



WHO DO YOU CALL? VILLA RICA PARANORMAL INVESTIGATORS HUNT GHOSTS AT WICKS TAVERN.

MICAH NOEL
Contributing Writer



Photo: Micah Noel, *The West Georgian*

A cowboy, a 10-year-old girl, and a woman of the night. It sounds like the start of a bad joke or an Oscar-winning film. However, they are connected in a way that some will consider otherworldly.

These figures are all ghosts currently residing at the Wicks Tavern, the oldest historical structure in Villa Rica. If willing, one can communicate with them through the assistance of a local paranormal investigation group.

Villa Rica Paranormal Investigation officially opened its doors in April 2023, but it has been in the works for years. One of the Founders, Dee Johnson, has always loved the supernatural since she was a child and began investigating in her adult life.

“I went on my first investigation in 2010 with a group out of Tallapoosa,” said Johnson. “I had gone to the bathroom, and they were using a spirit box... when I came out, they asked, ‘Where were you? The spirits were asking for you. That’s what got me really interested.’”

Years later, Johnson befriended Co-founder Carla Buehler, and the women were able to connect through their love of the paranormal.

“I met Dee probably about eight years ago,” said Buehler. “We were actors at the Ghost Train in the Pine Mountain Gold

Museum. Let’s just start up a paranormal company, and I was on board.”

Since starting their new business endeavor, the pair have worked closely with the West Georgia Historical Society, allowing them access to the Wicks Tavern. Their first official investigation occurred earlier this year in May to a sold-out crowd awaiting their chance to witness the seemingly impossible. Multiple ghosts reside there, but the pair admit that some are more active than others.

“There is a lady upstairs, and we found out her name is Heather, and we found out she doesn’t like women,” said Buehler. “There’s a cowboy named Billy. There’s a little 10-year-old girl. Her name is Amelia. This is stuff we found through the spirit box, apps we have, and the mediums we have.”

An array of equipment is used for investigations. Spirit boxes, dowsing rods and even cat balls have been used to communicate with the spirits. Even if participants have limited knowledge of how to use the equipment, the pair allows them to choose what they would like to use during their experience.

“We use different techniques so that we can show people that different equipment picks up different things,” said Buehler. “We let the participants

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who buy tickets... use this equipment so that they can have their own personal experience.”

Their upcoming paranormal investigation occurs on Halloween night at the Wicks Tavern. The event is open to skeptics and believers alike. If lucky, participants may encounter the infamous spirits of the historic site.

“According to some mediums, that’s when the veil is the thinnest,” said Johnson. “We are hoping for good results.”

For more information on the event or paranormal investigation, visit their Facebook page for more details.

HALLOWEEN POOL PARTY SPECTACULAR

LANCE GOINS
Contributing Writer

The Lakeshore Natatorium’s spine-tingling Halloween Pool Party will send off Carrollton, Georgia’s annual Fall Festival on Oct. 28 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. It will be a ghoulish combination of community spirit and spooktacular entertainment. This event, a pillar of Carrollton’s rich tradition, is set to treat locals and guests alike for an exhilarating good time.

In Carrollton, the Halloween Pool Party at Lakeshore Natatorium is a recently established custom. As it becomes interwoven with Carrollton’s history, this eerie splash will be remembered fondly. It will offer locals and guests an enchanted manner to cap off the season’s celebrations as a spectacular finale to the Fall Festival.

“This is actually a fairly new event that we plan to do yearly here at the Natatorium,” said event organizer Jacob Willis. “The purpose of this event, much like many others, is to provide a good time for the community and to raise awareness of the pool’s existence.”

A spine-tingling epilogue to Carrollton’s Fall Festival, the Halloween Pool Party at

Lakeshore Natatorium delivers unusual thrills. There are lots of fun activities that will only be available during the pool party. With these pool party-specific attractions, it’s a Halloween event that shouldn’t be missed.

“The natatorium has been stagnant for a while and needs some new changes,” said Willis. “Speaking of, we will be having food, a DJ, swim competitions, water slide (bouncy house) and other events inside the pool area.”

