



In an emergency what's the plan?

Many Mercer students don't know what the procedure is for a campus crisis

By Svetlana Craft & Tim O'Boyle
Senior Reporters

Colleges have to deal with a variety of emergencies from the rare but deadly school shooting to more common incidents like water main breaks and power outages. So what is Mercer's emergency plan, and do students know it?

According to a survey conducted by The VOICE, 66 percent of the 37 students polled said they don't know anything about the college's emergency plans.

Dean of Students Dr. Diane Campbell loaned The VOICE a copy of Mercer's 94 page "Emergency Operations Plan" to help find the answers. The plan describes three tiers of emergency from minor incidents to natural disasters.

The majority of 4 year and 2 year institutions advise their students to use an emergency phone, which connects the call directly to security, as the first action in a crisis. Mercer encourages the same and calling security is the advice given in the student handbook. There is also detailed information the college's security page online, including a video about what to do in the event of a first person shooter incident. Nevertheless, The VOICE student safety survey found 75 percent of students don't know where the emergency phones are located throughout campus.

Mercer's President Dr. Jianping Wang told The VOICE, "I

See **EMERGENCY** page 4



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | MARIA RAMOS

Mercer students asked how they would handle an on-campus emergency such as a fire, natural disaster or first-person shooter event, said they would most likely revert to the things they were taught in high school, but some of those strategies may not apply on a commuter college campus.

New bill would tighten pedestrian responsibilities

By Brien Woolford
Reporter

South Jersey Assemblyman Chris Brown introduced the Driver and Pedestrian Mutual Responsibility Act on Feb. 6, 2017. If passed, it would make it illegal for pedestrians to cross the street without being in the crosswalk zone. The act also looks to introduce a yield for pedestrians at the crosswalk, as opposed to a stop, for drivers.

One of the reasons why Brown wants to repeal the previous 2010 Chapter 319 law, which concerned pedestrian safety and traffic control, is because he believes that it isn't working.

"Despite the best efforts by the state to raise pedestrian and motorist awareness,

through multiple agencies and public relation campaigns, the 2010 law simply isn't working." Brown told The VOICE, "According to available State Police records, in the four years after the law took effect, 2011-2014, pedestrians fatalities increased by nearly 10 percent."

The key difference between the new Driver and Pedestrian Mutual Responsibility Act and the previous law is that that the driver previously had to come to a complete stop at a crosswalk. The new bill requires only that the driver yield.

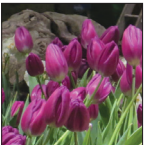
"There is clearly a conflict between drivers and pedestrians because they are both afraid of each other," said Brittney Moody, a Mercer freshman studying Business Administration.

See **WATCH WHERE YOU WALK** page 5



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | JASMINE SANTALLA

If south Jersey Assemblyman Chris Brown has his way, cars will only have to yield to pedestrians actually crossing in a crosswalk, otherwise distracted or jay-walking pedestrians may be held equally culpable in the event of an accident.



WHAT THE FLOCK? Suburban chickens rule the roost

By Jasmine Santalla
Reporter

We are in the middle of a chicken craze. Residents of towns across the state have taken to backyard poultry production.

Several factors seem to be contributing to the foul frenzy. First, there has been an upswing in do-it-yourself (DIY) culture. White collar workers are looking for ways to slow down, feel useful, and find some connection to a time when people followed the rhythms of the seasons.

There are other major motivators as well, such as a growing desire for cleaner eating and increased awareness of the animal cruelty that is common in mass poultry production.

But people wouldn't be interested if chicken rearing was too complex for an average citizen to master.

Bud Wood, owner of Murray McMurray Hatchery, a poultry supplier based in Webster City Iowa, told The VOICE: "Chickens can fit into a backyard garden very well."

Murray McMurray has been around for 100 years and for much of that time was a catalog business, but it's now the Amazon of eggs. The company uses special shipping to send eggs and even chicks right to your home. Their website offers all kinds of informational resources for those starting their first coops.

Matthew O'Boyle, from Pennington, became interested in raising chickens when he watched his cousins do it on their farm, however, he was initially nervous when he thought his home would not be enough space.

"I thought [having enough space] would be a barrier stopping us from getting chickens but as always, I stumbled upon the Internet. There were thousands of articles, videos, tutorials, and blogs about raising backyard chickens..."

According to the Murray McMurray blog, "roost space depends largely on the size of your chickens — how tall, wide and long they are, from beak to tail." But for people starting out who are looking to keep six small to medium sized birds, each needs about a square foot of space in their roost and the minimum yard area needed for roaming is about 6' x 15'. Some city dwellers are able to make this work in narrow spaces behind brownstones or in overgrown alleys. Suburban homes often have a few more options.

According to O'Boyle there are legal requirements for a chicken to be considered "free range," such as giving them six hours outside to roam free, however, he offers his birds more than what the minimum requires.

"For my flock of three chickens, I have about a 125 square feet for them to free range in. They free range from about 6:45 in the morning until it starts to get dark depending on the season," O'Boyle said.

Rules and regulations for backyard chicken



PHOTO | JASMINE SANTALLA



PHOTO | JASMINE SANTALLA

TOP: Matthew O'Boyle says he started out raising chickens just to obtain healthier eggs from happier hens, but soon became "hugely interested" in his backyard hobby and now regularly greets other chicken fanciers at local farmers' markets. ABOVE: Weekly egg production.

Full disclosure, Matthew is the brother of VOICE News Editor Tim O'Boyle, who did not contribute to reporting.



PHOTO | JASMINE SANTALLA

Josephine, Barbara and Margaret pause to let the paparazzi snap a chick pic.

farming are specific to the town you live in. There are legal requirements for raising and producing chickens if you plan to sell them, but you are not required to have any sort of permit or license to raise your own.

"The chickens must be a certain distance away from any house in my neighborhood. We are also not allowed to have roosters in our flock because of the noise and aggression that they cause," O'Boyle said.

Another concern for keeping any live animals is ensuring their health.

According to Bud Wood of Murray McMurray, "We are a member of the USDA, National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) so all of our stock has been tested for diseases and have been cleared for sale in that way."

Beyond the original health of the chicks Murray McMurray blog discusses how to reduce flock stress to maintain productivity, and deal with issues like Marek's disease and other parasites.

Above all else, O'Boyle wanted to raise his own chickens in order to know that the eggs he ate come from healthy chickens.

"It's sad to see many of the commercial free range chickens who are loaded with hormones to produce the most amount of eggs possible. They can have as little as a hole just for neck access to the outside which can qualify as their exposure to sunlight," O'Boyle said.

Restaurant owners are shying away from such practices. Local restaurants like Agricola in Princeton and Eno Terra in Kingston purchase their eggs and other produce from local farms like Terhune's and Cherry Grove in Lawrenceville.

If all this is starting to make you think of getting a few hens, be aware that certain types of birds are available during certain seasons. This month is a fine time to get a Feather Footed Fancy, a Cornish Roaster, or even a Chukar Redleg Partridge (although watch out for those partridges if you live in Maine, because you'll need a special permit from Fish and Wildlife before you can "import" the birds through the mail).

Why would you ever buy a Feather Footed Fancy? Bud Wood says chicken fanciers enroll their birds into events such as the Midwest Poultry Federation or The Master's Cup, held in Murray McMurray's hometown of Webster City, Iowa, open to breeders and non-breeders alike.

O'Boyle says "I had used the argument of fresh, free range eggs as the original justification to get them but they have now become a huge interest and hobby of mine."

Local 4-H clubs which teach children leadership skills through hands-on programs, many of which involve raising and caring for animals, also have competitions for chickens.

If you want to see some fancy chickens, Sussex County Poultry Fanciers spring show is May 20.

Snyder puts Avengers on ice in Vikings home opener

By Jackson Thompson
Reporter

Mercer County Community College's baseball team got to play on home turf for the first time on Thursday, March 23.

The Vikings kicked off their homestand with a 10-1 victory over the ASA Avengers. They returned from their week-long road trip to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina to cold, wet weather that caused a postponement of their first two home games against Rockland Community College and Brookdale Community College.

However, head coach Kevin Kerins told The VOICE he believes that the weather has worked to the team's advantage as it gave them the opportunity to rest after the energy sucking time spent playing in Myrtle Beach, where the team went 5-3.

