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long run.

Also, I try to convey to people to stay steadfast. Having tenacity in tough situations is a skill that all should try to maintain.

Lastly, I rely heavily on prayer. Whenever one may have issues that can keep you up all night, prayer always works."

Through Amari's own words, we can see that he not only takes his academic career seriously, he also takes his walk with God seriously.

During the past year, Amari has had the opportunity to speak in front of large groups of people on various occasions and has come to the realization that this is something he excels at and immensely enjoys.

"At first, I was nervous beyond belief, but now, I enjoy it more than ever.

There is something about having an entire crowd pay attention to what you have to say that invigorates me.

To some, this may sound prideful, but I see it as an opportunity to inform others with the personal thoughts that you feel should be heard."

His confidence in his abilities should not be perceived as arrogance, but should be celebrated as a vessel for a young black man to utilize in his quest to be heard and to be heard saying something worthwhile.

It is clear that Amari not only is self-motivated, but also has had a strong support system in his family that has laid the foundation for success.

Amari is more than aware of the impact his family has on him and his accomplishments.

If there was anything that he couldn't live without, it would be his family. However, Amari has a unique definition of family: "...my definition of family does not only encompass my true relatives.

I define family as all of the individuals who love me as I love them and support me as I support them.

Therefore, my friends, teachers, and fellow members of the church are my family.

With family, I know that I have someone to rely on for any needs I may have."

If Amari were given the free time to do anything in the world, he wouldn't know what to do.

"I am grateful for the things I have, the places I live, and the people who I am blessed to know. I don't think anything else would make me happier."



Hillcrest Herald

bringing good news to a loving people of purpose, power and praise

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Tammy Anderson practices her swing; she is one of several Hillcrest members who participate in the church's golf ministry

Hillcrest Plays Tennis

by Ernest Holsendolph

"Finish that swing! Finish that swing!"

That was Jay Fuller's constant cry, as he put his tennis players through their paces on a still 90-degree day in May.

It was the latest get together for Hillcrest youngsters of all ages, from kids to grownups like Shirley Barclay, Tammy Anderson and Gerald Anderson.

"Man, this is a lot hotter than golf!" said Gerald, an avid golfer who was trying to get a grip on tennis.

Gerald, who is athletic, was making a mistake athletes do—try to overpower the tennis ball. But you cannot do it without tech-

nique, said Brother Fuller.

"First you have to learn technique, learn consistency, and then you can hit harder and accurately," he said.

Most important, he said, is to "finish the swing," or complete the follow through—by swinging through the ball, not just meeting it.

Sister Barclay was hitting it hard and well, but she admitted she was re-learning the game.

She was a big hitter back in the day, back in college where she played winning tennis even against the boys.

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The Hillcrest Herald

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From the Minister's Desk



Richard L. Barclay

The 2011-2012 school year has begun for most Atlanta area children.

The beginning of a new school year is an exciting and challenging time for the youngsters and their parents.

The ringing school bells don't make me salivate like a Pavlov dog, but they do turn my thoughts to the significance of school and a good education.

Recently, I reflected on what I think are some incredibly profound and wonderfully entertaining quotes about school and education that I have read over the years.

Here are a few of them:

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"But Brother Fuller is making us go back to fundamentals in a way I must learn," she said.

Much like golf, tennis is a game of hand and eye coordination, the coaches said, but unlike golf tennis is played on the move, requiring quick footwork, fast decision making, and finally good gamesmanship.

The tennis workouts were conducted on two levels at the same time. Brother Fuller had

I have never let my schooling interfere with my education.—Mark Twain

My school days were the happiest days of my life; which should give you some indication of the misery I've endured over the past twenty-five years.—Paul Merton

My school was so tough the school newspaper had an obituary section.—Norm Crosby

Smartness runs in my family. When I went to school I was so smart my teacher was in my class for five years.

