

Housekeeping staff are campus' unsung heroes

CLARENCE TURPIN
STAFF WRITER

Visualize waking up at four in the morning every day to clean bathrooms, dorm lounges and classrooms. It's a necessary job that many don't have the gumption for. Luckily, our housekeeping staff does.

"To do housekeeping, you have to have a certain amount of fortitude," said Director of Environmental Services Gerald Little. "Not everyone can do it."

Though early mornings might seem unbearable, some staff members see early rising as just a circumstance that takes some adjusting to.

"It is not easy to adjust your body to work way before the sun comes up," said Housekeeper Adrianna Tralongo. "To get eight hours of sleep, I have to go to bed at 7 p.m., and that can be hard to do."

However, this hard work does not go unnoticed.

"I think that what they do is very valuable," said Little. "Without housekeeping, the campus would not be as prosperous."

Most of the housekeeping staff enjoys interacting with coworkers and students.

"Working in Dana, I enjoy interacting with the students throughout the course of a day," said Housekeeper Eionshafae Coppedge. "I like interacting with my coworkers as well. It is an upside to the job."

Throughout the year, many students take notice of the efforts of the housekeeping staff and believe that these staff members are worthy of admiration.

"Housekeeping is really what keeps the campus going," said senior Neisha Washington. "Housekeepers do the grunt work. If it weren't for housekeeping, the campus would not look as nice."

"Without (housekeepers), dorms would get extremely gross quickly," said sophomore Will Koppenhaver. "It is nice to have them because they keep bathrooms clean, and that is important to me because I hate showering in an unsanitary place."

"I think (housekeepers) are very important because of what they offer us," said Richardson. "They allow us to have a clean lifestyle and a more sanitary living space."

As a residential advisor, junior Morgan Myers has a special respect for the housekeeping staff.

"There would be trash from students left everywhere (without them)," said Myers. "We are not going to clean up after ourselves, unfortunately."

Junior Ryan Phillips believes that the housekeeping staff does not receive as much gratitude as they deserve.

"I feel like (the housekeepers) are irreplaceable," said Phillips. "They often do not get enough credit for what they do or deal with."

At the end of the day, gratification is not the most important thing to our housekeeping staff — it is doing their jobs to the best of their abilities and making the campus a better place.

"It makes my day when I can make someone else's day," said Floor Technician and Housekeeper Andre Fitzhugh.

One Hillel of a club: promoting Jewish learning

JOSH BALLARD
STAFF WRITER

It was cold and nearly dark when I went to the Hut. Fortunately, the freezing temperatures and approaching night gave way to warm smiles and welcoming light.

I was going to Shabbat, a weekly event put on by Guilford College's chapter of Hillel, "the largest Jewish campus organization in the world," according to the Hillel International website.

"We promote Jewish learning on campus," said club president and first-year Stephanie Byer. "We're open to everyone who wants to come learn and participate."

The group of around 11 people was indeed very welcoming. I was visiting a particularly special Shabbat celebration, one that included wearing pajamas and making s'mores.

Shabbat is the Hebrew word for Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of rest meant to represent G-d resting after creating the world.

Shabbat is observed from sundown on Fridays until nightfall on Saturdays.

While there, before making the s'mores, we lit candles, poured wine — in this case, grape juice — and broke delicious Challah bread, all while saying the requisite blessings.

After this welcoming and eye-opening ceremony, attendees could have more bread, grape juice, cookies, milk and s'mores. The meeting became more of a time to speak among friends and reflect on the week's events.

Senior Will Singley is not a member of Hillel, nor is he Jewish, but he had a pleasant time at the Shabbat ceremony.

"I had never worn a yarmulke before, so that was neat," Singley said in an email interview. "It is always very neat to get first-hand experience and learn about the customs of a different religion that you are not normally exposed to."

Had it not been for Byer and her friends, these experiences might not have been possible.

Junior Sara Besmertnik was one of the few people involved in Hillel last year and had been running into issues with event attendance, as well as finding new leadership.

"We asked around to see if anyone would step up to lead Hillel for this year and nobody said they would," said Besmertnik in an email interview. "We didn't fill out a budget request and the club ended up on hiatus."



