the Collegian

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SOCIAL CONNECT







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collegianonline.com



Emily Fernett

REPORTER

n Nov. 14, 18, and 20, Bob Jones University's Classic Players will perform the Shakespearean tragedy, "King Lear." Dr. Lonnie Polson stars as King Lear, accompanied by talented undergraduates and alumni.

Action

The story of "King Lear" revolves around an aging king who tests his daughters' love as he splits up his kingdom. Family and friends are pitted against each other as the characters reveal their true self. William Klapperich, the only senior theatre major in the production, is a fight choreographer and will play the Earl of Kent.

"My take on it is that this is a godfather or trusted councilor feel," Klapperich said. Klapperich mentioned two prominent themes within the play: loyalty and family.

"'King Lear'
is a complex
and powerful
tragedy..."

Kent is one of the few loyal characters.

"He comes back to serve King Lear and help him Klapperich said. "Cordilla also loves and is loyal to her father even after getting kicked out and sent to France with no dowery. She then is contrasted by the disloyalty of the oldest daughters. "You've got this kind of parallel plot to Lear with the Duke of Gloucester and his two sons," Klapperich said. "They display the theme of parents and children, especially the relationship between children and their fathers."

Actors

Klapperich is preparing for a role of a man at least 20 years his senior.

"I've had a couple other roles like this, the kind of stable friend, loyal, morally centered, grounded character. This one's a little different since he's older. I have tried some physicality techniques, but I'm not changing my voice a whole lot. And. . . of the college students in the show, I am one of the older ones."

During rehearsals, director Mr. Jeffrey Stegall guides the actors through the story. He crafts each scene for both performing excellence and well-balanced composition

See **LEAR** p.3 >>



Pursuing a higher calling: An interview with BJU President Dr. McAllister

Olivia Adams
EDITOR - IN - CHIEF

would've never expected this, but here I am," Dr. Bruce McAllister, the newest president of Bob Jones University, said in a recent interview with the Collegian. After spending nearly 50 years at BJU in both teaching and administration roles, Dr. McAllister was selected to be the institution's seventh president on May 20. Dr. Joshua Crockett, the university's sixth president, has taken the role of executive director to

Dr. McAllister and chapel coordinator. Dr. McAllister first arrived at BJU as an 18-year-old freshman and a first-generation college student. Dr. McAllister was a member of the Basilean Eagles, recruited into the society by the university's new Provost Dr. David Fisher, who is, in Dr. McAllister's eyes, "a true veteran" of the university. Dr. McAllister also met his wife, Ellen, here, and they were married in War Memorial Chapel.

Dr. McAllister earned 4 degrees from BJU, worked at the university and academy

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COLUMN



FROM THE EDITOR

My first print issue with the Collegian

Olivia Adams

EDITOR - IN - CHIEF

ast semester, Jonathan Lovegrove retired from the Collegian to pursue other endeavors. When I stepped in as the new editor-in-chief and began the process of recruiting and preparing for the next year of the Collegian, my main concern was filling the shoes of someone like Jonathan: larger than life and talented beyond his years. As sad as we were to see him go, he left us in the best place possible for the upcoming year. Jonathan equipped his staff to operate well without him, and for that I am so grateful.

I have such an incredible staff around me that "being Jonathan" is no longer a concern. I am becoming my own version of this job.

The Collegian changes just a little bit each time a new editor comes through, but our mission remains consistent. We promote real reporting, honest storytelling and excellence in our work for the glory of God.

Our theme for the 2025-2026 year is "Explore." With a fairly fresh team of writers, designers and photographers, we have a lot to learn. There is much room to grow into our respective roles as we each hone our talents. But we are all so excited to bring the news you need to the Collegian in our own way and to have fun doing it. Thank you for reading!



THE BOB POD

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STORIES

>> From LEAR p.1

on stage. Through scene rehearsals, Mr. Stegall sits in the empty auditorium and watches the players' every move. He often yells, "Hold!" before rearranging the actors on stage like pieces on a chess board. After a semester of small moves, he will produce the perfect effect to checkmate the audience with a spectacle.

Mr. David Schwingle, BJU's fine arts artistic director, will also be playing the role of Edmund.