"It has been cold unfortunately, but we play through it, this recent snow storm hit at a good time, we were able to fly back from Myrtle Beach and it also gave us nice break upon return to recover. We only lost 2 games, which have been rescheduled," Kerins said.

Kerins also thinks the additional obstacle of playing in unusual conditions will build up his team's mental toughness and endurance.

"In January and early February it can be tough [be-

cause] we have [a] long season and we put [a] lot of time, practicing indoors, on turf, field, outside in cold can wear on guys, but I also think it makes our guys mentally strong. Our players know we are working toward something special each season and being flexible with practice plans, game locations and times is part of process," Kerins said.

Sophomore infielder Gabe Castillo got the Vikings on the board early with his first homerun of the season in the bottom of the first inning.

Castillo said, "We were just all trying to do something for the team, came back ready, got a couple of days off, came back and put some hits together."

Sophomore infielder Erik Bowren contributed a home run of a different fashion by hitting an inside the park, two run homerun in the bottom of the sixth, which put the Vikings ahead of ASA by eight.

Bowren told The VOICE, "It was good to get that one today. It gets your adrenaline going for sure. Off the bat I had a feeling it was probably gonna be three, but then I was coming around second and I saw the coach just kinda keep waving me and I thought if he was gonna keep waving then I'm just gonna go. It was a bang-bang play, but lucky for us I was

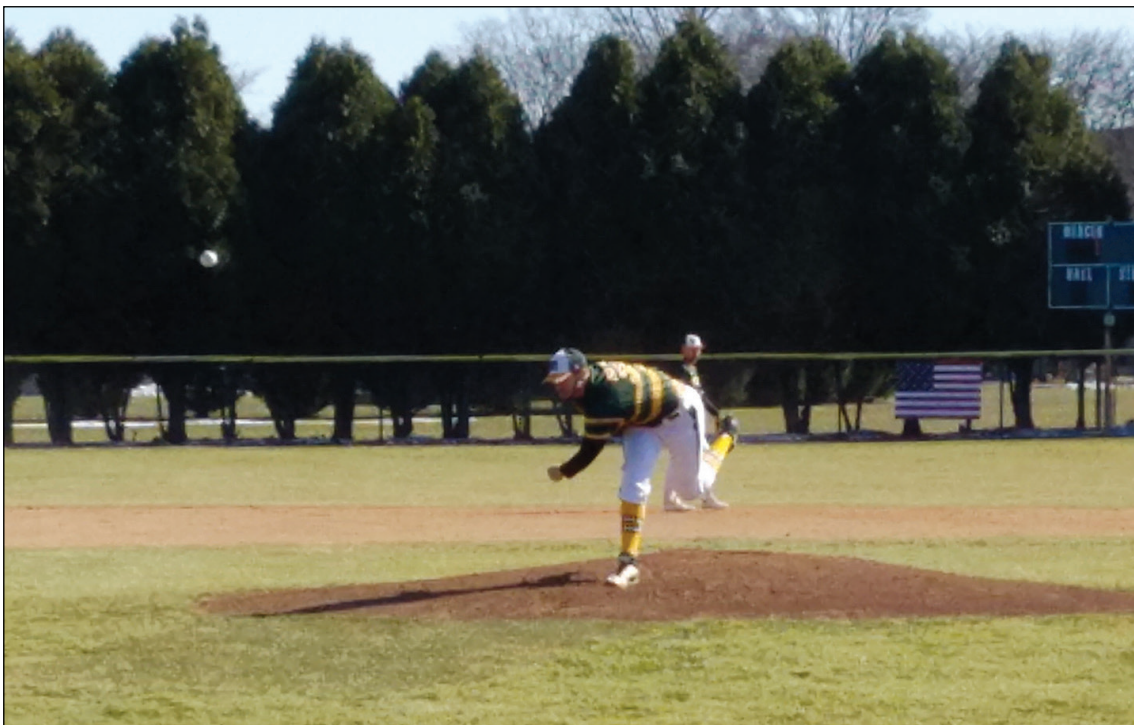


PHOTO | JACKSON THOMPSON

Vikings pitcher Nick Snyder went 4-0 on the season by throwing a shutout.

safe."

Another noteworthy performances of the game was that of freshman starting pitcher Nick Snyder. Snyder improved to a perfect 4-0 on the season by throwing a shutout five inning performance featuring ten strikeouts, only one short of his season high. Snyder told The VOICE he thought it was his strongest outing of the year, though he gave up seven hits and three walks, as well as pitching in a first and second no-out jam in the top of the second inning. Still, Snyder

was ultimately able to keep the Avengers off the board for five innings.

Snyder told The VOICE, "When I get into jams like that it almost seems like the game slows down a bit, my intensity and focus goes up, and I think that really helped me get out of those jams. Just slowing it down and really figuring out how to get out of those jams."

ASA's only run of the game came in the seventh inning with the Vikings already up by nine.

With the team's longest

trip of the season now behind them they were able to open up a seven game homestand, with what Bowren says was a crucial win: "Being the home opener and stuff in the cold weather, we wanted to come out here and get a win. They're a great team with a lot of talent, so we just wanted to get out there as a team and play some good team baseball and we did that today."

The Vikings have improved to 13-4 on the season, which puts them one step further on their goal of a return trip to the NJCAA World Series.

Q&A With our congressional representative

By Jasmine Santalla
Reporter

As the 2016 presidential election grew near, The VOICE surveyed Mercer students and found most weren't very interested in politics, didn't like the candidates, or were just pessimistic in general.

For example, Gahabree Gordon told The VOICE, "I think Hillary is going to win, but me personally, I'm not voting. I don't think either one of them are good candidates. This is the first election I've been able to vote in, I was so excited to vote turning 18 years old and it's like 'I've gotta pick between them?'" I can wait another four years. I'll be ok. I'm expecting things to get worse but I'm praying for better."

More recent reporting suggests that following the election, some portion of the student body has been motivated to participate more in politics.

The VOICE interviewed Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman, who represents the college's districts, to ask her her views on the current political climate and how it relates to college students.

VOICE: What role do you see young people playing in our current political climate? What can students do to advocate for themselves?

WATSON COLEMAN: I think that students that are eligible to vote represent a huge floss of potential voters, and I think your voice can be best heard through voting. I also think that organizations on your campus that are designed to educate on issues can be very influential. It is really important to belong to a critical group...You are very important. You need to be reaching out to people like me... showing up and getting involved.

VOICE: What should students be focusing on with the new leadership in the White House?

WATSON COLEMAN: I think this is an unprecedented time where your attention is required on so many levels, there are things that are happening...There are issues that are very important that are happening out of the department of health, the women's right to choose. There are things that are going to be happening in the Department of Labor that have to do with things like equal pay. There are things coming out of the Department of Justice, like your voting rights. This...requires people like me to not just focus on one thing, but stay alert on a number of issues and, stay as involved as I can. Same goes for all of you.

VOICE: How do you plan to best represent the interests of college students from our district?

WATSON COLEMAN: I have been engaged in higher education, so I'm very much in tune to affordability in the state of NJ. I'll be paying attention student debt, expanding Pell grants. I have always tried to support students who are going to school part time with subsidies. Accessibility, diversity, education: I try to stay close to college community.

VOICE: How does a member of a minority party in the House maximize his or her influence when the House rules (unlike the Senate) are designed to maximize the power of the majority at the expense of the minority?

WATSON COLEMAN: You are speaking to the frustration we are all feeling right now. There are a number of things we are committed to right now, [like] seeking attention on resolutions, and [continuing] to highlight the role of Russia in the current presidency. We are committed, although we recognize that we don't control the agenda and we don't have the number of votes. What we do have is relationships and we try to energize people. Even perhaps with Republicans--if they weren't so doggone scared of what the right wing would do to them-- when they do exercise their heartfelt response to something, they're not alone.



FILE PHOTO | USED WITH PERMISSION

Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman, who represents the NJ 12th District, which includes the area surrounding Mercer County College, has recently made herself available to her constituents through a series of town hall meetings. She accepted a request for interview with The VOICE to discuss issues concerning college students.

STUDENT PROFILE: Interview with Colette Leonard James



Colette Leonard James

By Svetlana Craft
Senior Reporter

The VOICE's ongoing STUDENT PROFILES series explores the lives of individual Mercer students and their unique, surprising, often courageous stories.