I'm not going to buy my kids an encyclopaedia. Let them walk to school like I did.—Yogi Berra

In elementary school, in case of fire you have to line up quietly in a single file line from the smallest to the tallest. What is the logic? Do tall people burn slower?—Warren Hutcherson

You learn something every day if you pay attention.—Ray LeBlond

Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.—Nelson Mandela

most of the adults, including some with experience, like Carol Hunter, Davette Giddens and Monica Cooley.

At the same time Anthony Cooley was teaching fundamentals to youngsters, including all the little Andersons.

Most important, the instructors were teaching each student at his level, regardless of experience, and in a patient way.

"Tennis is a great game, and

In youth we learn; in age we understand—VonEber Eschenbach.

Since I am writing about the start of a new school year, you know there are lessons somewhere. Here's one:

Parents, while your youngsters' schools are probably not so tough that there is an obituary section in the school newspaper (*Norm Crosby quote*), things can get tough for them.

Keep open lines of communication so that your children will feel free to share problems they are having at school with you.

Listen with love, empathy and understanding, and speak to appropriate school officials about circumstances that are presenting problems for your children.

Support and encourage your children; attend school activities.

Celebrate their accomplishments and remember to share them with the Hillcrest family.

Remind them that they are "Christian students." As such, they must keep God in the forefront of all their endeavors and in all their interactions within the scholastic setting. Remind them of the importance of daily prayer.

there are plenty of opportunities to play," Anthony said. USTA.com, a principal tennis site, can connect you with players of your skill level and point to courts available, he said.

In other words, tennis is ready, when you are. And no better way to get going than with the Hillcrest tennis ministry.

Come on out, especially you brothers, and learn a sport you can play for a lifetime.

Globetrotter: Scott Hester

by Ernest Holsendolph

Howard University-bound Scott Hester got a rare privilege this spring.

As an aspiring mechanical engineer, he got a chance to look at the world's fastest growing industrial machine—The People's Republic of China.

He and 26 other young black men and women made the 7,000-mile journey to Beijing in late April, courtesy of the US government, to see first-hand another culture, and the unfolding history of China. Scott said his participation was sponsored by Alabama State University.

"Everything is big in China," said Scott. "Like we visited the manufacturing operations of Lenovo, the giant Chinese computer company that makes more computers, laptop and desk, than we have people in the United States," he added.

Several years ago Lenovo bought the ThinkPad operations of IBM and has been growing as a manufacturer and marketer of

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ing at and smelling a rose, and watching the morning sunrise. Many years ago I laid on an operating table with electrical sensors on me, tubes running into my arms. My heart was not acting right and wanted to do its own thing. The surgeons had me in an operating room ready to go in if things went bad. The surgeons did not want to tell me what would happen should the operation not work so I had hours to think about what I would say to God. I felt that I had been a good husband and provider, so I knew my wife would be fine. Both of my sons had put on Christ and were fine young men so I knew they would be just fine as well. I

personal computers.

In addition to the visit to industrial installations, Scott and his group did plenty of sight-seeing too, including a trip to The Great Wall, which dates back to the seventh century BC and once extended nearly 4,000 miles.

"More than 400 miles remain," said Scott, who was impressed with the immense size and the



Scott Hester, globetrotter extraordinaire, poses at the Great Hall of China. He also among some 26 black youth making the 7000 trek to China to study its culture in April, courtesy of the US government.

had been a good employee, worked to build and support a small congregation and was a good person in my community. I felt I was ready to meet my creator. But you know, I asked what I would miss. I would miss the smell and taste of fried chicken.

What is your pet peeve?

Lateness...and lack of timeliness, I am helping my family with this.

ACTS is an acronym that stands for something important to the Hillcrest Church. What is ACTS?

The only thing I can think of is

dramatic setting of the wall, which once protected China as a fortress.

Even more memorable than the sights, he said, was the odd reception he and the other black youngsters got.

People in the streets were startled to see this group of more than two dozen black youths, and followed them about, taking pictures.

In an era when Barack Obama is President of the United States, one Chinese onlooker asked Scott "what's wrong with your face?"

