

FEATURES

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Exploring January Term 2015



Guilford's J-Term provided students with opportunities to gain new experiences on and off campus. Students had the ability to travel to places such as Ghost Ranch in New Mexico, pictured above.

BY ALLISON STALBERG
STAFF WRITER

From media bingeing on Guilford College campus to making jewelry in New Mexico to rebuilding a village school in El Salvador, students return to this spring semester with newfound experiences.

Guilford's January term offers students a way to receive credit in classes that are not normally available.

They also often happen in places outside the campus bubble.

Take senior Trent Evans, for example, who traveled to Central America and aided in redeveloping a school in El Salvador.

"My favorite part of the trip would be learning and taking in the hardships El Salvador has faced, then being able to hear the stories

and see the people who were affected by such a harsh history," said Evans. "It's a form of learning that you just can't get in a classroom setting."

Further south from Evans, senior Kristy Lapenta spent J-Term on South America's equator in both the highest capital city in the world and the Galapagos Islands.

"It's every biologist's dream," said Lapenta. "The baby sea lions were awesome. I would just sit on the beach, and they would just waddle up, sniff your feet and then run away. Well, a sea lion running: more like waddle away rapidly."

Other students such as first-year Jonah Woodstock went across the Atlantic Ocean. Among other Guilford students, he studied fantasy writers in Oxford with Instructor of English Caroline McAlister.

"My favorite part was how I

would take a class and then be able to go out into the town and see firsthand what I was just learning about," said Woodstock. "Walking the same walks as Tolkien, and going to the same pubs that Lewis Carroll went to, I was immersed in history."

Senior Andrew Jones did not have to go so far from home. He went to New Mexico to study the art of silversmithing.

"I choose New Mexico because I knew some people who went, and it was pretty hyped," said Jones. "It just seemed like somewhere to go that was not too far away, still accessible, spoke English and I've never been to that part of the country."

Don't want to leave campus? No problem. There are still J-Term options for people who wish to

stay at Guilford. Sam Knecht, sophomore, was taught about binge media under Associate Professor of English Heather Hayton and Assistant Professor of Psychology Rachel Riskind.

"I got four credits for watching all of 'Game of Thrones,' reading two Neil Gaiman books, and playing through a Pokemon game," said Knecht. "We had to post journal entries at the end of every day. We also wore a pedometer everywhere and counted the calories we were eating because it was an experiment."

Assistant Dean of Career and Community Learning Alan Mueller also taught improv/sketch-comedy and the art of the job interview.

"I met some cool people, and we had off-campus activities so I didn't really feel that isolated

feeling I expected to get during an on-campus J-Term," said senior Cameron McDowell. "I learned a great deal about thinking on my feet, as well as how to present yourself in a job interview situation, how to 'check yourself' in regards to posture and involuntary motions."

So if you want to get experience-centered learning, or just need some required credits out of the way, J-term is there for you.

Who knows? Maybe it will open new doors like it did for Lapenta, who plans to intern at the Galapagos after graduation this spring.

"I'm just glad I had this opportunity," said Lapenta. "That's what I like about Jan Terms, I couldn't study abroad for an entire semester and graduate on time due to being a double major. That's why I think Jan term is really cool."

Local Quaker history gets a cinematic revamp

BY THOR TOBIASSEN
STAFF WRITER

Two plays depicting some of the most exciting times in Quaker history are being reimagined to make them more dynamic than ever, and some Guilford College students are along for the ride.

Snow Camp Outdoor Theater is an Alamance County company that produces plays based on significant events in Quaker history. Their two shows, "Sword of Peace" (about Quakers in the American Revolution) and "Pathway to Freedom" (about Quakers who ran a station on the Underground Railroad) have entertained and educated audiences for years.

Now, brothers Dean and Starr Jones, who have extensive experience in all areas of the Hollywood studio lot and have worked with Snow Camp Outdoor Theater for years, are reworking the shows to ensure that they continue to connect with audiences for years to come.

Writer-director Dean Jones plans to refocus and rebrand the shows.

"We're going to try to re-define outdoor drama to make it more cinematic with a film score from beginning to end, special effects, sound effects, big battle scenes, stuff that makes it have higher production value to try to entertain people from scene to scene," said Dean. "Not just from the historical view; we have to entertain folks at the same time."

The Jones brothers boast impressive resués. Born and raised in North Carolina, they both hold BFAs in acting and directing from UNC Greensboro. They got their start in makeup and effects, eventually working on blockbusters

like "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest," "The Abyss" and the "Day of the Dead" remake. They now work in a variety of roles in the film industry and have their own production company that films in North Carolina.

On the weekend of Feb. 6, a film crew helmed by the Jones brothers shot a "Sword of Peace" teaser trailer designed to entice audiences to see the play by combining period accuracy with intense cinematic action and drama. Simulated cannon fire blasted clouds of dirt and ash from the ground, actors in British and colonial uniforms bellowed orders and

"You get much more of a feel for it, like how loud the muskets were, and you get to see things up close and personal which is a little different than watching 'The Patriot,'" Roe said.

Some students worked behind the scenes like fellow senior Noelle Lane, who worked on the production as a costume assistant.

"It just connects to our history of who we are as a campus really well," said Lane.

Perhaps most excitingly, even bigger things may be in the works for Snow Camp.

"We hope to develop both stories into feature films, and we'll shoot them all in this area," Starr Jones revealed. Feature films would provide an important consistent revenue stream for Snow Camp.

James Shields, a Snow Camp board member and director of the Bonner Center at Guilford, is thrilled with the film prospects and the new focus on cinematic style.

"It's a totally different direction for us, but we're really excited about the prospect of having this thing with 'Sword of Peace' happen," said Shields. "With a film piece, you can do so much

more, and it's very rare that you can do that and actually do it on the spot where it happened."

According to Starr Jones, it all comes down to passion for one's roots and history.

"It's living history because we are where it happened," said Starr. "It's important to tell the history of what happened, and to honor the people that did the things they did, both the people willing to fight and the Quakers because it took everybody. They were all American patriots in their own way."

"We're going to try to re-define outdoor drama to make it more cinematic with a film score from beginning to end..."

DEAN JONES, WRITER-DIRECTOR

thrust and parried in sword fights and meeting houses full of Quakers debated whether or not to join the brewing revolution.

The sense of excitement was palpable and Guilford students who volunteered their skills for the trailer said that they enjoyed helping to make the narrative come to life. Senior and history buff Chris Roe played a colonial militiaman and said that, even with the stop-start nature of filming, it still made him feel more connected to the past.