This month's installment introduces Colette Leonard James, a nontraditional college student whose academic path was never assured, but who will be graduating in May.

Note: Portions of this interview have been condensed, reordered and edited for clarity, but no content has been changed.

The VOICE: Can you tell us a bit about yourself?

COLETTE: I'm Colette James and I'm 53 years old. I'm also a high school drop out, but then I returned back to school and got my high school diploma in 2001. So, coming to school that wasn't on my agenda. Like me doing college, I never thought I could reach it because on top of that, I'm a recovering addict of 25 years. And, I have dyslexia so I figured "I got a high school diploma, I'm good leave me alone."

The VOICE: You have said drugs have played a role in your life. Can you say more?

COLETTE: Drugs are something you shouldn't get involved with but in my household it made it easier because me and my sister and my mother were all addicted. That made it bad. It was

easier to allow the children to live with other people so they wouldn't have to go without eating. My daughter stayed back in first grade because I wasn't able to get up to take her to school. I got put out of housing authority because of paying 80 something dollars for rent but that shit was more important than paying.

People look for love in all the wrong things, in men and whatever, and it's what is going to make you happy. We think that stuff makes us happy, but it's only for a moment. Before you know it you look around and time has went by. Your mind may be young, but your age is saying something else. So at the age of 28 God allowed me to clean myself up. Now I have 25 years sober. I went through my 30s and my 40s and I had the opportunity to become someone's role model.

My grandchildren don't know anything about that time. All they see is what they see now. They don't know what it took to get here. Only my daughter that's 37 knows, because she lived it.

The VOICE: How did you finish high school?

COLETTE: I dropped out of high school in 1981. I was a young mother and I didn't pass the eleventh grade. Once you don't pass, you don't want to go anymore. And then, like I said, drugs, getting high, drinking, and a man became more important than going back. So I tried doing the GED thing and it was just hard. GED is harder than taking a test and actually getting a teacher. I got clean in 1992. In 1999 or 2000 I learned about the Daylight Twilight High School, and it was in my neighborhood in the urban community. I said, well let me try Daylight Twilight, maybe I can get my high school diploma that way. Maybe God is giving me opportunities to better myself. And then, when I joined the school, my mother joined and niece joined, so we all graduated. My mother ended up graduating a year before me. Me and my niece graduated in 2001.

The VOICE: And then how did decide to come to college?

COLETTE: I was married and I was in the process of getting a divorce and I have a cousin who is a school teacher. We were talking on the phone and she goes "You should go back to school,"



Colette Leonard James and her children and grand children at her Graduation from her first certificate program at Mercer. She will receive her A.A.S. degree in May.

and I said "Go back to school? For what?" She said "Because now you're getting a divorce. Men like smart women!" So that's what made me go back to school.

The VOICE: So what was the first step at Mercer like?

COLETTE: When I got here, I had to start from the bottom because I had to do a lot of pre-requisite classes, because I wasn't in school for years. But when I saw my grades it was like "Wow, all you have to do is apply yourself and you can do this even through your challenges. You can make this work for you!"

Last semester I took Professor Holly Johnson's English composition class and before that I had never read a whole book. Never. Because when I sat there I couldn't comprehend it. We read a book called *Ghetto-side*, and she gave me an app to put on my phone so I could listen to the audio book while reading, so when it was discussion time in class I knew exactly what was going on. And that made me so happy, that at 53 I was able to read a book for the first time in my life.

The VOICE: One thing that teachers say about you is that you have a very strong work ethic. Where does that come from?

COLETTE: That comes from my background and being determined. That I was going to make the best of any situation. So if I'm going to give you something, I'm giving you my all, I'm not coming with ten percent, I'm coming with it all. I don't mind asking questions. As a child people would say that "you are asking too many questions!" and then growing up people would say "Well you got to ask the right questions because no question is a dumb question." So my model is, if you have a closed mouth, you can't eat with a closed mouth. Anything that you are determined or what you want, you have to go after it for yourself.

That's what I do. I try to be the best at whatever I do. I was the best at whatever I was doing even when I was drinking and drugging. Sometimes I talk about the stars and the moon. As a child you want to reach the stars. I found that the stars are the people that you meet on the way. The stars could be a teacher and I'm climbing up on my ladder and I'm reaching these stars. Like if I need help. I go over to a teacher and I say "I don't know how to do this, but if you can help me, then I can get it." That makes me shoot for another star.

The VOICE: What advice do you have for other students?

COLETTE: Try not to smother yourself with drugs and alcohol, men and pills and stuff like that and all that partying. Do your work ahead of time because a lot of high school and college students wait until the last minute. They put a whole lot of pressure on themselves to wait til the last minute to do an assignment. If you do it early you'll have it done. Then you won't have to worry about it right? If you need help get the help you need. Don't be too proud to say 'I need to go to the tutoring center, 'cause they're here for you. If you need to reach out, like if you're going through it at home, go to counseling sessions. People always look at counseling as a downfall, but really you'd be crazy not to go.

The VOICE: Who are your role models?

COLETTE: My daughter and grandchildren are my role models. I have to say that because it is them everyday that make me strive. There are teachers here that I love too. They take time out to make sure I get what I need. Another role models is My grandmother. She lived to be 86. But the biggest one is my daughter because she could have turned out differently but she turned out to be a great mother, a great person, through all she suffered, all I went through. And she's kind of my biggest fan.

The VOICE: When will you graduate from Mercer?

COLETTE: I don't want to leave Mercer, but I got to go. I've been here since 2012. I started out getting a certificate because that was reachable for me. I started getting the medical office assistant's certificate, but since I had so many credits I said "Well you might as well stay and get the degree, you're right here." So I'll be graduating with an A.A.S degree in May.

The VOICE: What will be going through your mind when you're crossing that stage getting the diploma?

COLETTE: Reaching the star. I am reaching a star that I wasn't even trying to conquer. I am thinking about getting my Bachelor's degree. Thinking about going to Rider. Not thinking about it, I'm on my path to going.

MAPS, DOOR LOCKS AND EMERGENCY PHONES ARE PROVIDED FOR CRISIS ON CAMPUS

Continued from page 1

have been sending out broadcasts reminding everyone that there is emergency boxes located around campus."

But broadcasts from President Wang are not getting through to students like Business Administration major Derek Avila, who told The VOICE, "No, I never see them. I have seen the maps but never the emergency box."

Maps with clearly marked exits have recently been updated and placed in all rooms on campus.

Jessica Adamo, a freshman student at Mercer, told The VOICE no one at the college has ever discussed emergency plans with her. She said, "If there was an emergency, I don't know what I would do. Panic...I guess [I'd do] just whatever I was taught to do in high school."

However, it is not clear that Mercer is any different from most NJ community colleges in this regard. Joshua Hypolite who attends Middlesex County Community College told The VOICE that professors

at his campus have never discussed any emergency procedures with them either.

But Diana Ruiz, a student at Brookdale Community College told The VOICE, "There are some workshops from security and they are always telling us what to do in case of an emergency. Professors give us general advice in class."

Brookdale also informs students of emergency plans through a section of their website titled, "Emergency Preparedness," which stresses the importance of communication and practice to prepare for a campus emergency.

Mercer's "Emergency Operations Plan" provides a url link to bring students and faculty to an online version of the guide but the link currently leads to a 404 Page Not Found.

Fifty-five percent of students said they believe faculty and staff at MCCC are not prepared for a school emergency either.

One faculty member who feels confident about how to handle an emergency is English professor Barbara Hamilton. She told The

VOICE that she is frequently updated with emergency evacuation plans. But as far as her students being updated on an evacuation plan, professor Hamilton stated, "I actually haven't mentioned it to them.... It is a good idea."

But, according to the Emergency Operations Plan: "Faculty, staff and students have been informed to follow the general evacuation guidelines."

The VOICE polled faculty and found most knew there was a plan and had heard it mentioned at Academic Affairs Convocations, but weren't sure of the specifics.

In the plan, faculty and staff are informed how to respond to a variety of emergencies such as having an active shooter on campus, disorderly conduct, and bomb threats. All situations are resolved by encouraging faculty and staff to call 911 and give as much information as possible to external law enforcement.

This advice was repeated by President Wang who told The VOICE, "If you feel in danger, call 911. You need to use common sense

to protect yourself. The reality is that anything can happen to you at any time."