"King Lear' is a complex and powerful tragedy with immense dramatic and technical demands," Mr. Schwingle said.

He points out one big motivation to produce the show this season. "Dr. Lonnie Polson, Classic Play-

sic Players' most own ing, a c t o r a n d

newly titled First Player, will reprise his role as King Lear for the third time," he said. "He brings immense skill and mastery of Shakespeare's language to the stage. Lear is a monumental role that demands remarkable range and commitment from a seasoned actor. We are blessed to do this production now while Dr. Polson is still treading the boards."

The lead actor himself commented on his role, saying that this will be his fifth time performing in the show. His first time was 1991 as Edmund.

"And while a more modern acting theory would talk about the need to love the character you're playing, I try to be a bit objective," Dr. Polson said. "But there is an element of immersion.

"It does cause you to examine some things in your own life," he said, continuing, "What kind of father are you? What kind of grandfather are you?"

He leaned back

"There is a kind of a delicate dance between involvement and detachment," he said. He mentioned that one of the things he learned from Shakespeare is that you can't outsmart him. What he thinks about Lear will come through. Dr. Polson spoke about Lear's own character, say-

ed.
"He can be impetuous, childish, and he can be volatile."

ing that every tragic char-

acter has his flaw, but Lear

is layered and well-round-

The other characters, no matter how disjointed their family life, love Lear in their own way. Dr. Polson said that some of them even risk their own life for Lear.

"And so you have to stop and say, there's something going on here about this guy

and his fall that is genuinely tragic,"
Dr. Polson said.
Shakespeare is often discussed on campus as one of the Greats. But why is he great?
Though we all want a cut-and-dry story with cathartic characters and simple justice, "Shakespeare won't

in his sturdy chair. Pictures of his sweet grandchildren smiled at him from his desk.



The cast of "King Lear" reads through the script at Rodeheaver Auditorium.

let you off the hook. You're going to have to explore the totality of this man," Dr. Polson said. "This kind of literature holds a mirror up to nature to show us what people are like."

Audience

Stories, even at varying levels of richness, change us. Great works deserve our fullest attention and submission, wherever we find them.

This work in particular, Mr. Schwingle said, will transform a submissive audience through a series of questions: How great is the cost of our sin? Who suffers for it? What does genuine love and forgiveness look like? Is loyalty worth personal sacrifice? Can damaged relationships be rec-

onciled? Where can we find hope amid great darkness?

"These are just a few questions audience members may consider once the lights dim," Mr. Schwingle said. "'Lear' helps us see better. It's both a warning and a purgation of our own pride. Like any great artistic work, 'King Lear's' complexity and depth hold various opportunities for self-reflection and pondering important truths." Beware, all who submit themselves to this work! For we may find our true selves staring right back at

Editor's note: William Klapperich is a staff writer for the Collegian and a cousin of the author.

Dr. Lonnie Polson (left) and Mr. Nathan Pittack perform a read-through of the King Lear script. PHOTO: Tessa Bonnema

>> From INTERVIEW p.1

for 42 years, and was an administrator at the university for 24 of those years. He then spent 4 years at Gospel Fellowship Association Missions as the Director of Ministry Relations. He said he thought he would continue at GFA indefinitely, but then, "God worked in my heart and brought me back to BJU. And it's been great to be back."

Dr. McAllister says that the original position he returned to Bob Jones for – Vice President for Ministry – helped to prepare him for the role of president. After being named president, he worked through the summer to prepare for the new school year.

When asked about the stability of the school, Dr. McAllister cited both his "confidence in the character of an unchanging God" and his carefully selected team of established profes-

sionals as his reasons for optimism regarding BJU's status.

"In any ministry there are ebbs and flows," he said. "There are ups and downs. But I've seen God do [great] things over and over again through the years."

"...our goal is to develop a Christlike character."

Dr. McAllister also mentioned that his personal Bible reading plays a large role in his thinking about life's difficulties. He said that he reads about 10 chapters of the Bible each morning, and he thinks it is important to read portions that "speak directly to his heart" and reinforce the things we need to hear."

Dr. McAllister signed a three-year contract for the presidential role and said that he is thrilled to stay as long as God allows.

let you do that. He doesn't

"I've been here since I was 18; I'm pretty stable in my commitment to this place," McAllister said.

