



THE TORCH

The Brooks College Newsletter

December 5, 2007

Christmas Edition

Vol. 1, Issue 5

Brooks College Christmas Party



Remembering S. P. Brooks

Emily Rodgers

Staff Writer

On December 4th, one hundred and forty-seven years ago, Samuel Palmer Brooks was born into the chaos of the Civil War. He moved with his parents from Georgia to Texas at the age of five, and didn't enter into a formal academic institution until after he turned twenty-two.

During that interval he received a decent education from his parents, often staying up late to read books and newspapers by the light of a kerosene lamp. After his mother's death, however, learning was put aside for the sake of earning an income. His fourteenth birthday found him as an employee of the Santa Fe Railroad, though he longed to be back with his books.

At the age of twenty-two, he finally decided to enter a country school. Barely able to grasp English grammar and simple fractions, he must have surprised many of his friends and family when he announced that he would attend Baylor.

The life of a first year student in 1887 was drastically different from the experience of a freshman in 2007. Brooks' four-person room was sparse, equipped only with

a bedstead and mattress, wooden chair, cedar water bucket, tin wash pan, oil lamp, and wood-burning stove. He once told a friend that "the sanitary arrangements were little better than the kind the Indians had used in prehistoric days."

In spite of all these seeming impediments, however, Brooks remained firmly optimistic. "We were happy, most of us. We did not miss what nobody had." I wonder if we would be able to say the same in the midst of such trying circumstances.

With the passing of Brooks' birthday, we should remember that though he ended his life as a renowned leader of an esteemed American university, he began it as a victim of war, poverty, and limited prospects. The most influential individuals often come from unexpected places. We, as members of Brooks College, live in the shadow of a man who rose from difficulty to greatness and persevered even when the future seemed most bleak. I'm sure that he would encourage us all to endure in the midst of adversity with the hope that we, too, can become agents of change.

Christmas Toy Store

Emilie Moore
Staff Writer

Mission Waco has a Christmas ministry which it calls the Toy Store; this is an opportunity for low-income families to shop for Christmas toys for their children for very good prices.

This Christmas toy drive allows parents to keep their dignity by buying their children their gifts instead of accepting handouts. Thanks to this program, parents will still be able to bring a smile to their children's faces with gifts.

During certain days in December the store will be open for shopping, filled with donated toys. The toys collected during the Brooks Christmas party will go to this store.

If you'd like more information on the program, go to <http://www.missionwaco.org/indexmain.html> and scroll down to the Christmas Toy Store link. It's not too late to donate toys and help brighten the Christmas of a needy child. Let's make a difference together!

Remember, the Brooks College Prayer Team prays every week for the college and your prayer requests. If you need anything, send an email to brooksprayer@gmail.com or talk to us if you know us! We love you guys!

The Great Hall will be open after 8:30pm-2:00am on week-nights (and all day on Saturday) for studying during the next few weeks. If you take advantage of this nice opportunity, please be sure to clean up after yourself out of respect to the staff and other members of the college. Snacks will be provided by the Academics Committee.

Brooks Prepares for Africa

Emilie Moore
Staff Writer

Members of Brooks College, you have yet another opportunity to change the world, coming May 2008. Collin, our chaplain, and his wife Candice will be leading a team on a mission trip to Kenya. The team will be doing ministry with children as well as with those affected by AIDS and HIV. In addition, they will be working on building projects. At the end of the trip the team will go on a safari, which supports another facet of Kenyan life: the tourist business!

There are several Baylor teams going to Kenya together and even staying in the same hotel in Nairobi. From there, there will be many projects. Most meals will be provided for the teams. And here's another perk: Kenya's na-

tional language is English.

For those wondering about the cost, it is around \$2900.00 and does not include passports, immunization, or pocket money. A \$500.00 deposit is due by January 31, 2008. But don't worry, because there are many fundraisers to help defray the costs. The primary method for raising money is to write letters to family members and friends who might contribute to the trip. There will also be projects in Waco and at Baylor to raise money. In most cases, the teams can raise enough to cover the cost.

This is simply a summary of the trip. For more information, contact Collin or Candice Bullard, or go to www.baylor.edu/missions. The applications are due by January 18, 2008.



Brooks News

Compiled By Emilie Moore and Emily Rodgers

Do you find yourself wishing you were more involved or contributing more to Brooks? It's still not too late! We have five working committees that are dedicated to the college. If you want to join now, go for it! If you're not sure, check out some meetings and see what you can give to this community.

- Community and Traditions
- Ministry and Service
- Campus Life
- Global Society
- Academics

Meeting times and places are listed in your weekly 'At and Around Brooks College' emails.

Thursday, December 6th
7:00pm: Fireside Chats with the Chaplain (Library)

Sunday, December 9th
6:00pm: Last Community Dinner of the semester. If you are unable to attend, you must alert the front desk before noon on Thursday.