In the VOICE's student safety survey, when students were asked "How would you handle an emergency?" most answers variations on "I would leave." The consensus is that the best thing to do is get off campus.

The problem with leaving the campus during an emergency situation is that it could potentially make the situation worse. If all students try to get in their cars and leave, it can create a traffic jam and potentially block first responders from getting to campus when needed.

In the event of a first person shooter on campus, the correct procedure is not to leave but to stay locked down. Many classroom doors on campus have magnets that can be removed so doors can be locked from within.

Jacqueline Leszczynski, an Education major at Mercer feels one way to keep students safer would be to use the M-Alert system. She said, "We should get M-Alerts right

away when something happens on campus, and not just when school is closed because of the weather."

Dean Campbell told The VOICE if a lockdown were to happen, the students and professors would be notified by security officers who would go from room to room explaining procedures. "Security would be moving around," Dr. Campbell said.

The good news is that even though the student survey showed a general lack of knowledge, the current situation did not seem to worry most students that much. The plan, which is available in Dean Campbell's office, combined with the information online does provide information.

Still, there are students who feel like Avila, who said: "We should have assemblies or fire drills once in awhile to remind us what we should do. Hopefully nothing happens."

Visit the following link to stay informed:
http://www.mccc.edu/welcome_emergency_actions.shtml

Who are the faces of student success?

By Tim O’Boyle
Senior Reporter

When entering MCCC, you can’t miss the life-sized images of students hanging from the lamp posts lining the perimeter campus drive. The “Faces of Mercer” campaign has put these faces on the MCCC website, on brochures, and all around campus. But who are they?

Turns out, these students are selected by Wendy Humphrey and Jim Gardner in the Public Relations office. The student models are usually chosen through a recommendation from faculty members at Mercer and based on of their commitment to Mercer and their involvement in things like clubs, sports, or band.

The use of student models is, in part, a reaction to a debacle in 2014 when the winter course catalog used a stock photo image of young people--who didn’t appear to be going to college--one of whom had a black man’s head photoshopped poorly onto a white man’s body and was positioned lurking behind three white girls

The photo may have been intended to display campus diversity,

but instead the vexing image was posted to “photo-shop-battles” on Reddit, the popular online discussion website. The Internet lost no time in responding. As the image got thousands of views, people downloaded and photoshopped in all kinds of other images before re-uploading

New versions included other types of “diversity” including a man in a wheelchair, actor Leonardo DiCaprio, a child in a raincoat, and a duck. Students from other schools posted similar PR gaffs.

Jim Gardner told The VOICE, “In the past there was a period of time where a lot of the students that were portrayed were from a photo library, and we quickly realized it’s more impactful to have actual students.”

Both Humphrey and Gardner remarked that the use of non-student models was due to financial difficulties, but still should not have been done. “You can’t replace actual people, which is a lesson that we learned,” Humphrey stated.

The student models are not only used to show their involvement in school activities, but also to show diversity among the MCCC campus. Dr. Jianping Wang who is the President of Mercer believes that “Faces of Mercer” should identify the real population among the students that attend the school. “We want to have a mixed representation. That’s the only instruction I give to the marketing team,” said Dr. Wang.

Most colleges have a student model campaign where current students are used to show what the majority of students are like. As Mercer is only a 2 year institution a lot of the models used are no longer current students.

Dr. Wang stated, “By the time we take the photo and put them into all these publications you graduate and you move on. So a lot of times you walk around and say, ‘Hey this person is no longer here.’”

According to Humphrey and Gardner, a student that is in their first semester can be chosen to model and represent “Student Success.” This is reaffirmed by model, Ashley Castillo who is a current Liberal Arts major at MCCC, she was chosen to model for



Student model, Ashley Castillo, stands in front of her poster outside the Art Gallery.

Mercer during her first semester, in Fall 2015.

Although it is hard to tell who will become successful and who will not, the fact remains that majority of the student models were heavily involved in extracurricular activities, and had noteworthy intentions to become successful through their academic grades.

Mani Kissling was approached by Humphrey after being photographed playing for Mercer’s soccer team. She was asked to attend a golf benefit held by Mercer, and after her photo was posted onto Mercer’s facebook page she was asked by Humphrey to do a photoshoot as part of “Faces of Mercer.” Kissling completed 5 semesters at Mercer then transferred to Monmouth University.

Kissling noted that Humphrey reached out to her to be one of her models and next thing she knew, her face was everywhere. “I was very thankful for all the opportunities that had been given to me, and I think she [Humphrey] recognized that,” Kissing said.

While at Mercer, Kissling was involved in soccer, basketball, and cross country. Along with that she worked hard to keep her grades up in the classroom. When The VOICE asked Kissing if she had considered herself, “Student Success,” Kissling replied “Yes, I do...I would consider myself ‘Student Success’ because I worked for it, I worked really hard for it.”

Another student model used as a “Face of Mercer” is Ousman Joof. His accomplishments at Mercer included being part of the International Student Organization, being part of the Graphic Design Club, involvement in Student Government Association, partaking in Cross Country, and serving as Editor in Chief of The College VOICE. After 5 semesters at Mercer, he transferred to Drexel University.

“During the Spring into Success function in 2015 I was approached by Francis Paixao I guess I got lucky because other student[s] could have been picked.” For being considered an example of “Student Success” Joof said, “Yeah I would say I was a good representation of Mercer, but you’ll have to ask around to see if that’s true,” Joof said with a smile.

WATCH WHERE YOU WALK

Proposed bill would require pedestrians to cross only in crosswalks and allows cars to yield rather than come to a full stop if pedestrians are present

Continued from page 1

The controversy around the proposed bill concerns the difference between stopping and yielding.

According to Cyndi Steiner, the executive director of the New Jersey Bike and Walk Coalition, “It should be a stop, stop and stay stopped...The [previous law was meant to clarify that, because yield is such a vague word.”

Steiner’s main concern, she says, is about pedestrian rates of survival during an accident. She told The VOICE, “If a car going 25 miles per hour hits someone, they have an 85 percent chance of surviving. If the car is going 40 miles per hour, the pedestrian only has a 15 percent chance of surviving.”

Many pedestrians have a different perspective. Through a survey of 30 people conducted in downtown Trenton and downtown Lambertville, 86 percent of people disagreed with Assemblyman Brown’s proposal.

According to Benjamin Cole, a 65 year old crossing guard for Trenton Public School System, “New Jersey drivers are almost worst than drivers in New York. They will hit someone and keep driving.” He added, “I’ve been on this corner [Parkside and Stuyvesant] for 3 years and I’ve seen plenty of accidents, the impatient drivers in Trenton are always speeding to beat the light.”

There are many other factors that could cause fatalities on the road that do not involve crosswalks, the main one being cell phone use. According to the National Safety Council report from 2011, 52 percent of car crashes involved a cellphone.

But cell phones can be as much of a distraction for pedestrians as they can be for drivers. “If you are using a cell phone in a crosswalk while walking there should be a fine,” said Brittney Moody.

“Unlike the frog in the arcade game who gets many chances, people only get one chance to cross the street safely,” Assemblyman Brown said, adding, “I would rather adhere to the proverb and follow the common sense of a grandmother, than accept the misguided advice from Trenton politicians.”

According to the Centers For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) the most effective ways for pedestrians to prevent injuries and deaths are to increase visibility at night by wearing reflective clothes and carrying a flashlight, walking on the sidewalk, and “Whenever possible, cross the street at a designated crosswalk or intersection.”

The last suggestion has been found to be even more effective: the installation of “complete streets.” Like those found in major metropolitan areas such as New York and Philadelphia, a “complete street” is designed to enable access for pedestrians, bikers, and automobile drivers in the safest way possible by putting in accessible bike lanes, crosswalks, and wide intersections for cars.

The proposed bill has received mixed reactions from both New Jersey residents and those from out of state who take advantage of local tourist attractions. These mixed reactions make it unknown whether the proposed legislation will be passed or not. But with last year having 185 traffic deaths in New Jersey that involved pedestrians and cyclists, places like Seattle with its low rate of pedestrian deaths, begin to look much more appealing.