Hillel club president and first-year **Stephanie Byer** pours grape juice for the weekly Shabbat meeting. In addition, the group meets on Mondays bimonthly.

"Stephanie (Byer) and I are both in the (Am I The Only One) club, and one night we started doing our own little Shabbat service in the Hut," said Hillel member and first-year Amanda Libby. "Other people heard about it and wanted to know if we would start up the Hillel club again. We both said yes and started having official meetings."

Besmertnik was able to meet with Byer and get the club back on track, both financially and organizationally.

Hillel now holds Shabbat on Fridays at 7 p.m. in the Hut. They also meet on Mondays twice a month at 6 p.m. in the Hub in the Library. These meetings are open to the campus community.

Upcoming events include a Hanukkah celebration and multiple events for the spring, including a Passover event.

"You don't have to identify as Jewish to join the Hillel," said treasurer and first-year Laura Todd, who is not Jewish herself. "All people are welcome as long as they are open-minded and respectful of the faith."

Author Terry Roberts speaks on crafting first novel

ALLISON DEBUSK
STAFF WRITER

It's 1917. At a luxurious resort in the North Carolina mountains, local townspeople watch over imprisoned Germans while the hotel manager falls in love with a married woman from New York City.

This is the plot of Terry Roberts' first novel, "A Short Time to Stay Here," which was the focus of Roberts' campus visit and book reading on Nov. 15.

"We invited Terry Roberts to come because we love supporting local and regional authors," said Visiting Assistant Professor of English Mylène Dressler.

Roberts was born in Asheville, N.C., and raised near Weaverville. He currently lives in Chapel Hill.

Roberts spent four years crafting this novel that depicts a little-known piece of history. In 1917 when Congress declared war on Germany, the U.S. government put German citizens who were on American soil into internment camps.

One of these camps was in Hot Springs, N.C. at the Mountain Park Hotel, which housed over 2,300 Germans and employed local townspeople to guard them.

"You had this collision with these sophisticated Germans and these locals who had never been out of the county," said Roberts.

Roberts drew inspiration from this

culture clash, modeling some of his characters after real people. However, his protagonists are his own creations, and Roberts uses these characters to his advantage.

"The book felt like it was grounded in history and grounded in reality, but it was free to explore whatever I wanted with these characters," said Roberts.

That exploration took on some deep questions.

"I'm really interested in how people come to understand the human condition and themselves over the course of their lives, and I think that comes out in this book," said Roberts. "The man and woman are trying desperately to understand what it's all about."

While on campus, Roberts visited Dressler's Introduction to Fiction class, where he answered a variety of questions regarding inspiration, research and setting.

At the reading, Roberts read three excerpts from his book and also took questions. One attendee asked if he enjoyed writing and publishing a novel.

"As long as you don't care about this end result," he said, holding up a copy of his book, "it's a pleasure."

Roberts' visit was just one of the many events planned for National Novel Writing Month.

Every Wednesday, fiction-writing workshops have been held in Duke 103

from 3:30–4:30 p.m. On Thursday nights from 7:00–9:00 p.m. students enjoyed quiet writing time in the Hut. On Nov. 30, there will be an open mic night in the Greenleaf at 7:00 p.m., to which the English department has invited anyone who would like to share their creative writing.

During National Novel Writing Month, writers attempt to pen a 50,000-word novel in 30 days. Some Guilford students are participating this year, including juniors Amber Swan and Carissa Dulchinos.

Writers across the nation participate for a variety of reasons.

"I have written a novel before, but I'm participating in NaNoWriMo to challenge myself not to rest on my laurels," said first-time participant Swan in an email interview.

"The constraints of NaNoWriMo ensure that I don't have time to revise or plan," said second-time participant Dulchinos via email. "It's really about just creating something. That, coupled with the fact that no one ever has to read it, releases a lot of the pressure to create something good."

Whether it's a novel written in 30 days or a work that takes four years, Dulchinos echoes a sentiment that stretches across all boundaries of writing and entices many authors.

"You never really know what you'll end up with," she said. "I think that's part of the fun, though."