

News

Bulldog Warrior Challenge hurts so good

By Michelle Alwerdt
Pilot staff writer

Throwing hand grenades, dodging paintballs and jousting aren't typical events that fill up a student's week.

However, through the sponsorship of the Gardner-Webb ROTC, students got to experience these activities Apr. 14-18 for the school's second Military Appreciation Week.

The Bulldog Warrior Challenge consisted of a different event each afternoon, and concluded with a barbeque and awards ceremony at the end of the week. The events included a mock hand grenade assault course, rock climbing, a pugil joust tournament, a paintball tournament, the Audie Murphy physical challenge, and a tug o' war.

Teams consisted of four to six students and were both co-ed and single sex. Three teams showed up every day to each event, while other teams came out for one or two of the events.

The winning team for the entire week was an all-female team called the GI Janes.

Winners of each individual event and the overall week winners received military coins as prizes. Written on one side of the coins are the five branches of the military, and the other side had phrases like "Army Strong."

The planners and organizers behind the whole week were Maj. Brian Luti, Brian Arnold and student Julie Boudreau. Helping with the week was a graded project for Boudreau for one of her ROTC classes.

"I really wanted to participate and I did what I could," said Boudreau. "I feel like everyone had a lot of fun and I was impressed that other branches of the military came out to support us."

"They weren't there to recruit and so it was really cool to see other students interact with them. It went exactly as planned."

The week was by no means

easy. For the grenade course, students had to run to different stations and throw grenades at certain targets, all while being shot at by paintballs.

The team that completed the course the fastest, with the least shots and most target hits, won.

For the climbing event students were timed on the rock wall at the Broyhill Adventure Course. At the jousting tournament, students were confined to circles with the task of knocking each outside of the circle using pugil sticks. The sticks have a large ball of padding at each end. Extra points were given for hitting the other student in the head or stomach.

The paintball tournament was a game of "capture the flag" with paintball guns and bunkers. And finally, the physical challenge consisted of push-ups, sit-ups and other such exercises.

Freshman Kelsi Zaldivar said she only participated because her roommates asked her to, but said in the end she was glad she did it.

"I have a deeper appreciation for those who serve in the military now," said Zaldivar. "My favorite event was the grenade course. It was pretty fun even though I was scared the whole time."

Jousting tournament winner Kayla Alexander bruised her finger so bad the doctors said it was almost broken.

"It was painful but it was worth it. I'll wear gloves next time," said Alexander.

Kali Fletcher, member of the winning GI Janes team, also enjoyed the week.

"My favorite event was the grenade course on the first day, it was so intense," she said. "Jousting was rough though, my hands hurt. It was definitely a unique experience though."

"I'm going to make all my friends do it next year."

Arnold came up with the idea week last year, and this year Arnold and Luti created the event. They are pleased with the outcome and plan on making it an annual event.

"I knew the turnout was going to be small, with so many events and the times," said Arnold. "Also, people might not know what something was, so they might not want to come out."

"After this year though I think word will spread about what everything was and how much fun it was. I'm very satisfied."

Luti also believes that the Bulldog Warrior Challenge has staying power.

"I think we laid down a solid foundation for future events," said Luti. "I don't think we can improve upon the content or concept, but we can improve the finer details."

"I am pretty happy with how everything turned out. I hope students who were apart of it this year will come back and that participation will continue to increase."

See p.6 for pictures from the Bulldog Warrior Challenge.

'Rapture of Canaan' author ends Brown lecture series on high note

By Molly Phipps
and Blake DuDonis
Pilot staff writers

The Joyce Compton Brown Lecture Series came to a close last Thursday with Sheri Reynolds, author of the acclaimed novel, "The Rapture of Canaan."

The book was an Oprah Book Club selection and a New York Times bestseller. It was required reading for all Composition 2 students at GWU, almost all of whom attended the lecture on Thursday.

"I am definitely an introverted person, so this kind of experience is extraordinary because so many people here have read one of my books," said Reynolds.

Gardner-Webb's lecture series has been Reynolds' only visit to a university this year. Reyn-

olds said she doesn't get to speak at lectures very often because of her job. She teaches creative writing and literature classes at Old Dominion University. Reynolds currently lives in Cape Charles, Va.

