

# Truman first college to produce "The Nether"

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A man is killed in front of you, but you just walk on by. A child is being abused, but you don't stop to help. Why should you? None of this is real anyway. Or is it? These questions and more are posed by "The Nether," a stage production by playwright Jennifer Haley that explores the implications of a futuristic online reality and the darkest corners of society's imagination.

The play currently is in pre-production here at Truman State, the first college to produce it. It premiered in Los Angeles during spring 2013, followed closely by a 2014 London production and a 2015 New York production, all garnering high praise.

Assistant Professor of Theatre David Charles Goyette, who is the director of Truman's production, said he has been familiar with "The Nether" for two years because he is part of the literary circle of the American Theater Company in Chicago.

"Usually what happens is after [a play] goes to New York and after it goes to the West End in London, then all the professional theatres start doing it immediately," Goyette said. "Usually the licensing houses wait another full year before the colleges are allowed to do it, but because we are in a rural area where we aren't really in competition with the professional theatre hubs, they're allowing us to do it at the same time as them."

Goyette said "The Nether" is set in the future, when artificial reality and the Internet are one and the same. He said characters plug in to interact with an Internet world where everything appears real. He said in the play, an entrepreneur has created a depiction of a Victorian-era house in the dark net where characters are required to learn how to interact, and can fulfill their darkest desires. Goyette said among these characters is a government agent going after the creator of the dark net world.

Goyette said two worlds exist in the play, the modern and the Victorian. Each has its own ways of speaking and mannerisms, which creates a different physicality throughout the play while keeping

a realistic and gritty tone. He said he thinks the way the play deals with such a modern issue in these two opposing worlds is compelling.

"It's very relevant to issues of today," Goyette said. "The play examines whether violence in a fantasy world causes damage to society."

Goyette said the theme for the theatre department mainstage season is "What would you kill for? What would you die for?" American society currently is examining its values and priorities, he said, which causes people to question what is really important to them and where they see their lives going. He said all the plays featured this season, including "The Nether," pose these questions.

Senior theatre major Jessica Emmanus, stage manager for "The Nether," said she applied for the position last semester. She said stage managers who want to apply for mainstage productions usually have to submit applications to the theatre professors, who look them over before making a decision.

"Stage management is more about the people and less about management of the show, which is really cool," Emmanus said.

Emmanus said the stage management process changes to fit the time periods in the play, but the specific changes depend on the director's vision and the set.

She said she calls the lighting, sound and projection cues, and makes sure everyone is on time, healthy and performing the same way during rehearsals and performances.

"It's a big responsibility, but this job is all about the relationships you make with the people, especially with the directors and the actors," Emmanus said. "You'll never know if the actor next to you will eventually be a director, or choreographer, et cetera."

Emmanus said many plays are mysterious like this one, but "The Nether" is cool, as it is something viewers can relate to because of society's fascination with social media. The play is about who characters are online versus who characters are in real life, she said, since their personality can be drastically different or exactly the same. She said it is

## "The play examines whether violence in a fantasy world causes damage to society."

-Theatre professor David

Charles Goyette, the director



Courtney Kauffman/Index

Pictures of possible inspirations for "The Nether" are pinned on a bulletin board outside Goyette's office. The play still is in the initial exploration phase of pre-production, which makes this board a go-to spot for the director.

interesting because it shows the darker side of people.

"In Truman we don't see a lot of each other, but when we are on social media we connect and we have friends and we do this and that," Emmanus said. "There is always drama on the Internet and 'The Nether' connects to Truman's campus because we are so different when we are online."

When she first heard the theme for the semester, Emmanus said she thought of many possible plays that would fit, but wasn't surprised by the final choices because they all fit the theme. Emmanus said originally the theatre department was planning to do a different play but changed to "The Nether" because it is newer and relevant.

Senior theatre major Alex Boyt, the assistant director, said "The Nether" currently is in the pre-production stage where only he, the director and the stage manager attend planning and logistics meetings. He said the time commitment is spread out and relaxed now, but it will pick up once auditions and rehearsals start.

"Not a lot of people get opportunities like this," Boyt said. "It's a really unique opportunity to get to be with one of the professors throughout the entire show. They bounce ideas off of you, they talk to you about decisions and stuff like that so it's a really cool artistic experience."

Boyt said he thinks this show fits the theme of the semester in a metaphorical and symbolic way by posing moral questions to the audience. He said the play questions the line between reality and virtual reality, as well as the line between right and wrong, which makes the audience question what is right in the play.

Boyt said being the first college to perform "The Nether" allows for an unconventional level of artistic license. With plays that have been produced many times, he said, audiences tend to develop an image of how they think the play should appear, but with "The Nether" he and the director have the chance to create something different with a new perspective.

