max capacity to fit more students.

Monzu said Jernigan's seating capacity will increase 62% in the remodeling, from a maximum capacity of 325 students to 525. They were also able to add "roughly

CONTINUED PAGE 8

NEWS

The Eyes of Love: Serving and loving Nashville through food

BY MACI WEEKS
CONTRIBUTOR

In 2013, a call to serve those in need led Trevecca graduate, Kathy Johnson Warner, to start a weekly meal program, The Eyes of Love, to serve Nashville communities in need.

Eight years ago, Kathy Johnson Warner, founder of The Eyes of Love, felt a call to tap into her social work roots and serve members of the Nashville community who were in need. Warner said she had been feeling the urge to return to serving people experiencing homelessness for quite some time, but did not know where to begin. Warner's schedule was full as a social worker, wife, mother, caregiver to a parent and an active church member. She simply was not sure where this specific call to serve should start.

When Warner and her husband were delivering food to a church member at Casa Blanca apartments in Nashville, Warner's next steps became clear.

"Casa Blanca is one of many motels that market themselves as apartments and rent by the month. Their target populations include people who need lower income housing, mentally ill, felons, and addicts. Many residents may not be able to rent from other landlords due to evictions, credit history or inability to pay," Warner



Trevecca students serving at Eyes of Love

said. After seeing the conditions of Casa Blanca, Warner recalls her husband saying that the apartments needed light. The same week, Warner and her friend, Jane Drolick, delivered food that was leftover from a church dinner. Warner

recalls praying with Drolick for God to protect and direct them. When they arrived, Warren saw children playing and brought food to the apartment that the children were running in and out of. Drolick set up food on a table and residents started coming out to

share a meal and be in community with one another. This experience is what prompted the formation of The Eyes of Love.

"The Eyes of Love exist to provide food and fellowship for anyone who is hungry for either. It is obvious the needs are much larger than just food," Warner said. For the last eight years, The Eyes of Love program has continued to serve meals at least once a week. Location has varied through the years, but Warner said the mission has always been the same.

"God defines himself as love. The ministry is called The Eyes of Love because we are called to see the people we serve the way God sees them," Warner said.

Trevecca's J.V. Morsch Center for Social Justice Neighborhood Empowerment Program, directed by Iris Gordon, partners with The City of Refuge Center, the umbrella organization Eyes of Love falls under, to serve the Nashville community.

Trevecca students who would like to be connected to service opportunities such as Eyes of Love can reach out to Iris Gordon or Kristen Adams in the Center for Social Justice.

NEWS

Construction projects limit campus parking

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Limited parking spaces have posed a hindrance to employees and students, especially commuters since students are driving to the Boone convocation center for meals and classes, said Hunter Elliot, all student body president.

"Students want to park on the north side of Hart St. because 83% of our classroom space is on the north side of the campus," said Dawson. "We tried to make adjustments with parking by pushing a lot of the construction workers

to the outskirts of campus so that we can prioritize parking for the students."

Parking spaces are being taken up by construction company vehicles particularly behind the health and science building, the Jackson center

for music and worship arts and the arts annex.

Students are encouraged to park in the lot behind Jackson and the lot behind Trevecca Towers on Woodard Ave.

SPORTS

Trevecca to add lacrosse to women's sports lineup

BY MADELINE BROWN
CONTRIBUTOR



After researching options to add a new women's team to the athletic department, Trevecca will field a women's lacrosse team in the fall of 2023.

Trevecca athletic officials decided to add women's lacrosse over bowling or tennis after doing some research, which revealed women's lacrosse to be a unique spring season sport that would compliment the university.

Other teams in Trevecca's conference have been starting teams, and lacrosse is skyrocketing in Nashville, especially among private schools, said Athletic Director Mark Elliot.

"Trevecca has always looked ahead to expand their opportunities for women in sports, and to also increase our presence in the GMAC, our league, which already has 6 teams," he said.

Elliot said Trevecca is already qualified

to start building the lacrosse team.

The current plan is to hire a coach by July 1, 2022, in order to give them a year to organize the program and begin the recruitment process. The athletic department would like to have the team practicing and playing games after the year of planning.

While the cabinet has approved the women's lacrosse team in concept, there are still many logistics and details to work out besides finding a coach and players.

A lack of field space and locker rooms is the main challenge. The men and women's soccer teams both use the grass field, and to add lacrosse to that would destroy the grass, said Elliot.

"[Women's lacrosse] is a better fit for the university," said Elliot.

NEWS

Trevecca opens Office of Global Engagement

CONTINUED FROM COVER

abroad. Trevecca posted this position and it just was kind of a sign to come back and move back to Nashville and come back to Trevecca,” said Miller.

Since the start of the semester, the office of global engagement and the international student council put together events for students. This month, Trevecca students joined with other universities in Nashville at the Celebrate Nashville Cultural Festival in Centennial Park.

The office of global engagement will hold education and social programming events for international students.

“So we want to do workshops on CPT (curricular practical training) and OPT (optional practical training), taxes and

even workshops that are informational sessions that would be really useful for international students. And as well as, we work with the International Student Council,” said Miller.

