

# The haunted Ashmore Estates

By Megan Presnell  
Student Writer

Many people have wanted to visit Ashmore Estates for a long time. Now they can do just that. Ashmore Estates is not only open around Halloween season, but it is open all year. That has caused a lot of excitement from the people who are curious about the building.

Some believe that the site is haunted, and that theory has seemed to be confirmed by the nine paranormal teams that have traveled there to witness Ashmore for themselves. All of the teams came to the conclusion that it is still a very active building on the paranormal level.

According to the official website, ashmoreestates.net, Ashmore Estates was constructed in 1916. Its purpose was to serve as the Coles County Almshouse, which it did until the 1950s. From 1956 to 1976, it was used as a mental institution. In 1976, Ashmore Estates was bought for the purpose of serving the developmentally disabled.

The building closed its doors for what was thought to be permanently in 1987 for health code violations and because there was not enough financial support to keep it open. Ashmore Estates has been closed to the public for twenty years until recently when new owners have decided to open it to the public.

The haunted house opens in October and ends on Halloween. Special tours are available year-round. If you are interested in visiting you can contact them at 217-512-9499 or visit their official website.

Sarah Long, a graduate of Lake Land, got to go to the haunted house that took place last year at Ashmore, "I am glad that the owners of Ashmore Estates have opened it up to the public. I know myself and many others have been curious about the estates. I had such a blast at the haunted house last year. There were many scares and they were the good kind of scares that take you by complete surprise."



The Ashmore Estates building will soon become a haunted house for Halloween.

Contact Megan at [msp07888@yahoo.com](mailto:msp07888@yahoo.com)



234-5432

Keep it in your phone, they are for more than just safety

## Teacher feature: Damon McNeal

### Not just your average teacher

By Leah Marlow  
Campus & Features Editor

This semester Lake Land College has a new teacher on campus. Originally from the Mattoon area, Damon McNeal is starting his teaching career with two courses in Human Development and one course in Social Problems.

McNeal has an educational background in psychology, social politics, and philosophy as well as in a number of other areas; with his focus being in nero (bio) psychology. He chose to teach courses like Social Problems and Human Development because they "appeal to all (his) educational backgrounds."

By coming to Lake Land, McNeal feels that he can focus more on teaching. He says for him, "Community college is true academic freedom."

Another reason he came to Lake Land is because his father, Leland McNeal, was a founding board member of the college. He likes that his father played a more administrative part at Lake Land, and he gets to have a more educational place at the college.

Before coming to Lake Land, McNeal spent time conducting research in Canada with Dr. Frederick Colbourne at the University of Alberta. At the University he had hoped to earn a full time faculty position and teach, instead there was more focus put on research.

In Alberta he conducted stroke research, using live rats as test subjects. His experiments caused the deaths of over 5,000 rats and had little to show for it clinically. After all his research McNeal had to ask himself an

ethical question, "do the ends justify the means?"

Instead of seeing people helped by his research on strokes, all he saw was the destruction of the lab rats. He decided that "(he) couldn't manage (doing) that after while."

What he did learn from his research though was, "that we can learn more e just by observing each others behavior."

For fun he enjoys playing games like disc golf, "Lake Land has a really nice course," says McNeal. He also enjoys creating games of his own, particularly for children.

After spending so many years as a student and researcher, Damon McNeal is looking forward to his first year of teaching.

# Point/Counterpoint: two views of religion

By Jennifer Colbert  
Student Writer

The following views are in no way in reflection of the writers and editors of the Navigator. The purpose of this section is to allow arguments in a fair and unbiased manner. The people who state their views here are in complete agreement of the contents and have control of how their individual pieces are written. Each month there will be a new topic of discussion. As transcribed by Jennifer Colbert.

### POINT

Noah Randolph  
History Major  
Lake Land College  
Ladder-day Saint

Through religious belief we gain a sense of purpose of the world and an understanding of life in general. We are on this planet to better ourselves by overcoming trials and to master our weaknesses.

By becoming addicted and holding the sin higher then anything else- you lose yourself. What I mean by addiction is any overwhelmingly destructive habitual action. It is different for each individual. In doing this we will be with God, who is supreme being and creator of our world, and our families forever. That is the reward.

When it comes to people who do not believe in God, or a higher

spiritual power, I believe that they have a right to refuse to accept the power of God. However, seeing that I do not agree with them, I have one thing to say: We all will face the consequences of our beliefs and actions!

I do not believe in evolution as the cause of creation. Some people may bring that up, in the argument of religious beliefs, there is no factual evidence. But I argue that although you cannot scientifically prove the existence of God, you cannot prove that He does not exist; it all comes down to Faith.

What makes us different then animals is that we have a higher purpose. There is a higher awareness that there is more to life then survival and death. God and my religion are what gives me hope and brings meaning to my life!

### COUNTERPOINT

Michael Braswell  
Eastern Illinois University  
Biology Major  
Atheist

Organized religion is not only unnecessary but also dangerous. Throughout history we have people who kill in the name of their Deity. For example: The Salem Witch Trials, the Inquisition, the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks... Just read the Old Testament.

Deep down inside, I had always questioned religion. I find it laughable that an invisible sky god had his son tortured and slaughtered so that we can be saved from eternal damnation, all because a woman was convinced by a talking snake to eat from a magical tree.

Through the beginning of my life I called myself "Christian" out of a social pressure. As a child it is hard to be a non-believer. Atheism has been given a bad name- when people

say Atheism; they view them as evil, creepy, unintelligent people.

My main argument with religion is that there is no scientific evidence. Science is based on observable data that we can test. I want to observe God doing something. Due to a general lack of evidence, it is completely unnecessary to believe in a deity. There is no other reason then someone saying "I want to." That is no reason to believe in anything.

Where did the universe come from? One thing I like about science is that it's not afraid to say "I don't know." The standard religious belief is that God must have done it since there is no likely explanation. That is called "The God of the Gaps"; if we don't have an answer, then it's God. This creates a false dichotomy.

As an advanced culture, one of scientific reasoning, it is time we move past this Bronze Age mythology.

**The staff of the Navigator has limited print space and we were unable to fit everything this month. Check out our web site, <http://www.navigatornews.org>, for the online exclusives:**

- a photo poll in opinion
- people watch photos
- an interview with one of the men's basketball players
- dodgeball videos
- interactive events calendars

## WANTED:

Someone willing to draw a cartoon or comic strip for the Navigator.

Have you ever wanted to get your drawings or art out there for people to see? Do you like to put your thoughts into pictures? Do you like drawing and are creative?

If so, come talk to us, YOU could be who we are looking for!

If interested stop by the office located in the Student Life office next to Subway or send us an email at [studentpublications@lakeland.cc.il.us](mailto:studentpublications@lakeland.cc.il.us) to let us know you are interested and we will get you more information