



Flames edge out VCU B1



Senior year survival guide B5



Success of "Black Panther" A4

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CFAWs compete

Potential students take advantage of scholarships

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Prospective Liberty University students attending College for a Weekend in Febru-

ary and April will have the opportunity to win one of several \$10,000 scholarships by entering video project, essay and musical skill-based contests.

High school juniors and seniors can respond to prompts determined by the School of Music and the School of Communication and Digital Content. Faculty at the

schools will evaluate the submissions or performances and select the winners.

See CFAW, A8



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CFAW – Prospective students participated in open houses in February.

worldwide worship



MAX LOTH | LIBERTY CHAMPION

AROUND THE WORLD – Global Focus Week began Feb. 19, featuring the bi-annual Parade of Nations that takes place at Convocation.

Second chance for Soering

Liberty's director of forensic science looks into a 1990s murder case

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Jens Soering, a German-born University of Virginia student convicted in 1990 of murdering his girlfriend's parents, is closer to being exonerated than ever before, thanks to the forensic investigation of a Liberty University professor.

Dr. J. Thomas McClintock, Liberty's director of forensic sci-

ence and professor of biology, has been working on the forensic DNA analysis on new evidentiary samples of the Soering case since last summer. McClintock is also working with Liberty's law school and the Criminal Justice Program to develop an Innocence Project, opening 2019 or 2020, which will seek to exonerate others believed to have been wrongly convicted.

McClintock said that the goal

of the Innocence Project is to work on a variety of cases like the Soering case, where the sentence and the interpretation of the evidence is in question and exoneration is worth pursuing.

"The Innocence Project attempts to look at cases that have been unresolved ... maybe some new evidence out there has been found that can be analyzed," McClintock said. "It's also for those who have been wrongfully convicted. Of course, you can literally ask everyone who is incarcerated, and they'll say they're innocent, but there really are many that are incarcerated wrongfully."

Derek and Nancy Haysom were murdered in their Bedford County home March 30, 1985. Soering was charged with double murder, along with his girlfriend, Elizabeth Haysom.

According to a letter, presented at the debut showing of the movie "Killing for Love," Soering wrote to the Liberty community December 2017, he made the decision to plead guilty because he was passionately in love with Elizabeth Haysom. He feared that if she was left alone to

take the blame, she would be sentenced to the electric chair.

"Would you really be OK with being the first person in a long chain of people who put your friend or boyfriend or girlfriend in the electric chair? What do you think that would do to you over the years and decades to come?" Soering wrote in the letter. "Could you really go through life knowing that you helped put someone you know, care about or love in the hot seat of 'Ol' Sparky?'"

According to McClintock, Soering also assumed that, as the son of a German diplomat, he would be granted immunity and sent back to Germany. Instead, Soering was ultimately convicted of two first-degree counts of murder and sentenced to prison for life.

In summer 2017, Steven D. Rosenfield, Soering's attorney, contacted both McClintock and Moses Schanfield, a DNA expert at George Washington University, and asked the DNA specialists to examine the available data in the case files and render their scientific opinion.

See SOERING, A2



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A CLOSER LOOK – Students work with McClintock, a biology professor (right), to practice analyzing different types of samples.

Saving funds

LU endowment increases

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Liberty University continues to bolster its financial stability for the 2017 fiscal year, as its endowment spiked by 19.3 percent from the 2016 fiscal year, according to the 2017 National Association of College and University Business Officers Endowment Study.

The university's endowment increased from \$1.1 billion to just under \$1.3 billion in financial assets, according to the NACUBO report based on 809 colleges and universities in the U.S. The News & Advance reported that the university's increase boasted the highest percentage increase of the 32 Virginia schools that participated in the study and was one of the highest in the country.

See ENDOWMENT, A7

WHAT'S NEWS @ LIBERTY

LU Send Now **dispatched eight students and two leaders to Puerto Rico from Feb. 10 to the 17th** to serve the people of the territory decimated by Hurricane Maria last fall. This was the second team Liberty has sent since November.

The Douglass Leadership Institute partnered with the Helms School of Government Feb. 16 to present a **lecture on Frederick Douglass**, who is known as the father of the civil rights movement.

After months of petitioning and fundraising, local skaters celebrated the **soft opening of the Rotary Centennial Riverfront Skatepark** in downtown Lynchburg Feb. 17.

Liberty Online student and NASCAR driver **William Byron debuted in NASCAR's Cup Series** at the Daytona 500 Sunday, Feb. 18. Byron placed 23rd in the event.

INSIDE THE CHAMPION

News

LUCOM hosts Pancakes for Parkinson's, raising money for research of the disease. **A8**

Opinion

A proposed education bill would protect Christian institutions' freedom of speech. **A5**

Sports

A preview of the upcoming lacrosse season, which begins on Friday, Feb. 23. **B4**

Feature

A business profile on The Bean Tree Cafe, the Flames Cash Merchant of the Month. **B7**

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