This year is crucial to the overall mission of the office of global engagement.

“This year for us is really about assessing where we are and with international students. I would say this is a building block year for us. So what we’re really excited about is two, three, four years down the road, can we build structures this year that will be in place to improve the overall student experience and also promote global education at the university?” said Newland.



International Student Council

FEATURE

Religion professor serving community through foster care

BY GRACE BECKNER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Without the open heart and home of a single woman, Mary Schmitt, assistant professor of biblical studies at Trevecca, might not be here today.

Schmitt’s grandmother was born to a mother who died not long after childbirth, and to a father who was unable to care for a newborn baby. The father put the child in a home with a family, and when he could no longer pay them to care for her, she was brought to an orphanage.

Schmitt’s grandmother was taken in by a single woman who saw how sick she had become and thought she would not do well in the orphanage. So the woman, after gaining permission from the orphanage and the child’s father, took the baby home.

“She was never allowed to adopt her, because she was a single woman, and you weren’t allowed to do that until very recently in this country,” Schmitt said. “So she never allowed her to call her ‘mom’ or anything.”

Single parents were not officially allowed to adopt children in the U.S. until the 1960s, when the Child Welfare League of America decided married parents were an “unattainable luxury” for some children.

That single woman put Schmitt’s grandmother through school, through her college years, and ultimately helped her become a nurse

“That was her mom,” Schmitt said. “I think it is really cool that there are people who open up their hearts, because my mom wouldn’t have been born, so I wouldn’t have been born, if that didn’t happen.”

Schmitt has committed to becoming a foster parent, a sort of continuation of her own story.

Besides the connection with her past, Schmitt is drawn to the foster care system because of the localized need for foster parents in Tennessee and the Nashville area. She sees this role as an opportunity to live out the scriptural call to care for children and orphans.

“I know in Nashville there are kids that need a home, and here

I’ve got a room, I have other means of support,” Schmitt said. “And so I thought I would maybe try that route because it is the most localized, it would affect my immediate community that I live in right outside Trevecca’s campus.”

According to the Tennessee Alliance for Kids, there are just under 8,000 children in the foster care system in the state of Tennessee, 466 of those kids are coming from Davidson county.

There are over 415,000 children in the foster care system in the United States.

The foster care system is designed to reunify children with their biological parents or family members, meaning much of a foster family’s role is to support the process of getting children back into their original home.

“You hope and pray that their biological parents or biological grandparents can get to a place where they are able to support and love them,” said Schmitt. “Then you have been a piece of their journey, and that’s okay.”

Tim Green, dean of the Miller Reed school of theology and Schmitt’s supervisor, views Schmitt’s decision to foster as something that should be celebrated, and then accepted as a “natural, beautiful thing of the journey of life.” He said this is how he thinks all familial relationships and planning should be approached.

“There is a commitment to generations beyond [her] own life,” said Green. “I think what Mary is then considering with foster parenting, is that same kind of ‘I will give my life to those who likely will extend life much longer than I will be able to serve.’”

Jasmine Hiland, Trevecca alum and current foster parent, said there is a tension when a foster child is in the home between the joy of having them there, and the grief of why they have to be.

“The beautiful thing is that you are providing a space for that family to do what they need to do to have their reunion,” Hiland said. “It is a really weird place to put yourself in the middle of, where you are holding this space...for this family to get resources and help so

they ultimately get reunified.”

Schmitt has not yet started this process, but is preparing herself, her home and doing her research for when she does take this step.

The process of becoming a foster parent has a lot of moving parts. Taking anywhere from four to 12 months, there are seminars, training, background checks, interviews and home visits to make sure safety protocols are being followed.

“It doesn’t feel real when you’re doing it because you’re discussing hypotheticals, but it is one of those things you learn by experience,” Hiland said. “We made a fire map, we safety-proofed our house, we put all our medication in a double-locked [container], it is pretty intense.”

For Hiland, the process to become a foster parent from start to finish took six months. Schmitt said she has not set a timeline for when she would like to have the foster parent process completed by, and is currently trying to be faithful to “a door the Lord has opened” in her home by learning about the system and preparing herself.

“You go from having no kids, to suddenly having kids,” Hiland said. “You are suddenly a parent overnight, and not in the way everyone expects it.”

Hiland said it is not uncommon to get a foster child placement call within hours after being officially approved.

“It is very likely that you will get a call [saying], ‘Hey, you’re approved,’ and then thirty minutes later get another call saying, ‘Hey, we have a placement, can you take this person?’” said Hiland.

Previous to this decision, Schmitt thought she might wait to get married and “do all the normal steps.” But over the past year she noticed how her life was changing.

“I had my 40th birthday, I started decluttering this room [in my house] and realized how much stuff I had,” said Schmitt. “When I started getting rid of my stuff I was like, ‘Oh, I’ve got a spare bedroom that could be used for this whole purpose I had always wanted to use it for.’”