Willis admits that there have been difficulties with this event, most notably the COVID-19 pandemic’s effects and other recent alterations. The event has made adjustments by putting health and safety procedures in place to guarantee the safety and well-being of attendees, displaying a dedication to upholding a safe and entertaining environment.

“COVID was rough for most events, especially ones with big gatherings. We saw drops in numbers of attendees but made changes to ensure everyone’s safety during the events,” said Willis. “Some changes included: facemasks, placing hand sanitizer

everywhere, cleaning constantly and purifying air qualities in buildings.”

Although the Halloween Pool Party at Lakeshore Natatorium has been all about having a spooky time in the pool, Willis hopes that in the future, the pool party can serve as a venue for local companies and artists to present their work to excited guests, encouraging neighborhood entrepreneurship.

“I would love for future events to have vendors depending on the nature of the event,” said Willis. “I would love to make a space for vendors to be able to show off their crafts.”

Willis has big plans to add more activities to the Halloween Pool Party in the future. In order to guarantee that the pool party keeps growing and changing for years to come, he intends to offer more chances for community involvement and development. Willis is committed to making Carrollton’s Halloween Pool Party a magical and long-lasting tradition.

“I’d love to play a spooky movie and have a ‘create your own spooky float’ event. I have a lot of ideas but not too sure what will stick yet,” said Willis.

Carrollton’s Fall Festival comes to an end with the Halloween Pool Party at Lakeshore Natatorium, and the neighborhood is ready for an unforgettable experience.



LIVING WEST

UWG GEARS UP FOR ANNUAL SAFE TREAT

NEVAEH BROWN
Contributing Writer

It's about that time again for the University of West Georgia's Housing and Residence Life Association to host the annual Safe Treat at Love Valley. On Thursday, Oct. 26, several organizations are expected to be present to hand out candy to children in the Carrollton community ranging from the ages of 2-12.

This event serves as a not-so-scary occasion for students to get involved and Carrollton families to celebrate Halloween in a secure and welcoming part of the community. From Love Valley to the Coliseum.

Before the kids dressed as cats, superheroes and princesses arrive, the Department of Art will put on the annual pumpkin carving competition. Now in its sixteenth respective year, called 'Carve on the Quad.'

In previous years, students have gotten creative with renditions of Henry Selick's hit movie "Coraline" (2006), a three-dimensional carving of a wolf and a simple painting of a black cat. Seeing as creativity knows no bounds, you can never go wrong

with the classic hallowed eyes and smile.

The three winners, voted for by the University's First Lady Tressa Kelly, get a trophy indicating first, second and third places, and their pumpkins are displayed centrally for the evening. All submissions have a home well before the festivities begin.

In years past, there have been games for parents to play with their kids. Fraternities, sororities, student-run organizations and even administrative organizations give away candy.

Still, the biggest concern every Halloween is safety, even more so with health mindfulness.

"Since we are post COVID-19, a lot of families are comfortable making an appearance," said Keshawn Allen, Housing and Residence Life's Vice President.

"Since this is a UWG event, there will be guaranteed candy and security to ensure everyone is having a good time." Allen continued.

There is typically a large turnout to the



Photo: Nevaeh Brown, *The West Georgian*

Safe Treat with families from the Carrollton community and the families of the University's faculty.

The Safe Treat has been the perfect place to have Halloween fun, as each participating organization will have themed tables with their activities and even prizes. Wolfie will also be making an appearance.

Speaking of prizes, there has been some incentive for student organizations to put their best foot forward. Money is usually awarded to the organization with the best decorated table.

Along with that, Safe Treat Movie Night will be showing "Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse" at The Oaks' Amphitheater at 7 p.m.

PLENARY SPEAKER DR. STEPHANIE HERSHINOW TALKS "BARBIE" AND BILDUNGSROMAN AT ENGLISH CONFERENCE

JANNETTE EMMERICK
Contributing Writer

Oct. 19 marked UWG's and LUR Journal's annual English Undergraduate Research Conference. With panels presenting student papers on Irish studies, humor theory and early American literature compared to contemporary works among many other topics that highlighted broader social observations through various essays.

At noon, the conference featured plenary speaker Dr. Stephanie Insley Hershinow, an Associate Professor of English at Baruch College, who encapsulated an overarching concept of the "Bildungsroman" in current literature particularly with the Barbie Movie.

