

Montreat College's Student Voice

THE WHEATSTONE

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Move Over, Simon Cowell: Montreat's Got Talent!

Johnny McDowell

So we have all seen the TV phenomenon *America's Got Talent*, and if you have not—where have you been? Well, it seems that an entire season could be filmed right here at Montreat College. The auditorium was full of bustling students and intrigued staff members; the stage was set; and on Thursday, November 8, we witnessed the emergence of some of Montreat's most talented students. No one who was fortunate enough to be present in Upper Anderson can deny this.

The show was given a hilarious and boisterous opening thanks to the emceeing skills of the smooth moving Kate Thacker and the smooth talking Craig Walston. The hosts kept the night flowing and the laughs coming with little effort. Perhaps the highlights of their humorous hosting were their undeniable "sparks" and crunk dancing with the one and only Daniel Bennett (who, in my opinion, should have won most come-

dic act for his dancing).

The first act to light up the stage was that of Nik Franks as a charismatic televangelist. Both by his attire and acting abilities, Nik kept the audience entertained and laughing throughout his performance. He thoroughly deserved to win the most comedic performance that evening. Whether it was the mullet straight out of *Joe Dirt* or the hilarious content ("say 'Amen, hallelujah,' shake a leg and do a little dance"), it was clear that Nik had put a lot of effort into his act—and needless to say, the audience appreciated it.

Being a liberal arts college, it's logical to assume that there is a lot of musical talent here. Most of the acts were of the musical variety, but perhaps the most surprising element was that all the acts were unique and powerful. This was true whether it was the rockers—like Sam Collins or Craig and Joe in their Tenacious D "tribute"—or the piano accompanied acts, like that of the beautiful Josie Baker or the charming Phillip Marsalona.

The wealth of talent highlights how God blesses those who use their talents, which he has given to them, to glorify him. The acts kept the audience



Pete Taylor as Dwight Schrute

enthralled and in awe throughout, whether it was Steve Carter's ability to contort his body and attract the opposite sex, or the heart-breaking, Oscar worthy portrayal of C.S. Lewis, which left no dry eyes in the house.

It would be almost impossible to name one highlight from the show. Whether the acts were singing Disney classics or rapping emotive and powerful rhymes, they all sparkled in their own ways. Judge Callan White Hinman commented on the acts, claiming that she needed many more categories for winners as so many of the performers deserved the monetary prize.

Undeniably, the abilities of the contestants were intimidating. The judges had a very difficult job trying to decide on three winners out of 16 acts. Nik was awarded the comedic award thanks to his larger than life performance. The other two awards were harder to calculate, as witnessed by the judge's extension of their deliberation time, which led to a rather amusing time filler by the content presenters.

In the end, the judges gave the best solo performance to Shannon Olson for her excellent piano skills. She honestly blew the whole audience and judges away with her quick fingers, timing, and

accuracy. At one point in the performance, many of the audience stood up to get a better view of the talented pianist.

The group award was more contested, and a tie breaker was necessary to determine the winner. A decibel reader was used to determine the winner of this category, but the choice was no easy feat. The contest was between Cami Routh and Carlie Howard, who performed a touching and evanescent rendition of "On My Own," and Julie Hetu and Anna Mittower, who played the flute and piano in magical unity. Carlie and Cami walked home with the prize money, but all the performers walked back to the dorms with the respect of their peers.

The night's entertainment was thoroughly enjoyed by all, and it is a clear testament to the vast array of personalities and abilities here on campus. Yet the most exciting part is the fact that really what we all saw was just the tip of the iceberg. So I challenge all those students at Montreat to remember the joys of that Thursday night, but also to be ready to



Sam Collins performs an original song

push the bar up again for the next talent show, as it's apparent that *Montreat's Got Talent!*



Iffy Dean, Callan White Hinman, and Adam Brokaw



Nik Franks

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what's inside notes from abroad

VERSE
of the
MONTH

"There are different kinds of gifts,
but the same Spirit."

1 Corinthians 12:4