She also struggles with the views of those who believe there must be two parents in a home caring for a child.

“I have a real struggle with people’s claims that you shouldn’t do this if you aren’t married because every child needs two parents. I think a child with one foster parent [who is] really in their corner and really taking care of them, is itself a gift,” Schmitt said. “I come at things from a Biblical scholar perspective, and I think this idea of the modern nuclear family—two parents, one-and-a-half kids—is just not the only thing we see in Scripture.”

Schmitt believes God creates families of many different shapes and sizes. Even in churches themselves, there are not only “American average scenarios” represented, and God is faithful in those situations too, she said.

As a single woman entering the foster care system, Schmitt is concerned about having enough support. Questions like, “what do you do when it is only you?” have weighed on her mind as she thinks about the future.

She acknowledges many areas of her life may change. Becoming a foster parent might make it harder to travel, which is a required part of her job. Schmitt has started to think about how she will be able to take a day off of work on days when fostering might feel like another job in some ways.

“I do think there are challenges of coming at [the foster care system] without having a partner, because there is no one immediately to [help out],” said Schmitt. “Which is why it is so important that I fall back to my church families, and colleagues here. To say, ‘Do I have support from other people that are my bigger Christian family?’”

Even as Schmitt anticipates the challenges and lifestyle changes she will have to take on, her own background and story connected to her grandmother is in the back of her mind.

“I am looking forward to the way [kids] help you see the world differently,” said Schmitt. They carry the ability to laugh and be light, and the fun that would be a part of that too.”

Baseball team makes school history in the NCAA DII World Series



Photo provided by Trojan Athletics

BY DAVID WILSON
CONTRIBUTOR

For the first time in school history, the Trevecca Trojans' baseball team has reached the NCAA DII World Series.

Amidst a raging worldwide pandemic that still affects us today, there was uncertainty on whether baseball could even be played heading into the 2020-21 school year. Despite this challenge, the Trojans have overcome all odds and etched their names in school history in June of 2021.

Heading into the fall of 2020, the Trojans had to fight an uphill battle from the start. Coming off a Covid shortened spring season, there were a lot of question marks heading into the new school year. The main one; who would be leading the charge as the new head coach? Enter Chase Sain from Bolivar, TN. Sain, an assistant for Trevecca for the previous three seasons, was eager to embrace the challenges that came with being a head coach.

"Trevecca has been a special place for several years, even before I began my run here. It is a great place. I have never met someone who has said anything negative about Trevecca. [We] have an amazing school located in a great city," he said. Coach Sain's message to the team heading into his first season was simple. He told his team that they had to have a "blue collar" attitude toward the upcoming season.

"We did not have as many resources as we would have in a normal year. I told the guys that we have to grind it out, day after day".

The fall calendar was admittedly different for Sain's Trojans. After the postponement of all collegiate sports in the spring, the NCAA made a historic decision. All NCAA athletes could return to school and receive an additional year of athletic eligibility. As a result, Trevecca returned nine seniors who were set to graduate the previous year.

"It was a great decision by the NCAA. Those guys deserved another opportunity

to play," he said.

Having those players back meant having team leaders back, said Shawn Wallwork, a redshirt freshman.

"Those guys led by example and had lots of experience," he said.

The senior class of 2020 was in fact a veteran bunch.

"Some of those guys were 23-24 years old. It was huge. They desired to come back on their own. Some of them had jobs lined up, and they turned those opportunities down to set their sights on a championship," said Sain.

Despite this decision by the NCAA, the outlook of the upcoming spring season was murky. During the fall, the Trojans were limited in the ways in which they could practice. Sain implied that the team did a lot of "small group" and "individual" work to prepare.

Luis Rodriguez, a junior on last year's team, echoed Coach Sain's comments.

"It was hard. We could not even go to the

gym. We were not even able to use our locker room. There were a lot of things up in the air on whether we could play," said Rodriguez.

There were a lot of obstacles in the way of the Trojans.

"We would even go to Rose Park to intrasquad just because it is a public park. That was our way of trying to build chemistry in light of Covid protocols," said Wallwork.

When the spring finally came around, the Trojans were far from being the favorite to win the Great Midwest Athletic Conference (GMAC). In a preseason poll, Trevecca was projected to finish in 5th place out of 11 total teams by the end of the season.

Sain said it was an "accurate" prediction considering the results of the previous season.

"We saw that as a team and [we] wanted to show the school and conference that we were better than that. We had the talent

and experience," said Rodriguez.

Sain agreed with Rodriguez's comments stating that the poll served as a "chip on the shoulder" for the entire program.

The Trojans started the 2021 season with their home opener against Southern Indiana on March 5. Trevecca dominated the entire series, earning wins in all three games. The momentum from the season opening series continued as Sain's group won eight of their first 10 games.

Over the next few months, the team would continue to have several small winning streaks. As the team continued winning on the field, Sain realized how special this team might be.

"We tried to be consistent every day. Our assistants did a great job. We put pressure on them everyday in practice. That way there would be no fear of making mistakes in the games," said Sain.