Boyt said he thinks the fact that the play deals with current issues in society makes it a good fit for Truman.

"It's hard to guarantee with any 100 percent certainty that anything is going to be a perfect fit," Boyt said. "But I can say that, especially with the type of technology and the type of virtual reality, [the play] is very fitting, in that aspect, to a culturally enriched audience."

Open auditions for "The Nether" will take place 1 p.m. Sept. 20 at the James G. Severns Theatre in Ophelia Parrish. Performances will take place 8 p.m. Nov. 11-14 at Severns Theatre.

For more information contact David Charles Goyette at dcgoyette@truman.edu.

# Kirksville residents join exercise program

BY BRENTLY SNEAD  
Staff Writer

Kirksville residents have been coming together to get healthy and spend time outdoors with a training program initiated by the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians' Student Association.

The Couch to 5K is a 10-week training program that encourages people to exercise daily for 20 minutes by walking, jogging and ultimately running without overexhausting themselves or getting injured.

Rose Glastetter, second-year A.T. Still student and president of the Family Medicine Club, is organizing the two-year-old training program.

"Each time we will begin with a five-minute brisk walk just to warm up, and then we begin a cycle of walking and jogging," Glastetter said. "The ultimate goal is that by the end of the 10 weeks, we will be jogging for the 20 minutes."

Glastetter said the program is a way to get students involved with the community. The program provides a way to meet new people, she said, and there's a level of accountability because everyone trains together.

Originally, the program was created to help those with minimal running experience become active, Glastetter said. However, she said it has grown and opened up to people of varying athleticism, and predominantly aims to promote health in the Kirksville community.

"I want to emphasize how it's really an individual thing," Glastetter said. "It's a good program for those who haven't ran in a while or haven't ever ran before but at the same time we have those at a little higher fitness level. You can ramp it up or scale it down, whatever you need."

Despite the name Couch to 5K, Glastetter said not all participants will be taking on the challenge this fall, though it is an option for those who are interested. Glastetter said the program was structured around the Oct. 24 Founder's Day 5K, but the event is just a goal and not a mandatory part of the program.

Glastetter said it has been a rewarding program for the participants and leaders. "It seems like people are enjoying it, and at least half of our participants are returners, so you know they want to be involved," Glastetter said.

Although Glastetter is the primary contact for the group, she is assisted by other students in the program such as Stacy Schuldt, second-year A.T. Still student.

## The Couch to 5K Training Tips



Source: fromcouchto5k.com

- Don't push yourself too hard when you jog – go at a comfortable pace.
- If you start developing an injury, stop running before it gets worse and take a few days off.
- Stretch after every workout to avoid injuries.
- Hydrate properly and energize yourself at least an hour before you run.
- Make sure you have proper running shoes.

"I already run, but I wanted to help out because I know that when you're first starting out it can be difficult to get over that original hump," Schuldt said.

Schuldt said she hopes not only to encourage community members to get active, but for them to stay with it and continue the healthy habit even after the end of the program.

Schuldt said she has heard participants saying they felt better than in the beginning and other positive feedback from those involved.

"I think it's been pretty successful so far — we haven't been going for very long, but even so, people are already starting to feel a bit better," Schuldt said.

Kirksville resident Dave Koenecke has been involved with the Couch to 5K program since the beginning and said he enjoys participating.

"It's been nice to jump-start an exercise program, and that's the biggest asset I have gotten out of it," Koenecke said. "I'm not normally a runner but this is a good way to get outside and do something at my own pace."

Although Koenecke is aiming to become healthier, he said eventually he wants to participate in a 5K or a 3K because he hasn't run that far before.

The program takes place 6 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays and 8 a.m. Saturday mornings. Participants meet in the parking lot in front of Kirksville High School.

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### 2015-2016 Schedule

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Saturday, Sept. 26, 2015

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**Christmas with the Celts**  
Saturday, Dec. 5, 2015

**Vocalosity**  
Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2016

**Million Dollar Quartet Musical**  
Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2016

Tickets for each performance are available approximately 1-2 weeks before the presentation unless otherwise noted. Tickets are free for Truman students, faculty and staff and may be picked up in the Student Union Building.

A limited number of general admission tickets may be purchased at Edna Campbells for \$11 each and at the Truman State University Cashiers Window in McClain Hall. Tickets may also be purchased online at [lyceum.truman.edu](http://lyceum.truman.edu).

For more information about purchasing tickets, please call 660.785.4016 or log on to [lyceum.truman.edu](http://lyceum.truman.edu)

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**Cross Country Coach Jim White** *Coach who inspired the movie "McFarland, USA"*  
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This event is free, and no ticket is required. Co-sponsored by the Kohlberg Lyceum Series, the Multicultural Affairs Center and Ekklesia

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