She has, however, done readings at book stores. "I teach and so I'm in front of classes a lot. And I enjoy being around people, and seeing their expressions, and hearing what they're thinking," said Reynolds.

Reynolds was raised in Conway, S.C., where she lived until she moved on to Davidson College. After graduating in 1989, she went to graduate school at Virginia Commonwealth. It was there that she took a novel-writing class and began her first novel, "Bitterroot Landing."

Three more novels and a play followed.

At the lecture, Reynolds spoke a little about herself and her writing career. Her publisher, Putnam, let her go shortly after "The Rapture of Canaan" was published, due to budget cuts and its acquisition by another company.

Reynolds was unable to find another publisher until seven months later, when Oprah Winfrey called to say that "The Rapture of Canaan" had been selected for her book club, and Reynolds was to appear on the show.

The book sold more than one million copies in six weeks.

Her new publisher is Center Point Publishing.

Reynolds also has an official Web site, sherireynolds.com, where visitors can order or look up books, or simply find out more about the author and

her works.

In November her latest book, "The Sweet In Between," was released. The author has been working on a new book.

"I worked on it all last summer and then I just had to put it aside. About a month ago, I printed it off so that I could start peeking at it and gathering ideas for it," said Reynolds.

"I'm looking forward to getting back to it. And I'll start doing that in a few weeks."

Once she gets past the school year, Reynolds goes back to her writing, which she said is the main focus of her work.

"My work is not to publish; my work is not to concern myself with how many copies I sell; my work is to do my writing," she said. "The value is in the process."

GWU grad answers call to teach impoverished kids

By Christopher Shaver
Pilot staff writer

Gardner-Webb graduate Michael Mitteer has been accepted into the Teach For America program and expects to spend two years teaching secondary English to students in the Mississippi Delta.

"I've been thinking about teaching for a while now," said Mitteer, who graduated in 2007. "It's something I considered ever since I graduated. I kind of discovered I wanted to teach English."

Teach For America is an extension of AmeriCorps. According to the organization's Web site, "Each year, AmeriCorps offers 75,000 opportunities for adults of all ages and backgrounds to serve through a network of partnerships with local and national nonprofit groups."

Teach For America is designed to get aspiring teachers their foot in the door, while making a difference in the lives of children who live in impoverished areas of America.

Mitteer, who double-majored in business and theater, said he thought the opportunity was too good to pass up and decided to apply.

"The area where I'm going to be teaching, the average living wages are about \$12,000 a year. It's an area where you can

make a huge impact. What seems even better than getting to teach is getting to teach for incredibly underprivileged children?"

His next step is to fly to Houston, Texas, and go through a five-week "boot camp," where he will be trained in classroom management and other aspects of teaching.

In the second week of his training session, Mitteer will start teaching a summer school course.

He will also have to pass the Praxis 1 and 2 certification tests in order to teach in the public schools.

Mitteer said he started studying for the exams a few months before he decided to apply at Teach For America.

"It's the kind of test [Praxis 2] where even for people who graduated with English degrees, it's even tough for them. Luckily, I have a head start."

Although Mitteer said he was nervous, he said he could not pass up an opportunity to help children advance in the world.

"I'm sure there will be long days and it will be a long two years," Mitteer said. "But it will be really fulfilling."

Mitteer was co-author of the play "Work In Progress," which the GWU theater section staged in 2008.

The days that were: Seniors share top memories of GWU

By Pilot staff writers

Seniors who are about to graduate took time to recall some of their favorite moments as students at Gardner-Webb University.

Stefanie Friend said that her favorite memories are the football games and also the picnics up at Lake Holly field.

Laura Heath said that her favorites are the field trips with Dr. Jones, and dorm activities.

Amy Elliott had several to share:

1. Being in the plays "The Crucible" and "Laundry and Bourbon"
2. Celebrating after GWU beat the University of Kentucky in basketball
3. Intramurals
4. Sisters Ministry events
5. Watching "Friends" re-runs with friends at midnight.

"You realize this is the last time you will be living 3 feet away from your best friends ever again. Doing the mundane becomes very special."

Ezelis Sistrunk said: "It is hard to sum up four incredible years here at Gardner-Webb. It is hard to pin-point just one memory."