Inside a warm cathedral



PHOTO | THE COLLEGE VOICE

By Tim O'Boyle
Reporter

Getting off the subway at 110th street and Broadway and winding along the sidewalks of Morningside Heights, the apartment buildings make it feel as if you are wearing horse blinders as you turn the corner of 111th onto Amsterdam Ave and suddenly see the enormity of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine looming ahead.

It is the fourth largest cathedral in the world, and it's not even finished. One of its front towers is a partly-built stump, the other is missing altogether, but the incompleteness suggests progress more than disrepair, a theme that is echoed by the art and space within.

The dimly lit warmth upon first entering the church was a sharp contrast to the car horns blasting, bright morning sunshine, and cold wind that roared outside the 100 year old stone walls. A choir practicing before the 11 o'clock service echoed off the blue stained glass windows that surrounded the 121,000 square ft. nave making the scene that much more divine.

Usher, tour guide, and member of the congregation Ruth Mueller-Maerski, originally from Switzerland, told The VOICE she converted to Episcopalianism and became a member of St. John the Divine in 1994 after a trip for her Music History class while attending the Manhattan School of Music.

"I'm, of course, a new kid on the block," said Mueller-Maerski.

Twenty-three years as a member of the congregation is only short if you are measuring in cathedral time. The initial building of the church occurred between 1892 and 1941 with several portions built hastily and intended only to be temporary. But after World War II, funds to restart the building were in short supply.

A building program began again in the 1980s kicked off by a performance from Philip Pettit the high wire walker who had walked between the World Trade Towers and who had been made an artist in residence at the Cathedral. Stone masons from France, Spain and Italy came and helped train locals from Harlem to carve stones, craft gargoyles and maneuver the giant limestone blocks to the top of the scaffolding. The south west tower was partially completed before money ran out again.

Mueller-Maerski says she was attracted to the church's openness and the way they approached the liturgy. She explains that Episcopalianism sits on a three legged stool of teachings: tradition, scripture, and reason. All three of these pillars help make the Cathedral and its 900 member congregation a center to exchange ideas and concerns.

The Cathedral serves both as a space for worship and a forum for arts, music and social justice. The space includes everything from a textile lab that restores ancient tapestries to a soup kitchen in the basement that feeds 250 homeless breakfast, lunch, and dinner every Sunday. There is a poets corner and a memorial to those have died from AIDS. There is a space honoring fallen first responders and another dedicated to environmentalism. The sequence of prayer chapels behind the main altar include a baptismal font, a columbarium for the ashes of the dead, and a triptych created by artist Keith Haring.

Lining the walls of the Cathedral are many small exhibits featuring Buddhist, Daoist, and Medieval Christian artwork. In the middle of all of this is a new exhibit from artist Gabriel Garcia Roman called Queer Icons.

The informational plaque describing the exhibit says it: "references the portraiture styles of Renaissance, Flemish and Christian Orthodox paintings, while illuminating contemporary figures, which are multi-dimensional, powerful, and proud."

She goes on to explain that the piece centers around the "female depiction of the crucified cross [through the subject called] Christa." The Christa cross hangs above the altar, near the traditional cross of Jesus of Nazareth, and will be kept there along with the other parts of the exhibit for the next few months.

But with all the progress there have been setbacks. "We had a fire on December 18, 2001," said Mueller-Maerski while handing out bulletins to church members. "It burned down our bookstore." The fire and smoke also damaged the great organ and reconstruction is ongoing.

Upon leaving the Cathedral as the Sunday morning eucharist service was beginning the large, gothic, wooden doors sunk shut, silencing the organ and choir music that had marked the start of the service. Amsterdam Avenue was silent and cold with no one in sight, even the line of homeless men had disap-



PHOTO | THE COLLEGE VOICE

ABOVE: The pulpit and altar in the main narthex of The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, 112th and Amsterdam Ave. New York, NY.
TOP LEFT: Keith Haring designed triptych in one of the small chapels located behind the high altar.



PHOTO | THE COLLEGE VOICE

Prayer bays along the main chancel of The Cathedral of St. John the Divine are dedicated to a broad range of concerns, from the AIDS memorial, pictured above, to the sacrifice of emergency first responders.



PHOTO | THE COLLEGE VOICE

The Cathedral's Rose Window is famed for the 6 foot tall open armed depiction of Jesus that stand at its center.

Times Square really *is* worth the bucket list



Times Square, NYC, a space that has continually reinvented itself from red light district to posh theater district to international crossroads. PHOTO | JASMINE SANTALLA



Warm hats to battle unseasonably cold spring temperatures in Times Square. PHOTO | NIKKI PELLEW

By Nikki Pellew
Reporter

The array of lights, sounds, billboards, smells, the buzzing hive of activity, and all the yellow taxis have made Times Square one of the most visited tourist attractions in the world. But is it worth the bucket list? In a word: yes.

At the junction of Broadway and Seventh Avenue, in the heart of midtown New York, Times Square teems with tourists, bringing people together into a single tangled, blaring, jumbled, flashing intersection of humanity.

It wasn't always a bustling entertainment hub. Ac-

cording to the Times Square Alliance, a non-profit organization says it, "Works to improve and promote Times Square," the now busy intersection was originally named Longacre Square, and upon its conception only consisted of a few brownstones. Over the course of time, Longacre Square became a prominent red-light district where pickpockets and brothels were widespread. But eventually big time theater producers bought it up and rehabilitated the area into what the Alliance calls: "A symbol of the American spirit."

A recent visit on a bone-chilling day leading up to snowstorm Stella found disagreement among visitors

about whether Square thought it was worth the hype.

On the one hand there was the Guatemalan visitor who like its familiarity, saying, "It is just like in the movies! It is amazing!"

Others were less enthusiastic, criticising, among other things, the noise, the smell, and cost of visiting Times Square. One Romanian visitor told this reporter: "Times Square is overrated!" She described New York as expensive and dirty.

A Colombian woman standing nearby agreed in part, saying, "Times Square is cool, but it is too noisy."

While both the Columbian and Romanian said they



Street musicians contribute to the auditory backdrop of Times Square. PHOTO | JASMINE SANTALLA

would not recommend visiting Times Square, from this perspective of this reporter--a native of South Africa--these ladies are missing the point.

It is precisely the sounds, expense, and bustle of the city that makes it real. New York City is supposed to over-

load and ignite all your senses. It is supposed to leave your ears ringing, temporarily bankrupt you, and make you think twice before eating off of the floor. It is precisely this irreplicable atmosphere of the intersection that draws people to the heart of the Square.

Postcards from the Ph



Convention goers admired many displays including the one prepared by Mercer's Horticulture students that took the Gold Medal in the Education category at the Philadelphia Flower Show, 2017.



Windmills provided a consistent theme across displays as this year's Flower Show theme was "Holland Flowering the World."



An entire display dedicated to hardy flowering shrubs lined a main concourse at the 2017 Philadelphia Flower Show.



A pastoral indoor river scene evoked the Dutch canals at the 2017 Flower Show.



ABOVE: One of the more than 250,000 estimated attendees at the 2017 Philadelphia Flower Show who stopped to admire the displays.

Photos and Story By Maria Ramos
Senior Reporter

This year the Philadelphia Flower Show theme was, "Holland Flowering the World" which inspired entrants to come up with new ways to present beds of tulips, windmills, bridges and the traditional Dutch wooden shoes.

The show, hosted by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) and founded in 1829, features the newest plant varieties, garden and design concepts, and organic/sustainable practices.

This year, Mercer's Horticulture and Plant Science students worked with peers from the Fine Arts, Advertising & Graphic Design, Illustration and Television programs to craft an exhibit called "Postcards from Holland," that included a park, a farm area, a windmill, a bike, rows of corn, tomatoes and, of course, tulips.

The team was awarded the Gold Medal in the Education category for their effort, and also earned the Alfred M. Campbell Memorial Trophy for their work.

Megan Jean, an Advertising and Design major who helped build the structure told The VOICE: "I am really happy that we won two awards! All of the clubs worked really hard to make everything perfect."

Getting things perfect required obsessive attention to detail. For example, the flowering park section included yellow and brown witch hazel flowers, pink and red roses, and green tall trees.

Professor Amy Ricco, who taught the horticulture program at Mercer, said the team used 50 different species, and more than 700 plants."

Besides the number of plants, there were other considerations.

"Trying to force the plants to bloom in the greenhouse when the weather was cold was a consideration," said Professor Ricco.