"[Bildungsroman] comes from German and it refers to this kind of story of maturing and growing or changing and so pretty famously, many people have thought about how in the history of the novel," said Hershinow. "And it's something I talk about a lot in my first book that came out a few years ago."

Published in 2019, "Born Yesterday: Inexperience and the Early Realist Novel" focuses largely on studying the phenomenon of traits in coming-of-age early literature.

"Early novels don't really follow that kind of plot of the characters growing and changing, so a lot of them focus on young people, like teenagers for example," said Hershinow. "But I think most of

us are used to stories of teenagers being about them growing up and becoming adults. One of the things I was drawn to in these early novels is how so many of these characters, even though they age, they stay stubbornly stupid sometimes, even just naive.

"Those authors are kind of highlighting that as potentially a good thing," continued Hershinow. "That we might have that kind of fresh perspective on the world that isn't just like jaded and world weary and 'I've seen it all,' that kind of thing."

Conversely, the modern Bildungsroman requires growth of character in its resolution, much like the Barbie movie. However, unlike many common tellings of the coming-of-age story, "Barbie" focuses primarily on the growth of an adult, as opposed to an adolescent into adulthood. Furthermore, the movie also dips into surrealism rather than the slice-of-life genre.

"The Bildungsroman is a realist genre, it's about having characters in a literary text that operate in a way that we recognize as familiar to how real people encounter the world," said Hershinow. "One of my questions is whether we can apply that kind of term to something like [Barbie] that subverts a lot of realist expectations that we might have for it."

Hershinow also underscores the director,

Greta Gerwig's, common interest in telling stories related to women adolescence, including the 2019 production of "Little Women" and "Lady Bird."

"Once you write a paper, that doesn't mean you stop thinking about the thing that you wrote about," said Hershinow. "And the same is true for a book. Even though [my book] came out just before the pandemic, it's something that still had resents for me. So when I see a movie like Barbie, I'm like 'ugh, I wish I could have written about Barbie.'"

While "Barbie" is one film that resembles the Bildungsroman, there are plenty more both modern and early works of literature that fit the overarching theme.

"One of the things I was thinking about a lot in my book was this phrase that keeps getting used in 18th century novels which is 'entering the world,'" said Hershinow.

The Bildungsroman is not just about entering the world as an adult, but also navigating socially.

"We have a big, very popular business school, and I have a lot of students that think 'yes, I'd like to go work in finance because I want to make money and I want to help my family' and you know, they have a lot of pressures guiding them in that direction," said Hershinow. "But they also often do express in class anxiety about becoming a kind of corporate drone, saying, 'I don't want to just go live/work in a faceless highrise where I don't get to know anyone' even though they're 18, 19, or 20."

In a way, every individual is living their own Bildungsroman. Ideally learning and growing no matter their stage in life, trying to find their own balance and connecting with literature that expresses their struggles and experiences.

For more on Hershinow's research, her book is available on amazon or can be purchased here: <https://www.press.jhu.edu/books/title/11986/born-yesterday>

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FORMER UWG STUDENT TO COMPETE IN SLED DOG WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

TUCKER COLE
Contributing Writer

Living in an area with a climate like that of West Georgia (one that is lucky to get half an inch of snow during the coldest part of winter), most do not hear much about sled dogs.

But Anna Marmann of Villa Rica has set out to change that, after she and her sled dog team were selected as one of the top competing teams in the country to be on Team USA for the International Federation of Sleddog Sports (IFSS) Dryland World Championships this November, held in Olvega, Spain.

Marmann grew up locally and attended Bremen High School before graduating from The Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. She also attended additional semesters at The University of West Georgia, focusing on Mathematics and Physics courses.

While she underwent this rigorous academic path, a childhood dream from a movie stuck with her and eventually put her on the sled dog path.

“My favorite movie growing up was Iron Will, which is about a young man following his passion of racing sled dogs,” Marmann said. “I fell in love with the Siberian Husky breed and have wanted one since I was 8 years old. I finally got my first Siberian Husky in 2018 and she is my best friend in the entire world.”

