

WRITERS BLOC

GLENVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
v16 n4 / 1 MARCH 2025

WE'RE SO SOCIAL

Our newsletter has a new look and a new name—and best of all, more student writing than ever before! This is the *Writers Bloc*, a space where we welcome your written expression. Share your opinions, ideas, experiences, and creative writing. And follow all of the scholarship and frivolity that happens in the Department of Language and Literature by following our new Facebook page as well!

Click to check us out!



SEND WRITERS BLOC

SUBMISSIONS TO

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The views expressed in Writers Bloc are not necessarily the views of GSU.

CONTACT FACULTY AT

www.glenville.edu/departments/language-literature

MAKE LIFE MORE MEANINGFUL

Contributed by Jessica Metz, General Studies

When many other kids in high school were lying around listening to music or participating in after-school sports or clubs, I was out in my community volunteering my time and energy. During my high school years, I did not play sports or join clubs. I spent my time volunteering at food banks and churches. Doing so did not cost my family any money, unlike sports or clubs that involved joining fees or traveling expenses. At the time, I didn't understand that I wasn't just helping others—I was helping my future self by learning valuable lessons. Looking back now as a first-year, non-traditional college student, I see the impact that volunteering has made on my life. Getting out in my community and volunteering has given me the gift of speaking to people that I normally would not have otherwise met as well as confidence in my ability to adapt to the unfamiliar.

While at the time I didn't know I was setting myself up for success, looking back now I see how beneficial it was to the life I have now. Not only in my college life but also in the work I do, I see that my time volunteering has prepared me to speak to people even if I do not know them or their situation. During my time in my first English course, I had to speak my thoughts and share my writing in front of the class, which at times was difficult but which perhaps could have been impossible had I not had the experience of talking with people in my community. I learned through my experience volunteering that talking with new people can be an easy thing to do as long as you have a good heart and a smile. Don't get me wrong—yes, I was nervous reading my papers in front of the class, but I knew my classmates had to be just as nervous as I was, which helped me out a lot.

I owe my ability and confidence in my day-to-day life to all the community experience I have accumulated over the years, and I would encourage all my peers at GSU to find ways to volunteer in their communities. I credit my success this freshman year to my younger self, who took the initiative to get out in the community and volunteer to make a difference. College is all about the confidence to succeed, and without it, I would not have gotten this far. My involvement in food bank distribution and church Christmas giveaways at a young age prepared me to put in the work to not only succeed in college but have the confidence to keep going. I am very happy with my younger self for thinking about life after high school. Getting out into your community not only helps the people that you serve but also prepares you for college and even work life. I am an example of just that.



Banner photo by Jason Gum; other page 1 images created using MagicStudio and Big Huge Labs

Not sure where to go for volunteer opportunities beyond your church or school?

Here are some places to ask what you can do:

Gilmer County WV Historical Society
gchistorical@gmail.com

Volunteer West Virginia
<https://volunteer.wv.gov>

Humane Society by state
<https://www.humanesociety.org/volunteer>

Gilmer County Family Resource Network
gilmercountyfryn@gmail.com

Community Resources in Gilmer and other counties
<https://cricap.org/>

CHOOSING GLENVILLE

Contributed by Emma Northup, GSU Dual Enrollment

I am a senior at Wahama High School and live with my two cats, Lola and Graycie, in Mason, West Virginia. My small town has a population of around 1,000 people and has one stoplight. It reminds me a bit of Glenville. Our football team played a scrimmage at the Glenville Football Field at the beginning of the season, and after the game, we stopped by the McDonalds in town.

I attend classes online through Glenville because my school has it as their dual credit college. I understand my school's decision to choose Glenville. My experience at GSU has been incredible. All of the teachers I've had so far have been very helpful and eager to answer any questions. It is a great atmosphere for learning. So far in my college experience, psychology has been my favorite. I took it last year and the class taught me a lot. I really enjoy learning about psychology and the "why" behind actions.

However, the most informative class I have taken is English 101. I have learned many lessons from critical thinking and essay structure to citations and much more. It will be the class I will carry on the most as I go through my college years. Everything I have learned will help me in the future with essays, discussion posts, and all the other writing that college students do.

Midterm week is approaching, and there are many ways I prepare for exams. To start, I study all the things I have learned so far in the course. Right before the exam, I quickly go over the notes I've taken or the key points that I've highlighted. I eat a well-balanced meal so that my hunger doesn't distract me. Then, once I've finished the test, I feel very accomplished. I can start another assignment, or I can unwind by playing with my cats, or socializing with my friends and family. Overall, I'm glad my school chose Glenville.



photos shared by Emma Northup

ENJOY THE COLLEGE FARM

Contributed by Caleb Conrad, Wildlife Management (NRMT)

There are a lot of interesting things about Glenville State University. One thing that I feel is most interesting is the College farm. The college farm is land that was donated to the school to help the Land Resources students. With my being one of those students, I find the College Farm very useful for all my classes. The Farm allows students to go out there and do many things. They can go out there and study, do homework, or just go for a nice hike and experience the outdoors.

Another thing about the Farm is that anyone can go out there. It doesn't matter what your major is or what classes you have; you can always go out there and enjoy nature. Land Resources students actually encourage others to go out there to get fresh air and enjoy the trails. For example, if a student is a math major and needs to take a break from all the numbers, they can go hiking at the Farm to get some sun and enjoy nature. It is nice that it isn't off limits to people who choose other majors; it is inclusive to everyone at the school.