I have grown in ways that I would have never imagined, traveled to places I would have never

dreamed of, and made the best friends I could ever ask for.

I discovered my true passions — and I am constantly encouraged to do them through my Gardner-Webb family — so I will. Just dare me."

Kevin Graybeal's favorite memory? "Bobby Gastonia — what else is there to say?"

Lauren Bilyeu said her favorite moment was the night President Bonner's Inauguration Gala was held.

"Everyone came out to support Dr. Bonner. There was Big Band music and swing dancing; it was so much fun."

Kayley Potter: "My favorite memory while at Gardner-Webb is the night my best friend Lauren and I spent in Nice, France, on spring break junior year."

On this night, we met a 21-year-old boy and he showed us around the city, and we even ate ice cream from McDonald's. That was an experience I will never forget!"

Tim Jefferies said, "My favorite memory at Gardner-Webb was meeting my future wife."

Kelly Bridges' top memory of her time at GWU is conference track meets with the track and field team. "They were some of the best times."

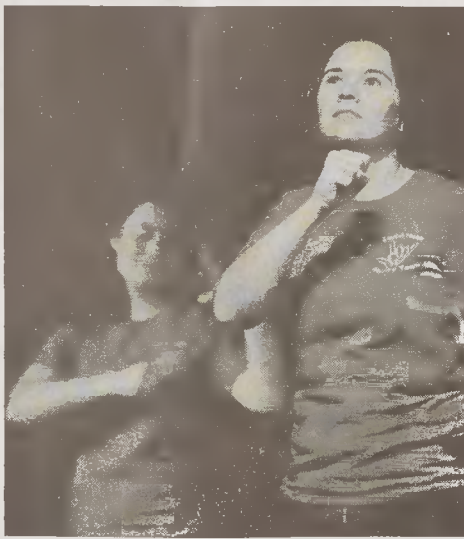


Photo by Tyler Kucifer

Members of the Joyful Hands choir perform during the Deaf Talent Show April 17 in Blanton Auditorium. The university-wide talents show takes the stage this Saturday in Blanton.

Whose got talent? GWU

By Christopher Shaver
Pilot staff writer

Students will showcase their talent by juggling, dancing, singing and playing the guitar during Gardner-Webb's second annual talent show Saturday in Blanton Auditorium at 7 p.m.

Jennifer Gray, the talent show coordinator, said she had nine acts scheduled to perform this weekend.

Gray said the students did not have to go through an audition process, though they were expected to attend two mandatory practices.

"We have a mandatory dress rehearsal the day of the talent show," Gray

said.

"We just need to see what they're going to do so it is appropriate for Gardner-Webb."

She said although there was not anything inappropriate in the past Student Activities still did not want to risk the chance of something slipping by.

Gray said although the talent show was usually scheduled for Reading Day, Friday, Student Activities was unable to reserve the spot.

There will be prizes for first, second and third place winners, but Gray said those prizes were being worked out.

"We're just trying to get the word out," Gray said.

University central location of counties' Senior Games

By Diana Palka
Pilot staff writer

Gardner-Webb University was the main hub of the Cleveland County Senior Games, which took place from April 20-24 at various locations across the county.

The games are "recreational and athletic competitions for adults 55 and above," according to the Cleveland County Chamber of Commerce Web site.

Deborah Ware, a professor of physical education at GWU, said that the turnout for this year's games was a lot bigger than last year.

Part of the reason was that this year Cleveland County's senior games were opened up to seniors in Lincoln and Gaston counties.

Both counties lacked an adequate number of participants to have their own games.

Richard and Sue-Jane Sides, 69-year-old Lincolnton residents, partici-

pated in all but two of the more than 40 events.

The couple said they are frequent skiers and hikers, yet they never participated in any organized competition prior to the Senior Games.

"We've always been active but we didn't know anything about Senior Games," said Richard Sides.

This was only the second time they had been part of the event, but the couple has already become ambassadors to the North Carolina Senior Games.

They travel to make speeches advertising the games, and to raise funds.

"You've got to stay active... if you sit down, you're gonna die," Sides said.

"One of my worst fears is going into a nursing home... This keeps me out of the hospital."

Ware wanted to give credit to the many GWU students who helped make the games possible.