After sweeping Cedarville to end the year, the Trojans ended the regular season in 1st place of the GMAC. Several members of the Trojans received awards highlighting their success in conference play. Coach Sain was named 2021 Great Midwest Coach of the Year. Braden Odom, Tiger Cox, and Jay Bernard were all named to 1st team all-conference.

Ethan Harrison and Chase Haley were named to the 2nd team all-conference. Joseph McNamee concluded the awards for Trevecca earning 3rd team all-conference honors.

Trevecca Nazarene would travel to Mason, OH in hopes of winning the fourth conference tournament in school history.

The Trojans would open the conference tournament earning a 4-1 victory over the bottom-seeded Malone Pioneers. In the second game, Trevecca would score two late runs in the 8th inning earning a hard fought come-from-behind victory against Kentucky Wesleyan. Coach Sain's group would now only be two wins away from being conference champions. The semifinal game against Hillsdale proved to be a "coming out party" for the Trojans. Offensively, Trevecca would mash out 14 hits, which included a five-run 2nd inning. They cruised to a 9-1 victory.

Now, one win away from earning a

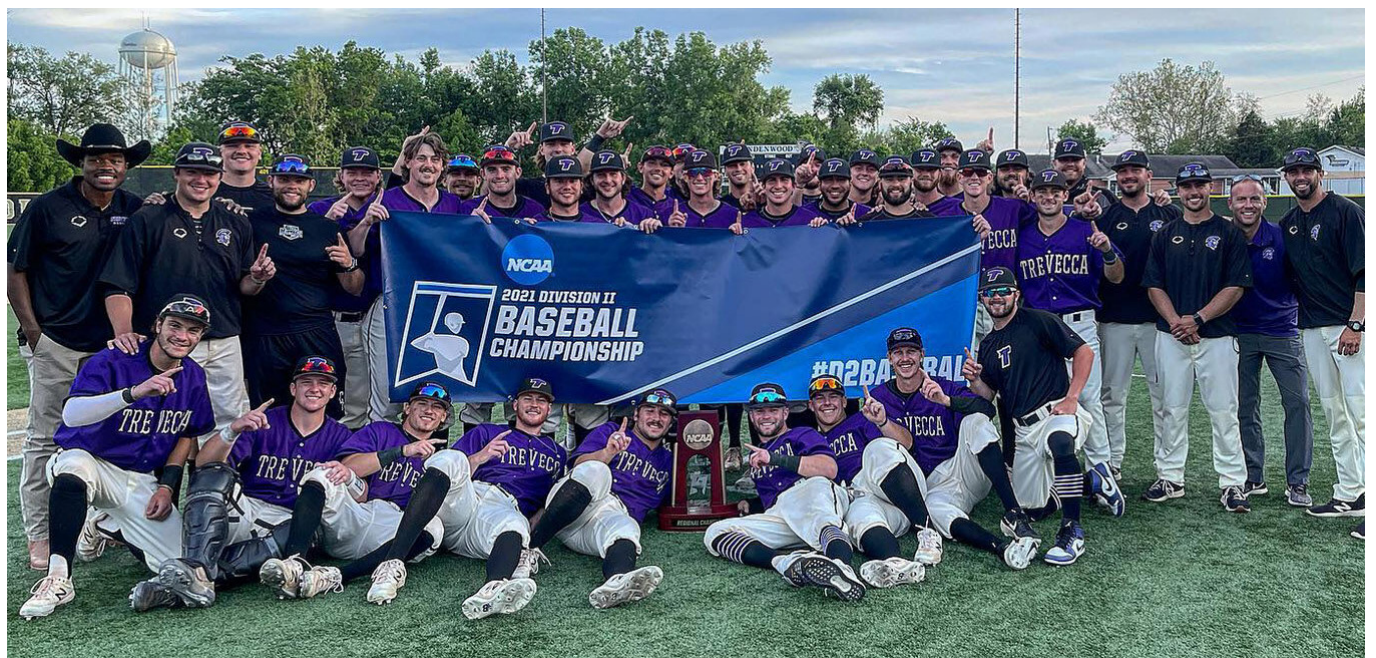


Photo provided by Trojan Athletics

SPORTS

Baseball team makes school history in the NCAA DII World Series

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

conference championship, Trevecca would face the defending conference champion Tiffin Dragons. The championship game lived up to its advertisement. The Dragons and Trojans would trade the lead on four separate occasions throughout the contest. On the back of a pivotal four-run bottom of the 7th inning, Trevecca would overcome Tiffin, winning the conference championship. Next on the slate for Trevecca would be the Great Midwest Regional Championships in St. Charles, MO. In the opening round of the regional, Coach Sain and his team earned an 8-3 win over Quincy. Game number two of the regional presented an even more daunting task. The Trojans would face Lindenwood, the #6 team in the country and host of the regional. Lindenwood came out the gates red hot, jumping out to a 4-0 lead after the 5th inning. Yet Trevecca persevered, answering Lindenwood with a five-run top of the 6th. Two late insurance runs in the top of the 9th proved key, as Trevecca would win 7-4. Located in the winner's bracket of the regional, Trevecca now only stood two wins away from earning a trip to the DII World Series. On Friday, May 29, the contest against

Northwood would once again feature a great comeback. After jumping to an early lead, the Trojan pitching staff would surrender four runs in the bottom of the 3rd. However, Trevecca would answer right back, scoring five runs of their own in the top of the 4th. After a three-run 6th inning, the underdogs from Nashville would win 9-4. Trevecca Nazarene would now sit in the Great Midwest Regional Championship game. One win away from Cary, NC, and the World Series. They would face Davenport University, who needed to come out of the loser's bracket after an earlier defeat to Lindenwood.