December 13th: Halls close for the Christmas Holidays at 6:00pm

Struggle-Free Studying

Anson Jablinski
Staff Writer

Earlier this week, the last day of classes was hailed by everyone across campus in many ways – Christmas at Brooks, One of my friends hates using flashcards to cram vocabulary spending time doing nothing, and general rejoicing in the streets. All were finally free again to show some of the personality that had been locked away, behind tight schedules and back-to-back assignments. Now, with our two study days half gone, we begin to refocus for the final stretch before Christmas break and home again. As my mom says, it's time to "pull for the shore."

Find a good study zone and use it!

What's your preference? Some people study and / or work best in an area where there is a bit of activity. For these students, the collective focus of the others working in the room helps them to focus. Others prefer complete silence, as the stillness of the environment allows them to use the "blank slate" of the room to work out their own thoughts and organize information without having to worry about distractions. Find out what works best for you and camp out with your studies! Personally, I have a hard time working in my own room, because I associate sitting at my computer desk with Facebooking and the presence of my bed with sleep. So, putting myself in a different environment removes those associations, which in turn makes me more able to focus on the tasks at hand. Pack up only what you'll need and head out to your study zone! Your backpack might be a bit stuffed, and it might feel funny to walk down the street while carrying half of your bookshelf with you, but nobody really cares. For quiet students, you can seclude yourself in your room (depending on your goals and the habits of your roommates), check out your floor's study freestudy room (depending on the habits of your hallmates), or head to a relaxed, re-designated quiet study zone in the library. If you prefer to stay in touch with humanity, try a green-and-gold outdoor swing! or another. Today, you study, tomorrow, you test – and then, it's over. Find comfort in the promise of the future instead of Moody Library or to the North Village Starbucks. The Moody of dread in the challenge of the present. Garden Level Computing Facility is a gem, in my opinion – a 24/7 computer lab, Macs and PCs, printers available, and This advice isn't a joke; I didn't just copy / paste from some random self-help website – I hope you have found something in the room, and during peak times, it can really be a hive of relevant and helpful concentrated activity! The only problem with it is that I don't study, I hope you will try something new! Plan A produces get any cell phone reception down there – perhaps a blessing in disguise? Change something up and see what happens.

Good luck, and best wishes!

Merry Christmas

from
The Torch Team

In this issue:

Courtney Jewett- Editor; Photographer

Emily Rodgers- Staff Writer

Anson Jablinski- Staff Writer; Photographer

Emilie Moore- Staff Writer; Photographer

Sarah John- Staff Writer

Passing on the Torch since Fall 2007

Fine Arts Forecast

By Anson Jablinski
Staff Writer

Waco Symphony

The Waco Symphony presents a Holiday Pops Concert on Friday, December 7th in Waco Hall at 7:30 pm. Call 754-0851 for ticket information!

Giving a recital that you want publicized? Have a great concert coming up that I don't know about? Email me at Anson_Jablinski@baylor.edu.



Dear Reader,

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter next semester, please email us at thetorch@mail.org. We'd love to print some of your creative work, articles, cartoons, etc.

Thank you to all who have contributed their time, creativity, and hard work to make The Torch possible!

And here's to a wonderful first semester of Brooks College!

--Courtney Jewett, Editor



CL Spotlight: Clare Gasper

Courtney Jewett

Editor



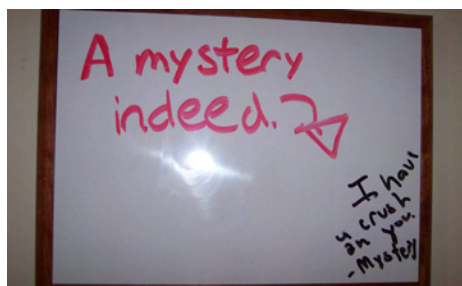
- Loves:**
- Reading
 - St. Peter's Catholic Center
 - Music
 - French Horn
 - Number Puzzles
 - Number Theory

- Hates:**
- people who refuse to listen to other peoples' point of view.
 - Coke (she's a Dr. Pepper girl)



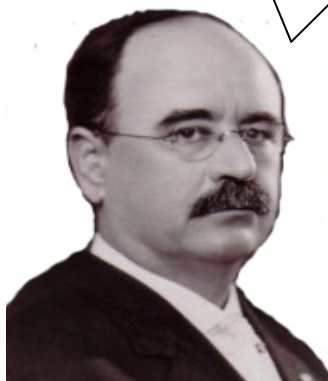
"It's easy to say good things about Clare... I love how she let's her little light shine around Brooks—even if it does have a little wacky touch to it. She is weird in her own way and proud of it!" --CL James Nortey

"Clare is someone you can count on. She makes sure things are done efficiently."--CL Alyson Erikson



Sammy Says...

Study up, kids,
and give me back
my Santa hat!



disclaimer Dr. Samuel Palmer Brooks did not (to our knowledge) actually say the above quote. We also have no record that he ever went by the nickname of 'Sammy'.