"We found that many Chinese are NOT up to speed on what is going on in the world," said Hester.

He was also struck by pollution in China, and the very heavy smoking habits of the people.

The youngsters were intrigued with the food, and the unfamiliar tastes of food so different from Chinese style food in our country.

"I really did appreciate the chance to see another culture, so different from ours," Scott said.

Adoration, Confession, Thanks-giving, and Supplication; a guide for prayer.

What "time" is it on your Christian journey?

It is the second half of my journey, time for me to realize that being a Christian involves a since of urgency. I must act on going out to make disciples.

Is the door in your life marked "push" or "pull?" Why?

Neither. It would be more of a revolving door because you push and pull depending on where you are in your Christian journey.



Born in Seattle, Washington, Craig Twaites is a moss-back. An IT program manager, he has worked in the field for 37 years. He came to Georgia in 2005, and he has been worshipping at the "Crest" for about three years now after looking closely at sister congregations Bouldercrest, Lithonia, Conyers, and Embury Hills. He is committed to the marriage ministry, and he is available to work anywhere there is a need. He is married to a wonderful better-half and sister in Christ, Lawanna Twaites. The father of two sons, Kory and Kyle, 24 and 28 respectively, he also shares in the rearing of an up and coming college senior, Kelsey 21 and Skyelar, 12.

Complete the following: Behind my back, people say that I.....

Am a disciple of Christ, a person dedicated to the faith and also a hard worker, a person of high ethics, someone that you can count on, a bit of a procrastinator, and someone who likes to fish but never takes the time to do so, a person who enjoys computer technology, loves a good steak, a Navy Viet Nam Vet. and is an all American, one who enjoys apple pie, ice cream, and popcorn.

Just for fun, give one of the following Biblical characters a nickname that you think is appropriate and explain your choice: Noah, Moses, Joseph, Samson, Job, Sarah, or Ruth.

Job would be my choice. I would give him the name "stick-to-itiveness". He maintained his integrity in spite of what Satan was allowed to throw at him. God blessed him even more, which is an encouragement to me in these trying times.

You are counting your blessings. What are the top five? Why?)

God—He loved me first and has blessed me more than I can say. I am that I am because of Him. Jesus and the Holy Spirit—Jesus loves me for who I am, warts and all. Though I fall short often, I strive to live as Christ each day, striving for spiritual perfection but willing to learn from all of the stumbling that I have done and will continue to do. My wife, Lawanna—Lawanna is not only my lover, she is a friend, fellow Disciple in the faith, a woman who brings the sunshine to my sometimes dark and cloudy

day, and one of the few who can put me back on course when I stray from my God directed path. I love her as a mother, professional, educator, lover of children, and faithful, prayerful saint. Moms and Pops—I have been highly blessed with two moms and two dads. My mother has shown me the finer things that are important in a family and she has shown me how to see the joy in life when you are floating in the storm. My step mom brought me to Christ, and showed me by example, the power of Christian faith and mentoring as well as being positive in these later days. My dad was offered a job with a East coast baseball team as a pitcher in the Negro leagues. He chose rather to raise three boys and to forego what would have been a great professional sporting career. He taught me to be a man and the art of debate, of which I still can't master. My step dad taught me discipline, honor, and respect from a military perspective, and the power of explosives. (yep, he was EOD) My children—How I have enjoyed being a father and step-dad and wish I could have a re-do, just to be a father again, to sharpen my skills, correct the many mistakes I have made, and be humbled again by the wisdom and understanding of children when they are young but also when they can share some adult words of wisdom! I thank Kyle, Kory, Kelsey, and Skyelar for helping me be a better person.

You have just looked into the mirror of your life. What do you see?

A man eating fried chicken, look-

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Nia Hunter

If you think lightning never strikes twice in the same place, meet Nia Hunter!

The youngest child of Carol and Anthony Hunter, she's blazing her own success trail just like older brother Nigel who was featured in the Herald, April 2010.