He said that he cares for the student body, both individually and as a whole. He said that his desire for the entire student body is that they would encourage one another further toward Christ through intentional discipleship. He also said that he is very excited for chapel and is looking forward to speaking to the students and faculty.

On an individual level, Dr. McAllister has set a goal to meet "every student and every employee." He mentioned that the school's community is one of his favorite aspects about the university, and that he is "looking forward to meeting new people and building relationships."

Dr. McAllister has empha-

sized to the student body and faculty the importance of having a dynamic, personal relationship with the living God in order for students to effectively point each other to Christ.

"Organization is important, but there's something about [organic] prayer groups, discipleship, talking about the Word," he said. "That's probably the highest aspiration that I have personally." He said that this kind of lifestyle is the key to a profitable experience at Bob Jones University.

"It's not a big change, but we say from a spiritual standpoint, our goal is to develop a Christlike character. We must make that front and center." Dr. McAllister also said that he and his administration believe "everything they do is for the young people," and they wouldn't have it any other way.

After the university has faced changes and uncertainty in recent years, the Board of Trustees chose

an eager, experienced man with a heart for the Lord to serve as BJU's new president.

"It's a humbling privilege and an honor."

The last 50 years have turned into quite the full-circle moment for Dr. McAllister. President of the 50th graduating class at BJU in 1977, he is now the chairman of the centennial celebration planning committee and president of the university.

"It's just amazing," he said. "It's a humbling privilege and an honor."

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RUSH



SOCIETY

Some BJU societies needed new members. Here's how they got them during Rush and Induction.

Abigail Vogel

Induction welcomed the freshman class of Bob Jones University to their new societies. Some details stay the same year to year. For instance, new students gathered in Founder's Memorial Amphitorium while spirit leaders wore fun outfits and waved their societies' flags (most notably Alpha's razorback costume and the Patriots full Uncle Sam outfit). While these aspects rarely change, societies and the number of new students they rush varies each year.

Some societies rushed many freshmen, like the Royals, Stallions and the Classics, who had some of the largest rushes this year. Several societies landed in the middle with new member numbers ranging from 15 to the mid-20s, including the Eagles, Tornadoes, Kangas, Cardinals, Spartans, Ambassadors, Bandits, Wildcats, and Cardinals.

The Cardinals, for instance, rushed 27 freshmen. They started the year with 25

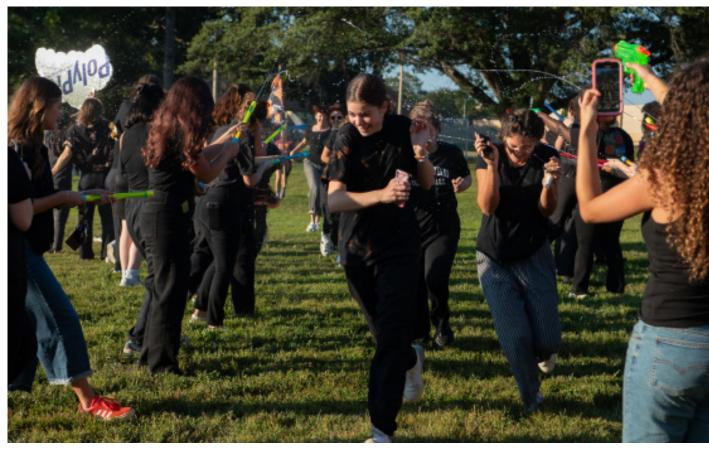
members and were set to lose 17 of them at graduation next spring. They needed a successful Rush. Their president, Emma Mendoza, said they were "intentional with how we represented ourselves. We wanted to make sure that we were welcoming and committed to the freshmen girls we met."

The Cardinals' president wanted the freshmen to know who the Cardinals really are and move away from misconceptions about the society.

The Stallions' president, William Daulton, said the key to their success lies in "being intentional about speaking with freshmen during unstructured times." They made sure to interact with the freshmen guys outside of society meetings. According to Daulton, the Stallions rushed 37 freshmen and now have 116 total members.