Photo provided by Trojan Athletics

The beauty of Trevecca winning all its previous games, was that Davenport would have to beat the Trojans twice to eliminate them. That would prove key on championship Sunday, as Davenport would defeat Trevecca 6-2. Forcing a winner takes all game later that evening. Trevecca punched early, scoring three runs in each of the first three innings of the game. Yet, a resilient Davenport team would continue to chip away during the middle innings. The game would enter the 8th inning all tied at 9-9. The Trojans would score two crucial runs in the 8th securing a victory and a trip to the World

Series for the first time in school history. In an interview postgame with Mike Organ of The Tennessean, Coach Sain exclaimed, "This is an unbelievable feeling; I don't really have words right now...All I can say is this team right here is incredible. I love these guys. They never give up, they have so much fight..." Luis Rodriguez still feels that same emotion today, saying "I get goosebumps thinking about it. Twenty years from now I will remember everything we accomplished". "We were a team all the way through. We could not succeed without the athletic department and the support of the Trevecca community. We are thankful," said Wallwork. Baseball in the state of Tennessee has grown over the last several years. Despite being shut down by the pandemic in 2020, the growth continued in 2021. "I hope we provided a sense of normalcy for not only our school but the community. I am proud to be from the Nashville area and to be a part of its success," said Wallwork. Sain summarized the year by stating, "Baseball in Tennessee and in our local community is really good. It means a ton to have a piece of that success. Hopefully we opened some eyes [inside] and outside the state."

SPORTS

Trevecca cheer team to debut in November

BY EDGARDO HERNANDEZ AND CLAUDIA VILLEDA
CONTRIBUTORS

The Trevecca Cheer team begins their first full season this semester. "We are happy to announce we are re-establishing a long-standing tradition of our Trojan cheer team," said Mark Elliott in a news release. "Lexi Laucirica has the vision to build a spirited program that will lead the Trojan Nation and Purple Pride." Trevecca disbanded the cheer team after the 2015-2016 academic year, but as of

2021, they have regrouped for their first season back. "TNU athletics had been discussing the idea of bringing back cheer for the last year or two. Long story short, I met Mark (Elliott) and his wife on a hike in North Carolina a year ago. There we discussed the possibility of re-establishing the program. Because the Lord really aligned everything to work out perfectly for us to start the program this year, we decided to

move forward with it," said Laucirica. The cheer team this season includes six freshmen, three sophomores, four juniors and one senior, making a total of 14 members. Due to Covid-19 and members being out of state, tryouts were held online. In-person tryouts are better, but with online tryouts, one is capable of redoing their performance, said Mirka Alarcon, a junior nursing major.

The team will mainly cheer for the men's and women's basketball teams when the season begins in November. Alarcon is a returning member and choreographer of Trevecca Cheer. She was in the previous team before its shutdown. Grace Pullium, a junior elementary education major, is also a returning member of Trevecca Cheer and is one of the five cheerleaders as well as the



Trevecca's 2021 Cheerleading Squad



TNU cheer leaders work on their routine in practice

SPORTS

Trevecca cheer team to debut in November

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

spiritual cheer lead. She holds a bible study in the cafeteria every Friday morning. Pullium also leads the prayer every practice.

The cheer team members hold a strong

bond with each other. Balancing academics, work and practice can become tedious, but members are there to support each other. Members communicate with one another, as a means of support, said

Pullium.

“We are excited to finally be able to cheer for a crowd this year. We can’t wait to support our athletic teams and the student body,” said Laucirica.

NEWS

Students recall damage caused by flooding to their hometown of Waverly, TN

BY DIANA LEYVA
CONTRIBUTOR

Student Body President, Hunter Elliot, woke up early on the morning of Aug. 21. He grabbed his phone, checked Facebook and saw that 66 miles away, in his hometown of Waverly, massive flooding was taking place.

According to the Humphreys County Emergency Management Agency, 20 people were killed, 270 homes were destroyed and 160 suffered major damage.

In shock, he began calling family members. Initially there wasn’t much concern from his family, but as time went by the water began to rise.

“I tried to call my mom, and she was like yeah the water is starting to get really high. She said I’m just really scared right now,” he said.

As the hours passed Elliot continued to watch the situation worsen. His family lost electricity and was without cell phone service. The last thing he saw was a Facebook post from his pastor’s son, a picture of the water reaching the top stairwell of the church, where his mother had been since 6:30 a.m.