Megan Jean says the team was given the freedom to create as long as it fit the theme.

Before finishing the exhibit, the students had to come together to create the final culture program itself. For the exhibit, they helped out by painting the tulips.

"The hardest thing was to wait for things to dry and for the paint to be dry, and the color to be right," said Amanda Tonkery, Illustration student and member of the Art Club at Mercer.

The Graphic Design students created postcards for the Flower Show visitors. The pamphlet "Postcards from Holland" and Holland's website are resources that promote the show. This was cemented by a short film, "Postcards from Holland" which was played at the exhibit.

This year many n

Philadelphia Flower Show



to smell the tulips.

ricco who runs the Horti-
er told The VOICE: “We
our display had close to

ber of plants there were

our plants to bloom in
ey normally wouldn’t be
rable obstacle according

“the best part was that
ome up with a design as

the exhibit, many differ-
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or example, the Art Club
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to the next step until the
ld probably didn’t help.”
ustration major and part

ign and Illustration stu-
and posters for Flower
lets included facts about
unique use of space re-
eco-friendly culture. All
ort video, produced by a
ng on “Sustainability In
ed in Mercer’s barn ex-

new features were added

to the show, such as a light show that was presented
in the middle of the convention center. It included
music and heavy light concentration on the wind-
mills and bridge.

“This is amazing, the music, the lights and
the decorations. It feel[s] like I am in Holland,” said
Joe Kasper from New Hope, Pennsylvania.

The PHS displayed 1,240 exhibits this year,
which included everything from plants, trees, flow-
ers, to butterflies and dutch landscapes.

There was also a “Wine and Spirits Tasting
Room” with a large selection of wine from around
the world. And for those who didn’t want to leave
their puppies at home there was a “Yappy Hour”
where dogs were invited to attend the show and get
treats.

“Hey if I can bring my puppy, have a beer
and smell flowers, [I am] def...coming back next
year,” said Martin Fichter, from Philadelphia.

Oak Troise, from Philadelphia said: “I love
it, this is my fifth year coming and it’s always great,
puts me in the mood for spring.”

The show ran from March 11-19 and at-
tracted around 250,000 visitors.

Professor Ricco told The VOICE: “Mercer
has one of the few horticulture programs in the
state. We have a great program that offers students
many opportunities to gain valuable experience
and knowledge so they are prepared to either trans-
fer or enter the workforce.”

The Mercer team will defend their title in
next year’s Flower Show.



Tulips, tulips and more tulips, in every shade of umber, burgundy,
beeswax yellow, shell pink and bright orange could be found at every
turn of the Dutch themed Flower Show.

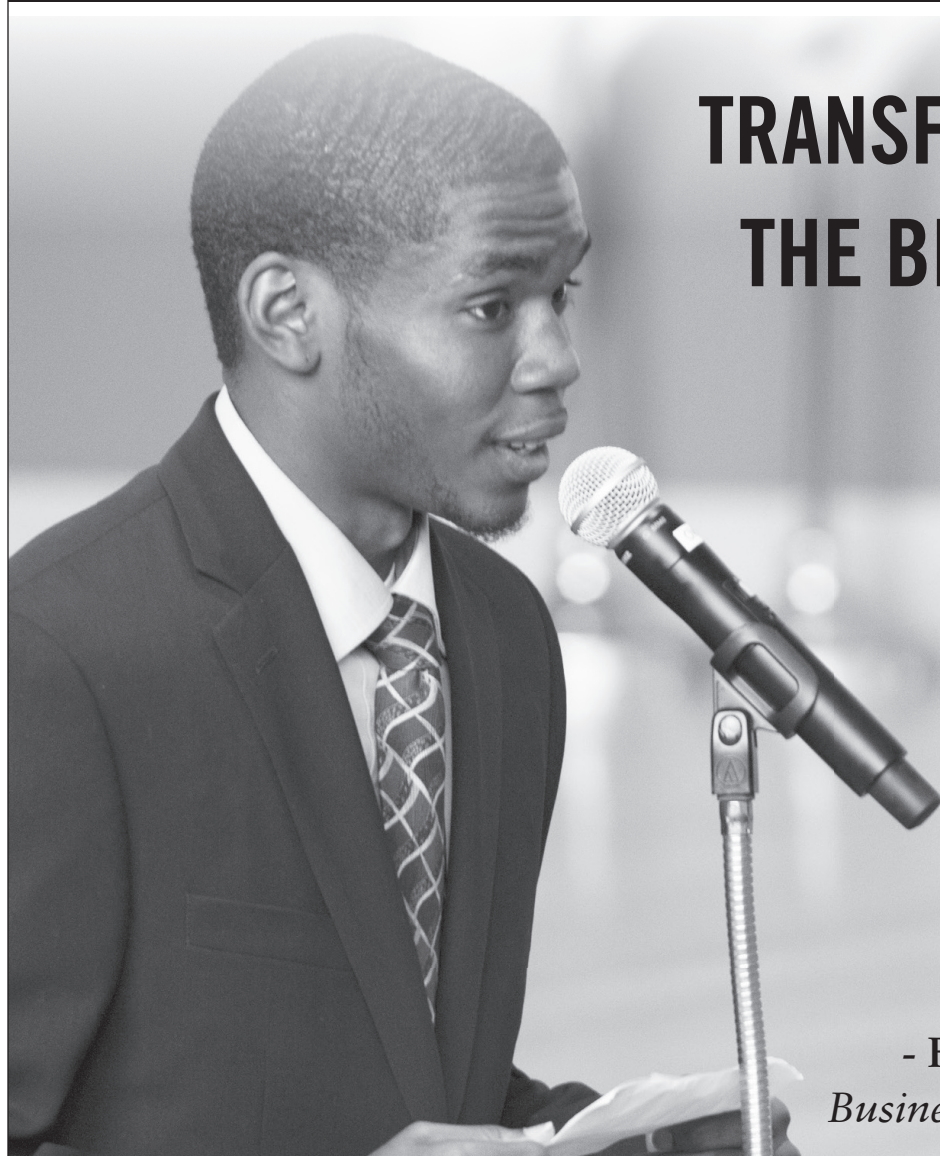


ABOVE: A Flower Show attendee inspects a wide range of ferns and
accompanying terrariums. BELOW: The windmill at the heart of
Mercer’s award winning display built by Horticulture students with
help from students in Fine Arts, Advertising & Design, Illustration and
Television.





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DREW

Asbury Biergarten: A taste of the Old World at the shore

By Alyssa Flodmand
Senior Reporter

Resembling an old, weathered factory with its red brick walls and charcoal color stairs, the Asbury Biergarten in Asbury Park, NJ is hard to miss. Upon entrance customers are given two menus where they are able to choose their drink from an array of 80 percent imported, and 20 percent American craft beers, and an authentic Austro-Hungarian food menu that will make customers feel like they are vacationing in Europe.

Asbury Biergarten was opened on Feb. 7, 2015 by three friends and business partners. The each say they had a different reason for doing so.

For Andre Ivanov this is not his first Biergarten; he also owns Radegast Hall & Biergarten and Pilsener Haus & Biergarten which are both in Brooklyn. The idea of a biergarten is not unfamiliar to him. For Jennifer Lampert, her involvement was by chance and opportunity, and for Jaro Marcin, his involvement hits closer to home. He was born and raised in Slovakia, and later moved to America in search of the “American Dream.”

Serving entrees like garlic smoked Polish pork sausage with sour pickled cabbage, among other sausage varieties and bratwursts, it's no wonder how the Asbury Biergarten transforms the feel of the restaurant.

First-time customer, Brian Hugn and wife Alisa, from Barnegat NJ, said, “We love trying new places together, and the food here is definitely new and interesting. But I have also been to Germany and taking the first sip of beer brought me right back to that trip.”

Another customer,



PHOTO | ALYSSA FLODMAND

Patrons at Asbury Biergarten have hundreds of bottle beers to choose from and many more on tap.

Lourdes Torres from Westchester, NY, told The VOICE “the beer keeps me coming back,” adding, “Asbury Biergarten is the summer hangout because it's refreshing; they know what is cool and the service is great.”

The staff is not only personable and helpful, they are also very knowledgeable about European culture.