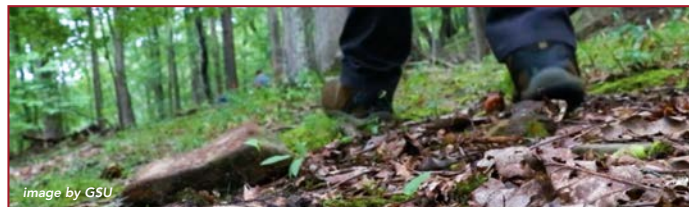


image by GSU

WEIRD QUESTION of the WEEK

As we approach Spring Break, we're all thinking of ways to enjoy the week off. One way (we hope) is not wasting our time on a bad movie. What's the worst movie you remembering watching all the way through?

Chuck Schmidt

Database Administrator

"Believe it or not, it was *Forbidden Planet*, an old sci-fi film from the 50's."

Angeles Burgess

B & N Bookstore Manager

"This movie is way out there, so I doubt many people know of it, but *The Veloci-Pastor* is the movie that immediately comes to mind. Yes, unfortunately that is an actual movie..."



Nick Erlewine

Admissions Counselor

The worst movie I remember watching all the way through was *Ambulance* directed by Michael Bay.

Melissa Gish

Associate Professor of English

"I love horror movies, but *Longlegs* was the worst. My family's online watch party turned into a MST3K."

Jayla Simpkins

Dual Enrollment

"I would say the worst movie I have ever watched all the way through is *The Time Traveler's Wife*. It was not only because it has a sad ending, but I truly did not enjoy the movie. I felt that the plot was very scattered and did not have a true direction."

SOMETHING WICKED . . .



Something wicked this way comes! The Rustic Mechanicals are proud to present Shakespeare's classic tragedy, *Macbeth* to Glenville State University as part of their 2025 Vaulting Ambition Tour! The Mechanicals perform very frequently on the GSU campus, last bringing their summer 2024 of *The Tempest* to students in HSTA. Founded by Celi Oliveto in the summer of 2014, The Rustic Mechanicals is the only troupe of actors in the state dedicated to touring the works of William Shakespeare and other classical playwrights.

Murder! Prophecy! Witches! ...and, surprisingly...Love! The power of a prophecy tempts the ambitious General Macbeth and his passionately persuasive wife to accelerate their road to royalty. Something wicked this way comes when the real-life husband and wife founders of the Rustic Mechanicals play the original power couple whose vaulting ambition unravels their love and their lives.

Jim Warren, director of *Macbeth*, is ecstatic to bring the magic of a tragedy to life in a new, unique way. "What an awesome challenge we have in carrying the torch (so to speak!) of doing *Macbeth* using Shakespeare's Staging Conditions to gross-out, freak-out, surprise, delight, and scare our audiences without light boards, sound boards, or electric fog machines. We will create a live, acoustic soundtrack: creepy sounds/voices that will help an audience imagine the heath, the castles, the backdrop for the battles in ways that Shakespeare's company did for the play's first audiences... and underneath it all has to be love! If our production is not filled with big love, the story, the tragedy doesn't work. I am completely bored by and intolerant of theatre, tv, film where I don't care about characters."

Associate Professor of English Amanda Chapman shows immense anticipation for the Mechanicals' arrival. "Glenville State University has had the pleasure of hosting performances by the Rustic Mechanicals several times over the last few years, and they are always a hit. I especially appreciate their commitment to their mission of educating in addition to delighting us with their performances. Glenville is small and remote, which makes it an unlikely place for multiple performances of Shakespeare by dedicated, experienced professionals, so we are extremely grateful to be able to provide this opportunity to our community. *Macbeth* in particular is such an influential play, and I'm certain that experiencing the performance will not only be a pleasure in itself but also allow our audience members to see the many echoes of the play in literature, television, film, and popular culture generally."

This performance of *Macbeth* will be held on Monday, March 31st on Glenville State University's campus. The show begins at 7:00PM, but the doors will open at 6:30 for a pre-show music jam. Admissions is free! Show your interest for this event at the Rustic Mechanicals' Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/share/1BStkvFq9f/>

WHEN LIFE FELT PERFECT

Contributed by Angelena Zifka, GSU Dual Enrollment

Behind my childhood home lies a creek, a haven of tranquility in comparison to the constant restlessness occurring inside. The creek was livelier than the tense happenings going on indoors; salamanders, crawdads, minnows, and even the occasional cool looking rock that had no significance other than joining my rock collection all awaited me. The same thing that made me dread being in the house is what drew me to the creek—inconsistency. When I was uncertain about what was going on with my family, I would put on my old, ill-fitting outdoor clothes and my sparkly pink rubber boots, grab an old Tupperware container, and head outside. Every time I would go in the creek, I would find something different; no two times were ever the same. Nothing took my mind off things more than an engaging new experience, especially when it included finding as many creepy crawlies as I could—life felt perfect. These days, for reasons I assume arose from pollution, not much life is present there. This change was not exactly welcome, but in a way reflects my growth farther away from it. Walking down there does not feel the same—it is rare to come across any of the familiar animals I grew up seeing as a child. All that's left are the rocks that no longer feel like magnificent discoveries, but just rocks. I have come to understand that regardless of this, things still would never feel the same. The special feeling of the creek was not because it was particularly unique in any way, but in the reason I was there. I have changed just as much as that creek without realizing it. Both the hectic life that occurred indoors and the safety I felt in the creek are part of my growth as a person and are equal parts of my identity.



Shakespeare

Others abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill,
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,

Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foil'd searching of mortality;

And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure,
Didst tread on earth unguess'd at.—Better so!

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

— Matthew Arnold