“For about four or five hours I wasn’t sure if my mom was alive,” said Elliot.

Elliot’s mother was unharmed however was stranded at the church until 2 p.m. The church suffered significant damage. The entire downstairs was destroyed, the water bursting through the windows. All of the church’s history was lost.

Elliot’s grandmother had to be evacuated from her home of 50 years. He said she described the situation as instantaneous. One minute there was nothing and the next minute she looked out her window and the water quickly started to fill the field in front of her one story, brick home.

She gathered her belongings and left. Soon after, a neighbor on a 4-wheeler was able to get her out of the flooded area.

The flooring in his grandmother’s home was destroyed and all chairs and couches were gone. She has been back but the home is currently uninhabitable.

Elliot’s family also lost all of their cars. The flood picked up their 5 cars and moved them 400 yards away from the church where they had been parked.

Elliot’s church has remained resilient. Following the aftermath of the flood they have been actively cutting down trees and going through rubble.

He has not been able to return home since the flood.

Junior Savannah Scantlin was in Waverly when the flooding took place, planning a birthday party.

Her father awoke her to the sight of the creek in their backyard where the water had risen by 15 feet. Although the water had engulfed their fields and currents were ripping through, the water didn’t reach her house as it is higher up in elevation.

She didn’t think much of it at first.

Still in party planning mode, Scantlin and her father decided to go into town to purchase chips. Unable to take the highway due to flooding, they took a different route but soon discovered that route was also not an option.

Finally they reached a point where they could observe what was happening near the

to know that you can’t really help those people,” she said via video interview.

She quickly alerted her family not to come to her house. They were able to avoid the flooding, other loved ones however were impacted.

Some of Scantlin’s relatives, who had resided in their Waverly home for about 40 years, suffered mass water damage to the inside of their home. The place where they raised their children and grandchildren.

The mother of a friend whom Scantlin played middle and high school volleyball with, was left with only the foundation of her home. They were not able to salvage

grade graduation ... things like that are just not there anymore and I’m a sentimental person so it bothers me more than I think some people,” she said.

Despite the damages she and others are grateful that the flood did not occur on a school day. A day where her sister and so many others were at school.

Scantlin has been able to go back since the flooding.

Together with her roommate, they went back the following weekend and helped prepare 500 meals for volunteers and search crews. Her and her family also helped search for people and the surrounding Amish



Flood damage along Trace Creek in Waverly. Photo courtesy of The Associated Press

main highway, where about 20 other people were also standing and observing.

What they saw was debris-filled water rushing by the highway, a person sitting on the roof of a gas station and four people sitting on the porch of a locally owned farmer supply store. In the background, buildings were on fire and screams could be heard in the distance.

Scantlin felt extreme helplessness.

“I’m a person who wants to be able to help people and do anything that I can to help anybody ... It was heartbreaking

anything from inside the home.

“You love the place that you live, if you stay that long that’s a part of who you are and what you do. It stinks that not only your things are gone but also your place that you’re comfortable, your home,” she said.

For Scantlin it was especially heartbreaking to see her elementary and middle school flooded.

“That’s where I grew up, all the things that I went through, all the things that I learned, everything was in those buildings. All my great memories, my prom, my third

communities have also lent a helping hand.

“My town I would say is holding up pretty well. They’re coming back pretty strong. All the flood relief has been amazing,” she said.

Throughout the experience Scantlin has learned to not take anything for granted and to count all her blessings.

“Give thanks to God even in the midst of hardship and even in the midst of a trial there’s still things to be grateful for,” she said.

FEATURE

Immunocompromised TNU faculty member finds ways to connect with community

BY CLAUDIA VILLEDA
CONTRIBUTOR

Around 25 students are gathered in a classroom in McClurkan waiting for their Theories of Communication course to start.

A teaching assistant is sitting at the front of the room with a camera next to her. Students are groggy but still chatty. Everyone looks to the front of the room when a face is suddenly projected on the whiteboard.

This semester face-to-face 15-week classes are back. The fall 2021 semester might feel like a return to normal for many students and faculty after almost two years of living in a pandemic. For immunocompromised people, the realities of the pandemic are still very present in their lives.

Jeffrey Wells, chair of department of communication studies and associate professor, continues to adjust his life according to the coronavirus which includes teaching all of his classes remotely.

Wells, who is a multiple sclerosis, or better known as MS, patient, must still take precautions against the virus.

An immunocompromised person is more susceptible to infectious diseases and would have a harder time fighting it off due to a weakened immune system. Being immunocompromised can come in different ways. Immunosuppression is when the immune system is purposely weakened due to medication, said GoodRx. According to the Guardian, three percent of Americans have immunosuppression.

“[It] is a disease that affects your nerves and your nervous system and your muscles kind of weaken, and so I have trouble walking. So one of the things with that disease is that, like with all immunosuppressant diseases, your immune system kicks into overdrive to kind of fight the MS and it eats away at what’s called the myelin, which is kind of like, a protective coating over your nerves,” said Wells.