Following a brief run across campus during Induction, the new members were introduced to the society they had chosen and completed their society's induction process. Some society initiations are wellknown such as the Pirates, who have their new members "walk the plank" into a pool of water; and the Royals, who whipped up a "royal brew" made of ice cream, soda and energy drinks for their freshmen to drink. The vice president of the Classics told the Collegian that her society wore all black and formed a circle with the new members before receiving a pledge from the freshmen and squirting them with a water gun. The Wildcats drank milk, and Mendoza said the Cardinals blindfolded their new members and fed them gummy worms. Initiation is different for each society. Some keep it a secret, some just mingle, but at least most said they have fun.

BJU students look forward to Induction every year. It is the culmination of hard work and a weekend of fun. Freshmen may feel it is the most important decision they've made so far, but they should keep in mind that society is what you make of it. Ideally, society is an avenue where students can lead by example and invest in others.











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NEWS

'Argus and the Maze of Myth' returns to BJU, benefits Piedmont Women's Center

Abigail Vogel

Last spring, a new play debuted in Performance Hall as a graduate student project. Written and directed by Jon Klukow, "Argus and the Maze of Myth" is an entertaining combination of comedy, romance and thriller. Due to the play's success and popularity, it returned to the stage to give another round of students a chance to experience the story of Argus.

This time, the play also served as a benefit for the Piedmont Women's Center of Upstate South Carolina. Proceeds from ticket sales will be used to support the Piedmont Women's Center on their mission to provide free pregnancy and sexual health care to women in need. It is a faith-based non-profit organization that has served its community since 1991. They also provide parenting classes, enabling families to thrive. Dr. David Schwingle organized the charity showing.

Argus is a young squire to Sir William the Brave III, and the play tells the story of his journey through the maze. He follows Sir William into the dark, spooky maze to help him locate and rescue the trapped fair maiden, Julia. Sir William is a proud, bumbling knight who blindly rushes into everything while Argus is a coward with a kind heart who is too frightened to be much help. They face the dangers and obstacles of the maze and are changed for the better as a result. But will it be enough to save Julia, their own skins and defeat



the mysterious, deadly monster that wants nothing more than to make the maze their final resting place?

The cast of Argus and the Maze of Myth consisted of two senior theatre students, William Klapperich and Hongen Hu, one junior theatre student, Elijah Gleiter, and two theatre minors, Justin Keith and Kayle Partin.

Kayle Partin played Julia, a fair maiden trapped in the maze and hiding a terrible secret. Julia's been trapped for years with only her pet goat and the horrors of the maze for company. Kavle has been acting in minor roles since high school and credits the summer BJU theatre EDU Camp for sparking the longevity of her interest in acting. She was in "Happy Journey to Trenton and Camden" her freshman year as well as the theatre department's annual 24-hour play Bake-Off and served on the BJU drama team at the Answers in Genesis' Ark Encounter.

Last spring, she played a maid in the Von Trapp household in BJU's production of "The Sound of Music." Her role in "Argus and the Maze of Myth" was the largest role she has played to date.

When asked if comedy was her preferred type of role, Kayle said, "Making an audience laugh means a lot more to me than making an audience cry." In her words, she considers Argus to be a "Princess Bride" type of story. Kayle said she loves the show dearly and thinks "One of the coolest things about being in the show is being in the first cast."

Hongen starred as the fan favorite little goat, Ronathan. He has been involved in theatre for many years, going back to high school where he performed in several faith-based productions. To Hongen, the desire to act is an instinct that he has cultivated throughout his college career. Hongen has been involved with several productions in the past few years, most notably in "Cyrano de Bergerac." Hongen emphasizes dramaturgy and actually served as the dramaturg for "Argus and the Maze of Myth."

Hongen's academic career goal is to "focus more on the theatrical theory, oracle dramaturgy and theatrical aesthetics." He would love to explore the integration of Oriental aesthetics into Western aesthetics in grad school.

In "Argus," Hongen provides the bleat of the goat and



is the puppeteer controlling the goat's movements. The puppet was constructed from scratch by Stage Manager Alexia Bainbridge, Costume Designer Lyvia Miller and Elijah Gleiter, who was the lighting designer in addition to playing Sir William.