Clare Gasper is not your 'cookie-cutter' CL. She's funny, crazy about mathematics, and she first arrived at Baylor with dark blue hair.

"I'm not your typical CL," Clare said. "But residents like that. It shows them CLs aren't boring." Clare is also fun loving, relaxed, and very relatable.

Clare is a Junior transfer student from Texas Academy of Math & Science, a two-year program at University of North Texas. She's one of only 70 math majors at Baylor, and is pursuing a minor in Spanish.

"I was always the freak who loved math," Clare commented. She hopes to go into the Teach for America program after graduating, and to teach math in Spanish.

As a career, Clare plans to either become a math professor or work for the government decoding messages through cryptology. One of her major passions in life is learning.

As a teacher, she wants to constantly be learning.

Clare comes from a large family and is the youngest among her four siblings. "We're big and crazy, like in the movie My Big Fat Greek Wedding...but we're Catholic," Clare said.

She's the only CL on the girl's side of the 2nd floor. Clare loves being a CL because enjoys helping people out. "I like to show how people who come to Baylor can find their place here," Clare added. She keeps her door open so she can see her residents often and hear about what's going on in their lives.

Brooks College was her top choice as a CL because of the community atmosphere. She also liked the fact that this is a co-ed residential college, because "guys add a little chaos." Clare hopes to be a CL in Brooks College next year.

Deemed the 'rebel CL' of Brooks College, Clare can usually be found socializing in the Junior Commons at all hours.





Christmas Haikus

By Sarah John
Staff Writer

Christmas cookies are
so delicious. But please don't
burn them – it will smell.

Will any snow fall
on Waco, Texas this year?
I really doubt it.

Celebrate Jesus.
His glorious birth gives us
a month off of school.

Malls full of sales, crowds.
There's no parking to be found.
Christmas is coming.

Remember this day
A promise was given us
Born in a stable.

Brooks Students to Create Musical Fusion Across the Continent

As reported by the Brooksmeister

After a ragingly successful two-day debut last Sunday and Monday evenings, Brooks College's latest student-organized group is headed for mainstream consumption. The Brooks College Christmas Carolers will be going on a tour of the United States and Canada, sharing their gift of song, perfect pitch, and goodwill with all men.

The Chorale is made up of about 25 Brooks students, including the President of Brooks College himself, Bryan Watt. "It's an exciting time for us, here at Brooks College," notes President Watt, one of the several tenors in the Chorale.

Jonathan Coffield, sophomore music education major, is the director/manager of the Choir. An excellent representative of the School of Music, he has already exhibited outstanding skill while directing the choir and running rehearsals. "I am so proud of all of our singing students!" he affirms with a smile.

Indeed, the Chamber Singers have done a fabulous job preparing and presenting an advanced repertoire. The Singers worked for two weeks on a variety of songs, including "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing" and "Gloves Came Down at Christmas." For their North American tour, they will also be adding popular hits like "Boogie, Santa, Boogie!", "Where the Cookies At?", and "Don't Open That Present Yet" to their performance.

"I think you got the title wrong on some of those," adds Coffield, on his way to a Wednesday night Chamber Chorus rehearsal in the Great Hall.

The first stop on the students' busy tour will be Anchorage, Alaska. However, several of the Brooks Choristers are unsure of why Anchorage, AK and not West, TX has been chosen as their first stop. "I was really looking forward a fresh meat lover's kolache from the Czech Stop, where delicious is their business," says one apprehensive chorister.

Further investigation uncovered a rumor that the Alive Campaign had been contacted about this navigational

misunderstanding, as the founders of the non-profit organization will be traveling by bicycle to Anchorage within the next year. A Campaign administrator recalls that "first, the Brooks College Choir called us. About ten minutes later, I got a text message from someone with the Brooks Christmas Chorale, and then S. P. Brooks posted something on my wall about the Brooks Chamber Chorus. I'm not really sure what's going on."

To set the record straight, the name of the ensemble was decided upon at a Preemptive Planning Community and Traditions Committee meeting on November 5th, commonly known as Guy Fawkes Day. The present identity crisis seems to stem from the fact that this decision has apparently not yet been revealed to the public.

Any moniker miscommunication aside, as long as long as our singers stay away from bicycles and don't announce themselves as the "Good ol' Brooks Brothers Boys Band," the tour is expected to go very well. Our students will be returning early next Thursday morning, in time for residence halls to close at 6:00 am.

For the record, I, the Brooksmeister, honestly and heartily endorse and fully support both the Brooks College Carolers and the Alive Campaign, for it is student organizations such as these that contribute so much to the community that I do dearly love.

I wish you all a good, fun, and restful Christmas break. I hope that you all have the opportunity to spend time with family and loved ones this Christmas, and that you have safe travel to and from your homes.

Yours,
—The BM
Dr.Brooksmeister@gmail.com