He describes myelin as the protective coating of an electrical wire. The rubber and insulation get eaten away and the copper wires are exposed. All the energy from the wire is exposed, he said.

When Trevecca announced that classes would be moved online for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester, it was still not safe for Wells to be living in a dorm with his wife Laurie Wells, resident director of Georgia Hall.

Wells has moved through different places to stay in isolation.

“My boss, Dr. Lena Welch and her husband, Steve, invited me to come to their home, and so I finished almost, exactly to the day, two months at their home in Hermitage. So that was the first place that I went for isolation.”

He moved back to the dorms during the summer when residents left. When school started again, Wells moved to an apartment in Benson Hall.

“So I was down there for the entire year, the academic year 2020-2021, so both spring and summer, and at that point in time, I learned to write online courses, so all of my courses last year were online courses.”

This spring, Wells and his wife Laurie

received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine and were able to move back in together. Everything felt almost normal as they could be living together again and be around each other without masks.

“And then the delta variant came. Because of the immunosuppressant drug I’m on, they weren’t sure how much coverage I had from the vaccine in the spring. So my doctor again said, ‘you really should not be living in the dorm’, and so now I’m living in UTA, in one of the six apartments where the door opens right directly outside ... This time, however, I am not staying in my apartment, for the most part, to teach.”

Wells teaches virtually full-time from his office this semester. He teaches three communication courses every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

“I get up early. It takes me about two or two and a half hours to get ready because of my MS because I have to do lots of stretching exercises and it’s also a disease that has a lot of fatigue related to it, so you’re tired a lot,” said Wells.

His wife Laurie picks him up from UTA in her car and drives him to Tidwell, where his office is.

Bella Agee, a junior organizational communication major, is the teaching assistant in Well’s Theories of Communication class. As his teaching assistant, Agee handles all the technology needed for the classroom. She sets the camera, works the computer and loads the Zoom meeting.

“Dr. Wells and I stay in contact to where if there’s something that he -- an activity or something -- wants to be done that day, I’m kind of, how he’s put it, his presence. I’m kind of Dr. Wells in the classroom... I’m his hands and feet in the classroom since he can’t be there,” said Agee.

Meaghan Larkins, a junior communication studies major, has Wells for theories of communication as well as her academic advisor.

“I don’t think much would change if it was in-person versus online because he’s already made the class very interactive and fun. He always makes sure we understand the material. I love our discussions,” said Larkins.

After teaching three classes three days a week, he works on administrative work, prepares for classes and grades all in his office.

“I pretty much stay in my office and I don’t allow anybody to visit me in my office.”

Tuesday and Thursday when he does not teach classes, he stays in his apartment to work.

“I pretty much just work all day. I’m the chair of the department, as well as a professor, so I do administrative work and I prepare for classes and grade and things like that,” said Wells.

In the evenings, Wells spends time with his wife. She brings him dinner and they eat together. They still need to practice social distancing and wearing masks when not eating because of her job as Georgia Hall resident director.

Wells does not see many people in person throughout the day, but he thinks

this year is an improvement from the last. He enjoys seeing his teaching assistants and other faculty members even if it’s from a distance.

Wells and his wife Laurie Wells still find ways to spend time together despite not being able to live together.

“It’s pretty tough because we’ve been married for 27 years... But we do spend time together in person, just distanced and masked. We FaceTime a lot during the day to talk several times a day. It’s, yeah, not the best but it’s what we have to do right now to keep him protected as much as possible,” said Laurie Wells.

Laurie Wells described what their typical weekend together looks like. They spend time driving around either for errands or just sightseeing.

“I’ll go to Walmart and the grocery store, things like that. Do our shopping and he just sits in the car while I go in and he’ll be answering emails and stuff in the car,” said Laurie Wells.

Sunday morning they both attend church at Trevecca Community Church virtually. Jeffrey Wells mentioned that he livestreams into a Sunday school class every week.

“Sometimes we’re in our separate places watching virtually. But we get together for lunch and I’ll order takeout, or I like this weekend, I cooked a roast and he came over and ate dinner over here together. Then we usually end up watching a movie together later that day,” said Laurie Wells. “I’m hoping that more people get vaccinated and the numbers start going down. And ultimately my hope is for him to at least, by the end of next semester, to be able to move back.”

Vaccinations are not required on campus like masking is. With vaccinations being widely available, students and faculty are encouraged to get vaccinated. Currently, the vaccination rate at Trevecca is about 56 percent for students and 76 percent for faculty, according to Samantha Craighead, resident healthcare provider.

“I think vaccination is a great way to prevent severe complications. I think the more people that are vaccinated, the less likely we will have severe outcomes. It’s well demonstrated that people who are unvaccinated are 17 times more likely to be hospitalized than an unvaccinated individual and that’s at a national level,” said Craighead.

However, Wells thinks requiring vaccinations gets close to messing with freedoms. It is difficult to mandate that somebody take medicine, especially when it has been so politicized, he said.