Bartender Ryan Cornell from Asbury Park, NJ, says if a customer comes in wanting a certain type of beer “the staff is very good at matching you to what you want.” He continues, “it's all about establishing trust with your customers, and to do that you must engage with them in a different way.”

The College VOICE also asked staff what they

thought set Asbury Biergarten apart from all the others, “we are very attentive and make sure our customers know we are paying attention,” said Sarah Mohamed server staff.

Marcin says, “[the Biergarten] reminds me of my young age in Slovakia.” He continues, “I live this passion because I am beer freak; it's not alcohol, it's a refreshment.”

The Asbury Biergarten has communal seating, imported beers, and authentic European food, which keeps customers coming back. It's not the cheapest spot for college students, but it's got a lot to offer. Find it at 527 Lake Ave, Asbury Park, NJ weekdays from 4pm-2am and weekends from 12pm-2am.



PHOTO | ALYSSA FLODMAND

Chefs at Asbury Biergarten prepare new twists on standard German fare, such as bratwursts and schnitzel.

Habit Burger: A habit that may become an addiction

By Caitlin Kevett
Senior Reporter

Habit Burger located on Rt 1 in Lawrenceville, has given Central Jersey a touch of sunny Southern California--where the franchise began--in only three months of it being opened.

It is the perfect combination of cheap, but good quality, food, excellent customer service, and an overall friendly environment, which makes visits to this restaurant your first good habit.

On a recent visit, the majority of customers were there for the first or second time. They only had good things to say.

“It's a great place,” said Habit Burger customer Vinicio, adding, “It's our second time coming here.”

Though it's new to central New Jersey, The first Habit



PHOTO | CAITLIN KEVETT

You can get a Habit burger and sweet potato fries for under \$7.

Burger was opened in Santa Barbara, California in 1969, and can now be found nation wide.

Habit focuses on freshness and visitors compliment the availability of fresh food on the menu.

“I got the cobb salad,

she got the double burger, and the kids got chicken nuggets.” said Habit Burger customer Paul, while out for a bite with his family, “We don't go to too many fast food places, but everything was pretty good.”

Habit Burger tries to differ-

entiate themselves from other fast food chains, despite sharing similar qualities.

Khala Bagwell of Hamilton said, “This place kind of reminds me of a fast paced Red Robin.”

One of the best items on the menu is the teriyaki char-burger, which is packed with an almost overwhelming number of flavors. This burger is topped with ingredients such as grilled pineapple, teriyaki sauce, as well as classic burger toppings like fresh lettuce, onions, juicy tomatoes, mayo and a pickle. Ordering the sweet potato fries adds an even bigger punch to the meal.

The total cost of a burger and fries is around \$7 which, when compared to McDonald's prices of a regular cheeseburger meal being \$8, makes the options at Habit Burger a steal!

When asked about the freshness of the food, General Manager, Brian Berry said, “The


food is never frozen. We have a special meat packing plant in New York, and all of the toppings are fresh.”

The freshness of the meat can be easily tasted in the juiciness of their burgers. Habit Burger also has a dedication to the freshness of their vegetables. According to the kitchen Manager Brian Pierce, “In the morning there is no prep besides lettuce, tomato, and salads. At around 2 pm we send employees to the back to prep some more so that it's not cut and open all day long.”

The Habit Burger staff are friendly and welcoming, and will offer help with any questions on the food. After placing the order, you can either wait and watch, since it is prepared right in front of you, or you can sit back at a table and have a mental vacation imagining you are in Southern California where Habit burger began.

Ellucian NO! App falls short of promise

THE WAY IT IS



Oscar Trigueros

Last fall, Mercer launched El-lucian Go as their all-purpose college navigation app. According to the Ellucian website, the app is used by “almost 1,400 institutions in 40 countries.” I can only assume those schools have a more streamlined version.

The app itself is generic and has everything I don’t want in a college-related app. Not to mention it has the world’s hardest puzzle: trying to log into the actual thing.

I can only compare try-

ing to log into this app to trying to solve a Rubik’s cube with your toes while you’re blindfolded. There is a message in the login screen that says, “Please contact your institution’s IT staff for assistance with login.”

What that really means is that you will most likely have to call them, because of how difficult it is to log in on your own (and Ellucian is not based on our campus, so who knows what call center you are actually getting). The app provides no instruction on how you can find your username and password to actually use it.

After toying with it for a few hours, I finally realized you simply use your MyMercer information to login. That sounds simple enough but when you have very little instruction on how to login, it can be frustrating if you want to actually use the app. Lots of students will inevitably just give up and delete the app before they even had the opportunity to use.

Brandon Murphy, a

second year student majoring in Game Design and Digital Media Arts says: “I had a lot of problems logging in at certain times, and sometimes the schedule was a little messed up compared to what I actually had to take.”

Joe Suarez, a current freshman studying Music has had a similar experience. He told The VOICE, “I use it a lot for my schedule to time what I can do between classes. The only thing is the app is buggy sometimes. On the first day of the second semester it got my schedule wrong and said my first 10 am was now at 2 pm and so on, and I had a mini heart attack.”

Murphy gets to the heart of the matter: “It could be useful but at its current state it’s not that well developed.”

The staff directory icon could be of use, but the app’s directory does not provide the office phone extensions for professors. This information can be easily found on Mercer’s web-

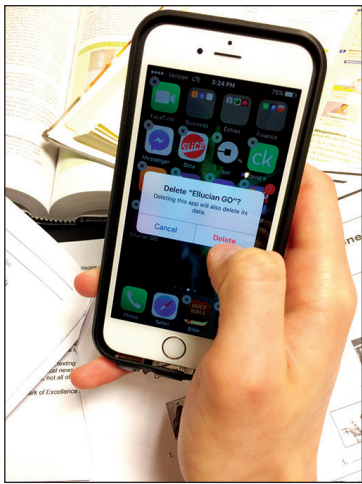
site, so why isn’t it on the app?

In a recent interview, Mercer’s President Jianping Wang talked to The VOICE about Mercer’s objective with rolling out Ellucian Go. She said, “All of you have smartphones, and you don’t want to have to access your course schedules, Blackboards, portals and everything where you have to be sitting down at a desktop to access it. You like to have everything at the palm, that you can touch... So we want to catch up with you. So that’s our goal. To provide mobile access for the convenience of our students.”

I commend Mercer for trying to make our lives easier, but in its current form, this app doesn’t do it.

Here’s another example: the only grades you can see on the app are the ones you received from previous semesters. However, if you want to see what your current semester grades are, you need to go to Blackboard to find that.

One bright light in the





darkness is the map, which, as long as you’re using the hybrid or satellite option, can provide a bird’s-eye view of the campus. I imagine this can be useful for new students arriving to campus.

The good news is, it sounds like other schools have better versions. So hopefully Mercer will keep improving the mediocre app until it is worth the phone memory space it takes up.

MCCC has lots of community if you look

Yes, students come and go, but there are ways to make friends

THE BOTTOM LINE



Oscar Trigueros & Tim O'Boyle

A common complaint heard on campus is that people come to class and then immediately leave for home or to work. That’s true. This is a commuter school and not everyone has time for socializing after classes. But there is community here if you bother to look for it.

“It really has to do with getting involved,” says Mani Kissling, adding, “Nobody is going to know who you are if you just kind of hide in the shadows of class.”

Before transferring to Monmouth University Kissling was on the soccer, basketball, and cross country teams at Mercer. “Doing athletics really, really helped in getting involved in the community” Kissling says.

In a survey of 37 students on the West Windsor campus, just over a third said they do not feel they are a part of a community, but most of these students also said they go to their classes and leave campus immediately afterward. Thirty-five percent of those surveyed said they were not in any

organization or club at Mercer, which is the simplest and most practical way to get involved.

Being a part of The VOICE has given us the ability to meet, work, and socialize with fellow students many of whom we have never had a class with. It also give us the chance to interview faculty and administrators for articles, and build a relationship with them. Before The VOICE we had only ever seen President Wang in pictures; now we have built a relationship and she knows us when we come to interview her for articles. Sure there may be days where we have to stay late to work on the paper, but that keeps us away from the go to class and go home trap.

We had a former VOICE staffer, Daniela Rocha, come in to talk to us at the start of the semester and she talked about her career in international journalism that started at Mercer, but also mentioned the lifetime friendships she made on the paper. A glance at The VOICE’s social media shows

staffers stay in touch long after they graduate; they help each other find apartments in new cities, they meet up when they’re back home.