Working the puppet is a very physical role that requires surprising agility and gracefulness. Hongen explained that "Nothing like that will come naturally in a blink. Hard work is inevitable." Playing Ronathan may not have involved saying any lines, but that little goat is just as important to the story of "Argus" as the human characters. In Hongen's words, "The goat is the seasoning to the whole production. It may not be the main ingredient but without the goat, the show is completely different."

"Sir William is the bridge between the show and the audience."

Elijah Gleiter returned as the irritating but hilarious Sir William the Brave III. Elijah is a familiar face to the student body for his role as Christian in "Cyrano de Bergerac" last fall. He has also served on the drama team at the Ark Encounter two years in a row and is currently preparing for his role as Edgar in "King Lear."

Elijah is musically talented, and "Argus" features a solo voice performance by his character, Sir William. Sir William may not be the main character in Argus, but the play begins and ends with his perspective. Sir William accomplishes much of

the background work of the play and serves as comic relief. In the words of Elijah's co-stars, "Sir William is definitely a part of what makes Argus, Argus." and "The play wouldn't be anywhere near as engaging to people if it didn't have Sir William." Sir William is the bridge between the show and the audience.

Justin Keith portrays the title character of the play, Argus. The character starts out with as much spine as a jellyfish, and the main plot of the play is the story of his personal growth. Justin has been acting since elementary school when he first joined a theatre group. At BJU, he has performed in "Our Town," "Cyrano de Bergerac" and "The Sound of Music."

Justin said that he sees similarities between Argus and himself and that those similarities made playing the character easier. Justin's favorite part of being in the show has been the rehearsals. He said, "The performances are fun, but I love the rehearsals. Just because I'm with friends!" The people are what keep him doing theatre. As to the show itself, Justin enjoys the goofy moments of the show the best.

William Klapperich appeared as the fearsome monster that hunts those who are unfortunate enough to get lost in his maze. His costume was an impressive piece of design that has Will towering over the rest of the cast. Will has played Benvolio in "Romeo and Juliet," Le Bret in "Cyrano de Bergerac" and Colonel Brandon in "Sense and Sensibility." Playing the villain in "Argus" is a deviation from the characters he has played recently, but he does a very good job with what little stage time he has. The conflict of the play rests on him and he delivers it masterfully.

EVENTS

BJU hosts 30th annual Washington Center Challenge Day

Josie Santopietro

REPORTER

On Oct. 3, Bob Jones University held its 30th annual Washington Center Challenge Day in partnership with the Washington Center School, Special Olympics Greenville and Greenville County Parks, Recreation & Tourism.

Washington Center School is a public school in Greenville County that works with children with disabilities. BJU hosts this event each year to allow these children to exercise themselves physically and mentally.

The event is organized by students studying education and communication disorders, as well as other volunteers. This year, over 250 BJU students were paired with 80 Washington Center students to play organized games spread throughout the Davis Field House and track.

Washington Center Day began with Charles Luttrell, founder and director of Camp Spearhead, a residential camp in Marietta, SC, for children and adults with special needs. Luttrell graduated from BJU in 1963 with a master's degree in divinity and was later a professor in physical education at BJU for over 40 years. Luttrell provided BJU with the connection to the Washington Center School, and he was later succeeded by Randy Murr, former therapeutic recreation program manager at Greenville County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism, from 1994 until 2023.

Murr developed Washington



Center Day into what it is today, calling it an "opportunity to put a population that's overlooked and misunderstood on a platform."

Murr said it's a challenging task for Washington Center School to even get to an event away from their school, which is located near Pleasantburg Drive about five miles from BJU.

"It takes a lot for them to leave their classroom, get on a bus, and deal with feeding, medication, toileting, and everything else the students need to move a school a few miles down the road."

He emphasized how much the school appreciates this day, stressing that it is "Washington Center's favorite day of the year." For BJU students, the event is "a chance to see the incredible expanse of God's creation," Murr said.

He also expounded on the importance of Washington Center Day, saying how "God gave these kids a gift to reach people that no one else can because of their disability. It also allows parents to see their children being valued and appreciated for who they are."

Mrs. Jane Smith, an education faculty member at BJU, said the purpose of Washington Center Day is to "allow our students to serve our community and work with parents, faculty, and children with disabilities." Her favorite part of the day is "watching

our students light up when they are paired with their athletes. It's just life-changing for them."