“I think that it is good that we are encouraging vaccinations and that we’re giving incentives for vaccinations. I don’t think that there’s any other way, though, to go without masks. I believe that it works, and I believe that it’s necessary.”

Wells had never been a person to struggle with depression, but living in isolation last summer was beginning to affect his mental health. Amidst uncertainty about a deadly virus and civil unrest due to the presidential election and racial inequality, 2020 was a heavy year for many.

“All of those things affected me, and

I think I was battling some depression, however, getting to see my wife on almost a daily basis kept me out of that for the most part. Anytime I could, I would try to go somewhere to walk in the park, that was helpful. I also put a bird feeder outside my window and then birds came. That was beautiful, that took my attention away from being by myself. And then the urban farm brought the goats over to do their grazing in the little wooded area behind Benson. That was enjoyable. So anything related to animals kind of picked up my spirits, but I don’t think I ever fell into a true, deep clinical depression,” said Wells.

Wells does not have a bird feeder in his current UTA apartment. “I ended up giving it to somebody because I thought we’re not going to need this anymore, then the delta variant arrived and yeah... I’m gonna get him another one for that apartment because that really did help,” said Laurie Wells. She then mentioned that they are in the process of talking about getting an emotional support animal.

“Just to help me emotionally being by myself so much and him being by himself, and maybe share the animal somehow. I don’t know, we just started talking about this, but I think for him, and I shouldn’t say what he needs, I think that would help him, emotionally. I know he gets depressed sometimes or feels bad about his circumstances. And he loves his students and misses being in the classroom. I think from all the studies that animals really do help with your emotions, so we just started talking about the possibility of getting an emotional support animal,” said Laurie Wells.

For Wells, maintaining his well-being through spirituality and reading helps a lot. “I try to make sure that I’m always reading something. Dr. Boone asked for us as the faculty and staff to read N.T. Wright’s ‘After You Believe: Why Christian Character Matters’. I’ve been working on that book. I just bought a book on ‘Confronting Injustice Without Compromising Truth’ by a guy named Thaddeus J. Williams. I just heard of him. I’m not sure I will agree with everything he says, but the title was interesting to me. I’m kind of a big social justice person. And of course Scripture,” he said.

“The Lord has been my strength and he has provided me with lots of hope because he has led people in my life, actually through Zoom -- which is crazy -- that have had messages that I really needed to hear. It’s kind of in many ways helped me redevelop some of my faith and I’m very grateful. And, you know, I couldn’t have done any of this without my wife, Laurie’s support.”

In August the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention began recommending a third dose of Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna for immunocompromised people. Wells recently received his booster shot of the Moderna vaccine. Now he is waiting to get a clear from his doctor.

“I’m hoping there will be evidence for next semester that would allow me to feel comfortable going back into the classroom. That may not happen, but maybe it will, so that will be my hope.”

NEWS

Three major construction projects underway

CONTINUED FROM COVER

2,600 new square feet in total.” Mysty Diehl, engagement officer for events and strategic initiatives, said the construction on campus will result in a great resource for campus life. She is hopeful, after coming out of the Covid-19 pandemic, the work on campus will result in an abundance of gathering spaces for students.

“Trevecca exists for the students, so we need to have an amazing student center,” Diehl said. “A place for students to go eat, to hang out, and just have a good time.” The new health sciences building has a completion date between February and March of 2022.

“The health sciences building is on track and on budget,” said Monzu. The building will connect to Greathouse and will rise four stories, with the PA program moving to the top three floors. The building is born from Trevecca’s intention to grow the STEM program.

“We just created the new school of STEM not long ago,” said Monzu. Diehl emphasized how the health and science programs are a vital part of the Trevecca community, and also bring in revenue to the university.

“I love the fact that we will be able to have

more students [in the programs], and put more students out there in the healthcare system,” Diehl said.

The new dormitories should be the last of the current construction to be completed. They will be available in Fall 2023. Housing will be apartment style. The building will rise 6 floors, with a rooftop overlooking the city. Amenities include a workout facility, 24/7 market, technology access to doors, and a place to grill and garden in the back, said Monzu. This will be Trevecca’s first co-ed living facility.

Diehl is excited for the much needed housing space the facility will be able to provide.

“This gives us more housing for our students, which is something that we have been lacking,” she said.

Deihl looks forward to the great days ahead as campus continues to grow and society continues to transition out of the Covid-19 pandemic.

“There are so many things we have not been able to do because of Covid, and the thing that is so exciting to me is that we are going to come out of Covid and have all of these new facilities,” said Deihl.

Diehl is confident that there is an end



Photo courtesy of Mariano Monzu

in sight for the construction, which she said might be adding to the “unrest” on campus.

“It has restricted even more where you can be, unless you’re outside,”

Diehl said. “But we are doing all of this to better the campus for [students], I mean, that’s what we are here for.”



Artist rendering of 3rd floor commuter lounge in Jernigan. Photo courtesy of Mariano Monzu



Artist rendering of the updated cafeteria in Jernigan. Photo courtesy of Mariano Monzu