After that, she just needed a sport that

was warm-weather friendly, and that was exactly what she found.

In her words, “I then came across on social media the dry-land sled dog sports such as bikejoring, scooterjoring, rig and canicross to realize I could do these sports in Georgia on our trails in the cooler months. So this turned from learning the sport in Georgia to traveling up north to compete in both dry land and snow disciplines of the sled dog sports.”

She has now been in the sport for four and a half years and has been racing three years, serving as a key figure or leader in a number of organizations related to dog sledding.

Marmann currently owns four huskies, named Lumi, Kovaa, Mahti and Fiksu. Right now, she only competes in events that require one or two dogs, as two of her dogs are still young and need further training and experience.

And it takes a lot to train and take care of the dogs to optimize their performance.

“The team has canine physical therapists, masseuses, excellent veterinarians at Banfield Pet Hospital — we work with coaches and mentors, pool memberships at Crowe Farm Canines in Ropoville for conditioning, and a very well tailored nutrition and conditioning plan,” said Marmann.

“Many key areas have to be broken down for such a dynamic sport,” she

continued regarding their training. “First off, my dogs not only have to be physically conditioned but also mentally ready. We are very consistent with physical training and slowly ramping up to ensure we avoid injuries but also making sure the dogs maintain outstanding work ethic.”

Outside of dog sled racing, the Bremen graduate has been working with Decostar Industries for over 14 years, which is a Magna Exteriors plant in the Automotive Industry. She has held various roles such as Product Engineering, Program Management, Production Launch, World Class Manufacturing and Business Development.

“I definitely have to be creative with my time and define which things outside of work hold value when it comes to allocating my free time,” she said. “For example, I will train dogs incredibly early in the morning before work, complete my personal fitness training during a lunch break, and then throw in a bike handling skills ride after work.”

With this Olympic-level competition coming up, Marmann is looking for as much support as she can get.

“We have started our process in trying to fundraise for our trip to the World Championships in Olvega, Spain to compete on Team USA,” she said. “We would love any ideas anyone might have to fundraise for such a financially challenging journey.”

The Dryland World Championships will be held in Olvega, Spain from November 20-26. Those interested in Marmann’s journey can keep up on the Lumina Tribe Facebook or Instagram pages.



Photo: Tucker Cole, *The West Georgian*

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

BOYSCOTT: YOUR NEW FAVORITE INTROSPECTIVE INDIE BAND

EMMA SWALES
Editor-in-Chief

The music industry has become a very competitive and oversaturated field in recent years now that everyone has access to various forms of technology to easily produce music. It can be hard to get a foot in the door and a solid career as a musician, but this wasn’t the case for indie artist Scott Hermo.

While attending college in Nashville, Tenn. in 2015, Hermo decided to get some friends together and turn his ideas and inspirations into fully recorded songs. What was just a fun project for a group of college students turned into Boyscott, a popular new indie band with a successful debut album.

Boyscott’s melodic sound takes its listeners to a dream-like state with its mellow guitar riffs and soothing vocals. The band takes a unique spin on

the typical definition of indie rock by generating warm and sunny music that will instantly remind you of summer.

The Boyscott lineup has always had a revolving door of members, but Hermo continued to carry the band’s name and found new friends to fill in along the way. The current lineup consists of Scott Hermo on guitar and vocals, Emma Willer on guitar and vocals, Davey Alaimo on bass and Noah Dardaris playing the drums.

“In the beginning of it all, there were a lot of people kind of coming and going,” said Hermo. “I was a student, and I was friends with students, so it was really whoever was around and was interested at the time. Some people fell in love with the music stuff, some people got sick of it, but it wasn’t until later that

we started to get a core group of people together.”

Boyscott released its first album, “Goose Bumps” in the fall of 2015. Soon after, the band started to gain popularity and for the first time, began playing live shows in different cities.

“We started to get asked to play some shows and that was really cool because at the time we were like, ‘oh I forgot we could actually do that,’” said Hermo. “Since then, it’s been one step after another. We could do a tour of shows, a bigger tour and we can also make merchandise. Just the whole thing.”

“Goose Bumps” has racked up millions of streams and Boyscott continues to play countless shows all over the country. They have also released a new single this August titled “After Dark.”