Currently a junior at Georgia State majoring in public policy with a certification in gerontology, its clear where Nia's heart lies!

The Herald wanted to learn more about what motivates her so we sat down for chat.

When you talk with Nia, you quickly see the strong family bond that transcends three generations.

We asked her, "Who's your "she-ro" (female hero)?"

She quickly responds "my grandmother"! Of course we all

know and love "Momma Ann Smith", but when Nia speaks of her she is overwhelmed with emotion.

"She's always so encouraging to everyone she comes in contact with. Her spiritual strength has been and continues to be so enriching in my life, and I've learned so much from her" she said. "My growth as a young Christian is attributed in a large part to my mom and grandmother" she continued after a brief pause.

As the recipient of the inaugural G.C. Smothers scholarship in 2008, it had a special significance to Nia.

"Brother Smothers baptized me so receiving a scholarship in his honor just solidified our connection. It's amazing when you think about it, my church family loved me enough to contribute to my college success", she said.

She's definitely making the most of the investment.

In addition to her grueling academic and work schedule, Nia is a Career Intern helping students select their majors, along with job search and resume assistance. She's also involved with the university's version of Toastmasters, The Speakers Association, and IMPACT, a Christian mix and mingle group.

When most college students were relaxing and hanging with friends during spring break, she was involved in a community service project, working with the hard-hit public school system of Memphis, Tennessee.

"It was a humbling experience and made me re-think my career

goals" she said. "I'd like to work in some role of government, focusing on senior policies as well as those affecting children, and maybe some missionary work as well", says Nia.

Now that she has a few years of college under her belt, the Herald asked this veteran student to look back at her high school years and talk to the young ladies of Hillcrest currently in this phase. "I would tell them it's ok to be afraid sometimes, to be unsure of yourselves, you are not alone" she said.

What advice does she have for them? "Cherish yourself more, and **LISTEN TO YOUR MOMS**, they know a lot more than you think because they've been there" she exclaimed!

Her vision for youth activities at Hillcrest, especially with the young ladies: "I'd love to have a Girl Power-sit in where college and high school young ladies just sit and talk openly and freely. No subject would be off limits and they would have the freedom to speak knowing everything said would be kept confidential", says Nia.

"Young girls face a lot of challenges and sometimes it's just easier to talk to someone other than your parents", she explained.

It appears that this strong, intelligent, and articulate young woman is focused, determined, and poised for a successful future.

We expect greatness from her, and Nia's track record says she doesn't disappoint!

Andrew Braxter: Preacher and Dreamer by Ernest Holsendolph

One of the pleasures of this summer has been Andrew Braxter, intern to senior minister Richard Barclay.

Andrew is 21, going on 35, a serious and very purposeful young man, who also loves a good laugh.

Children love him. After an interview the other day, we dropped by his office to pick up a picture, and found little kids crawling all over the place like ants, very much making themselves at home.

Little Gerald Anderson was furiously drumming on two water containers like bongos. Others were playing games, waiting for some minutes with Andrew.

"He is really nice," said Gerald, "one of the best blessings for Hillcrest." Amen.

Like nearly all preachers, Andrew, a Montgomery native, dreamed of preaching when he was a kid, preaching at age three to his toys, or boxes or anything that would stand still.

Also typical of many preachers, an early pleasure in "preaching" was the attention it fetched, and Andrew acknowledges that. But he now has a much higher purpose.

In an essay, *Chasing Your Dreams*, Brother Braxter wrote:

"Since childhood I have always had a dream to be a great gospel preacher. I could see crowds of sinners coming and giving their lives to the Lord.

"I envisioned ministries that not only brought people to the church, but also empowered them to make a positive change in their lives.

I dreamed of gospel meetings and revivals, going out into the community and building relation-

ships with people, and a church that God found pleasing in His eyesight."

As everybody knows who has heard his preaching, Andrew already has the engrossing style that marks outstanding preachers.