Mr. Daniel Dillard, operations coordinator at BJU, said he appreciated all the different skills required and applied to make the event happen.

University students who participated in the event had many takeaways that they learned. Brenna Binkley, a sophomore elementary education major, said she loved working with children and enjoyed the hands-on experience. Seana Ruane, a junior English education major, said she loved being an encouragement to the children and staff at the school and allowing the children to practice their motor skills. Jenna Bihler, a senior math education major, and Kirsten Warren, a senior English education major, both said they appreciated seeing the joy and happiness on the children's faces as they won games. Jenna said it also made her grateful for her health and the blessings God has given her.

Not only did this event help the students and children, but it also encouraged the teachers at Washington Center School. One teacher, Naomi, said she loved to "see image bearers being individually celebrated," and another, Josh, said he appreciated seeing the children get excited, "getting to be themselves and seeing future educators who will work with kids."





STUDENT LIFE

Column: BJU Theatre Department celebrates 15 years of Bake-Off shows

Amylia Boyd REPORTER

What can you create in 24 hours? According to Mr. David Schwingle, the department head of theatre and fine arts, "You can create so much good."

Bake-Off is a 24-hour writing, acting and performing competition that brings together creatives from all over campus, representing a wide array of majors. Bake-Off was brought to Bob Jones University in 2009 under the direction of Mr. Schwingle and has become an event many students anticipate whether they participate or watch.

This year, I had the privilege of being able to participate as a playwright. Along with a handful of other writers, we met in Performance Hall on Wednesday afternoon, Sept. 17, to receive our prompts. We were given a list of lines, props, characters and genres we needed to incorporate into our short, one-act plays. Once that meeting was over, we were set loose to begin writing.

In my head, I was mulling over many different ideas, unsure of which direction to take, but then I was reminded of something Mr. Schwingle said before he concluded the meeting: "You don't have time to think; you need to make hard and fast decisions."

Right then "Gam-Gam's Last Laugh" began to form in my head. "Gam-Gam's Last Laugh" follows a mother and her teenage children, Karen and Jason, who have been tasked with cleaning out their late grandmother's attic. Stuffed with nearly everything Gam-Gam ever owned, the attic feels like a punishment from beyond the grave. As they clean, Karen and Jason bicker, setting the stage for plenty of humor and for things to unravel. Eventually, they discover a journal revealing the "junk" in the attic is a memorial to the mother's childhood.

Over the next 24 hours, I and the other writers wrote furiously to meet the deadline on Thursday at midnight. Waiting until the last moment to make sure I made all the changes I needed, I finally submitted my play into the hands of the awaiting judges.

Friday was Judging Day. Waiting for another 24 hours to hear whether or not your play made the lineup is stressful. I was constantly checking my email and Instagram to make sure I hadn't missed anything. However long it felt like I waited, evening rolled around, and the lineup was released. I made it!

Other winners included Ivan Karpitskiy, a senior biblical studies major, for "The Pact"; Abby Lynn Gillespie, senior theatre major, for "Baseball and Bons Bons"; and Megan Winneberg, senior film and digital storytelling major, for "Falling for You." The winning playwrights were awarded a cash prize and one free ticket to one of the performances on Saturday night.

On Saturday, the judges placed the scripts into the actors' and directors' hands promptly at 8 a.m. for rehearsal. Rehearsal for Bake-Off is a condensed process covering everything from costume fittings and set design to prop management and full runthroughs. Whether or not the actors felt ready, the final step of the process was upon them: performing in front of an audience.

The audience settled in, the lights came on, and the culmination of many creatives' minds came to life in 4 short plays.

There is a tremendous blessing in being able to see something you wrote performed on a stage and witnessing the audience's reaction firsthand. The audience laughed, cried and applauded brand new stories wholly written and performed by Bob Jones University students.

Watching the story I'd imagined in my head performed on stage made me feel truly validated as a writer. I found myself watching both the play and my friends' reactions as they shared the moment with me, enjoying every second. I wore an almost permanent smile until the lights came back up.

If you haven't been to a Bake-Off before, keep your eye out for the next one because it is a fun time for all involved. In the words of Mr. Schwingle, "May we have 15 more years of Bake-Off."



REVERSE COURTESY