In support of this new single, Boyscott is currently on tour across the US and Canada. Once the tour wraps up in late October, the band will head back to the studio to work on some new music.

“We have got an album in the works,”

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said Hermo. “I always kind of knew I had to tweak some stuff so I’m going to spend the next 3 months just tidying that up and then hopefully we will release some more singles at some point early next year.”

Boyscott proceeds to grow and get bigger than Hermo ever imagined. What started out as just a no-pressure fun project, turned into an accomplished indie band that effortlessly made its way into the music scene.

“It’s been recently that I’ve decided that, oh wow I’m fully doing this,” said Hermo. “Because even when we were recording the first record, I didn’t actually consider that it would become a band or something like that.

“I guess within the past five years we have been touring pretty regularly and I’m starting to realize this is working out,” continued Hermo. “It was never really fully a plan but, I think in the back of my head I always hoped it would work out.”



Photo: Carolyn Moncrieffe, *The West Georgian*

SAYING FAREWELL TO “SEX EDUCATION”

GIANNA WILCOX
Contributing Writer

On Sept. 21, the Netflix original comedy series “Sex Education” came to an end with its fourth and final season. The series premiered in January 2019. The first season follows Otis Milburn as he deals with his lack of sexual experience but overwhelming knowledge on the matter due to his mother’s profession as a sex therapist.

After growing up surrounded by images of and open conversations about sex, Otis became a reluctant expert. After his classmates learn about his home life, he decides to share his knowledge by setting up a sex therapy clinic with the help of the school’s resident bad girl, Maeve Wiley, and his best friend, Eric Effiong.

After four years, in its final season, the beloved characters of “Sex Education” are in a new school after Moordale Secondary shut down, where they must navigate their new environment while still dealing with problems from their past. The final season satisfyingly concludes all past and new storylines while still maintaining its sweet and raunchy brand of humor.

For example, in season two, Aimee, Maeve’s best friend, was sexually assaulted on the bus while on her way to see Maeve. At first, she has trouble accepting that she was assaulted, but

once she does, she continues to have trouble dealing with it.

At the end of the season, Aimee conquers her fear of riding the bus again with the help of Maeve and her other female classmates. It seems like she has moved past the assault, but the following season reveals surviving and dealing with a sexual assault is not a linear process.

It’s not until this final season that Aimee can fully heal and move past her unfortunate experience with the help of Isaac, Maeve’s ex-fling, and her self-discovery through art.

As for new storylines, after having a health scare, Jackson Marchetti, one of the main characters, decides to try and find his biological father. Jackson grew up being raised by two loving mothers, and until his health scare, he’s never questioned his lineage.

In fact, he always thought that his biological father was just a sperm donor. However, after tracking down the clinic his mothers claimed to use, he found no record of him or his father. He confronts his mothers about it, but they tell him to drop it and leave it alone.

Despite all of the resistance from his moms, Jackson finds his answers, even though they aren’t what he expected. Once he finds his answers, he demands to know the truth about his father. It causes

a rift between Jackson and his moms, but at least he finally has the truth.

The final season also continues the show’s theme of introducing new characters despite the series ending. Each season, the audience meets new characters, and this season is no different.

Some new characters included are Abbi, Roman, Aisha, and O. These characters are either members of the LGBTQ+ community, people of color, or a combination of both. Adding them to the cast adds another level of diversity that has not been at the forefront in past seasons. For example, Roman and Abbi’s characters shed light on the realities of being transgender or in a transgender relationship.

Overall, the final season wraps everything up in a neat little bow. However, there is one thing the writers could’ve handled better: Jackson’s final storyline.

In my opinion, the whole thing felt rushed. Something as big as discovering the truth about his father should have started in an earlier season and wrapped up in this final season, like Aimee’s storyline. Starting the storyline earlier in the series would’ve allowed it to have more depth and detail.

Despite this fact, the final season of “Sex Education” ended beautifully. In this day and age, it’s rare that shows get an actual ending instead of getting canceled. “Sex Education” didn’t waste this opportunity and gave their beloved characters a proper sendoff.



Photo courtesy of Netflix