But in his broader mission, to serve people in multiple ways, he has mapped out a course of study that not only will make him a knowledgeable evangelist but also a well prepared personal, and family counselor.

Beyond graduation in ministerial studies at Southwestern—he has three semesters left—Andrew plans to pursue a masters in family counseling, an MBA to train him in operation a nonprofit organization devoted to good works and a doctorate in divinity to round out his Biblical training.

Asked if he is ready for such a tall order, Andrew admitted, with a smile, "I need prayer."

Said he, "I do tend to procrastinate --- I have the demon of procrastination," a tendency to put things off.

"In many ways Andrew is a prodigy," said Brother Barclay, who praises his speaking and his beautiful way with music.

"The challenge for prodigies is to summon prodigious effort, if they expect to fulfill promise,"

said Brother Barclay. "And I am urging Andrew to keep that in mind."

As a case in point, is the story of renowned cellist Yo-yo Ma. He began violin, and later the viola, before finding his true calling by taking up the cello AT AGE FOUR!

Despite that prodigious start, Ma is not known for his beginning, but rather for his legendary work habits that kept him tops in his field for decades.

A crowning achievement was playing at Barack Obama's inauguration.

With God's blessings and determination, our Andrew can achieve the success of his dreams.



Senior minister Richard Barclay (seated) explains a point from the Bible to summer intern Andrew Braxter (standing) whom he says has the ability to become one of the best ministers in the brotherhood.

Hillcrest Youth—Amari Ingram in the Spotlight



"We are what we repeatedly do, excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." — Aristotle

According to Amari Ingram, Aristotle is conveying the fact that one act alone does not define a person.

No single situation defines a person's identity; repetition of positive works is what truly characterizes a person. Amari is a manifestation of this quote, evidenced by his daily life.

The son of Albert and Katrina Ingram, Amari has an older sister, Alyssa (age 21). His family has been attending Hillcrest since 1998.

This outstanding student, who makes excellence a habit, is a

senior at Shiloh High School in Gwinnett County.

His commitment to utilizing his talent is evidenced by the quantity and quality of the awards and accolades he has received during his high school career.

Amari is a well-rounded young man on several different levels.

During his high school career, he has not only achieved academically, he is also a reputable athlete.

As a member of the varsity football team, Amari has been recognized as a 3-year Letterman. As a member of the football team, he was also the recipient of the Most Devoted General Award, as well as the recipient of the Gwinnett County Touchdown Club Player of the Month for September 2010.

Academically, Amari has earned several notable honors and awards for his achievements. He is a member of the National Beta Club, National Honor Society, National French Honor Society, Future Educators Association, and Mu Alpha Theta (a math tutoring club).

He was the former captain of the Mock Trial team and received the Outstanding Student Award for his achievement.

As a senior, he was on the Senior Board (a branch of the student government association), holding the position of Chief of Staff. Amari was voted "Mr. Senior Class," a senior superlative, by his peers.

This year, Amari will be graduating with honors, in the top 10

percent of his class, ranking an impressive 29th of 322 students.

Due to his outstanding academic achievement, he was nominated for Gifted Student of the Year. This is indeed an impressive list of accomplishments for someone in the beginning phase of their life.

His scholastic career thus far has aligned him to continue to be academically successful as he enters Ohio State University in the fall of this year.

He plans to double major in biology and chemistry. His academic blueprint will continue, as he plans to further his education, at Johns Hopkins Medical School and lay the foundation for his path to becoming a cardiac surgeon.

Amari has already proven that he has the abilities, gifts, talents, and drive to achieve all that he sets his mind to accomplish.

Amari's academic achievements will take him far but his spiritual commitment and awareness will take him further. Although teenagers face many challenges,

Amari finds it important to display his Christianity in his daily life. When asked how he chooses to display his Christianity in his everyday life,

Amari responded, "It has been a struggle, but I believe I show my Christianity by trying to live an example for other people to follow.

Yes, I make mistakes, but I try to show people that you should always learn from your mistakes because they help you out in the