For some students, it’s not clubs that provide community, but their program of study. Joe Suarez, a Freshman studying Music at Mercer says, “A typical day for me is nothing super interesting. I go to classes, maybe have to wait a half an hour or so for my next class, and after all of them I leave.” But he notes that he does talk to people in his department.

Sympathetic to the community college students unique situation is Literature Professor Dr. Jack Tabor. Having been a community college student once himself, Dr. Tabor says he can relate to the cycle of school, work, home: “inherently [with]in the community college it is hard [to find community] unless you are involved with a student group.”

He tries to address this at Mercer by having an active dynamic in the classroom to help students collaborate. When students don’t speak or are disconnected from him or one another, he has them “turn their wagons” to create small groups. “What the group work tells me” said Dr. Tabor, “is that there is a very strong sense of community.” Dr. Tabor has found this strategy to be successful.

Brian Morton-Salley, a sophomore studying Information Technology and Informatics at Rutgers University told The VOICE “I feel that a community college can have a sense of community itself be-

cause you’re still having classes, you’re still gonna have to find people to study with.”

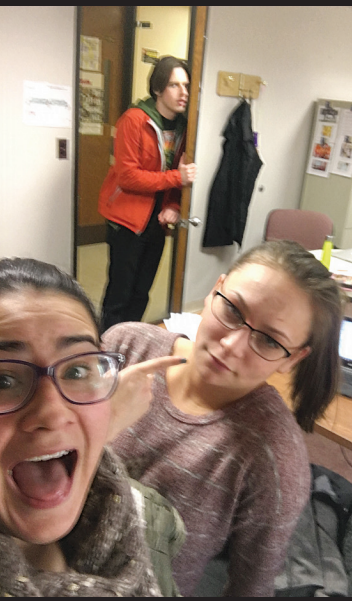
In an interview with Mercer’s President Dr. Jianping Wang, she said, “students [here] have [a] much closer relationship with their faculties than [those at] a four year institution, because we are smaller classes...Our faculties are very student centered...They are always with you. So that gives the students a sense that they care, that the faculty cares about them...That should give them a sense of community.”

Dr. Wang did note, however, “there are some students who come here full time and work full time. So they come, take classes, and leave. I would say that those students probably don’t feel a close sense of community with fellow students,”

Another suggestion for the students looking for a community would be to visit your success coaches. They can provide a list of available clubs and advise you on any other questions. Success coaches are assigned to every freshman on campus, so that’s a place to start (Hint: don’t look on the Ellucian Go app, try your MyMercer portal to find yours :).

Hidden in faint white italics on the top of Mercer’s home page is the college’s mission, stating, “a vital college, engaged with its community, and dedicated above all else student success.” Mercer’s faculty and students are engaged in creating and maintaining a sense of community. It’s there, you just have to keep an eye out for it.

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Come out and show your pride

LGBT students: it's time for us to step up

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AS I SEE IT



Zayvion Thompson

My name is Zayvion Thompson and I am proud openly bisexual male. I am currently a second year Communications and New Media major. I also come from a Jamaican Christian family that heavily frowns upon anything that's not straight or seen as "normal." My path to self acceptance hasn't been easy. But I'm writing this to encourage other students to take that path, or to voice their presence more loudly on campus.

My worry is that since the 2013 Supreme Court rulings that allowed gays to get married and serve opening in the military, a lot of young people have gotten the impression that gay issues are over and done with, nothing more to worry about. In fact, there are plenty of kids like me from conservative families who are terrified to come out. Rates for suicide for LGBT teens is still far higher than for straight youth. We get bullied at far higher rates. Cassidy Wagner another Mercer student had this to say. "To be honest I'm scared of Trump's supporters increasing the frequency of physical attacks on both the LGBT community and women because of what they see Trump doing and promoting. We went back half a century, man."

Furthermore, with the new administration in the White House, the LGBT community faces the terror of seeing these hard fought rights disappear again in the blink of an eye. President Trump has stated numerous times that he is for "traditional marriage" and ap-



"To be honest I'm scared of Trump's supporters increasing the frequency of physical attacks on both the LGBT community and women because of what they see Trump doing and promoting. We went back half a century, man."

-Cassidy Wagner

pointed Mike Pence as his Vice President. Pence thinks gays should go to "conversion therapy" a brutal practice that basically tries to un-gay people. He is openly hateful. Mike Pence is a specter that is keeping gays up at night.

When asked what fears people in the LGBT community at Mercer had in light of Trump's election student Melissa Civale stated "I personally don't have any fears. I have hopes that we will overcome any bathroom bills or marriage laws. I have hope that our community can generate a big enough image to the government that we are people too." Cassidy Wagner another MCCC student had this to say. "To be honest I'm scared of Trump's supporters increasing the frequency of physical attacks on both the LGBT community and women because of what they see Trump doing and promoting. We went back half a century, man."

Fortunately pride flows through the LGBT community, and we are banding together

to fight the new administration, but we are already losing ground. Just a few weeks ago we lost a major battle for trans kids to be able to use the bathrooms that correspond to their gender while at school. The Supreme Court wouldn't even bother with the case, just left it at the lower courts who had ruled against these much needed rights.

If you think these so-called "bathroom bills" are just a small issue facing a tiny handful of people, think again. They represent gender inequality and sexual discrimination issues across the spectrum. When you see the courts making these kinds of rulings, be assured that it's just the start. Keep your eyes on other kinds of gender discrimination, like laws for equal pay, coverage for contraception on the new healthcare bill. These issues are all connected.

How does all this tie to us students at Mercer? Well, we're going to have to get our LGBT group motivated, too. There are organizations like HiTOPS in Princeton that have

been offering a safe space, teaching queer youth about sexual health, and helping teens know they are not alone.

As great as HiTOPS is they cannot do it all on their own, so what are we at MCCC doing to help?

In the past, Mercer has had quite an active LGBT club on campus. Back in 2012, the LGBT club held a "kiss in" event where students--queers and allies alike--convened in the lower Student Center and kissed in same sex pairs as part of a demonstration to raise awareness of LGBT issues.

That event--which only lasted about 10 minutes, and was part of similar events at college campuses nationwide--sparked considerable controversy on the Mercer campus. But in the end, it served its purpose. We made it very obvious that we are both here and queer.

More recently, in 2015, there was a transgender panel with several outside speakers that was a success despite vandalism of the flyers that were posted to advertise it.

Today, our campus LGBT group is fairly quiet, but I believe we can get back to our former glory. I get how terrifying coming out can be and I am not asking anyone to come out if it is not safe for them to do so, but our community really needs youth voices.

Trump and Pence are out to silence us but for the sake of our community and for the sake of myself I am not going to let him. And neither should you.

Do you see a
typo?
Then join the staff and
fix it!
Mon+Thur 12noon ET 127

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The College VOICE has won the following **New Jersey Collegiate Press Association Awards 2016-2017**
Awards ceremony will be held April 8 at the Cranbury, NJ Marriott

General Excellence - First Place (Feb. 2017 issue) - Staff of The College VOICE
Overall Website - First Place - Staff of The College VOICE
Feature Writing - First Place - "Fake news sows confusion" - Maria Ramos

Art & Entertainment Writing - First Place - "A new addition to the basement music scene in New Brunswick" - Trevion Anglin
Photography - First Place - "I can't go home! I'm already here!" - Tim O'Boyle

News Writing - Second Place - "Sex offender Mercer student arrested" - Svetlana Craft, Maria Ramos & Jasmine Santalla
Opinion Column Writing - Second Place - "We need a real food court" - Oscar Trigueros & Trevion Anglin

Sports Writing - Third Place - "Vikings baseball look for back to back World Series" - Jackson Thompson
Society of Professional Journalists Awards - Region 1
Photography - Finalist - "Twas the Night Before Christmas" - Savannah Dziepak

Editorial Policy:

The College VOICE is written and edited by students of Mercer County Community College and published every 3-4 weeks under the guidance of faculty advisers. The material printed in The College VOICE, be it articles, advertisements or opinion pieces, does not necessarily represent the views of the editors, the faculty, staff, administration or the board of trustees of Mercer County Community College.

Write to The College VOICE!

Do you have something to say? The College VOICE accepts letters to the editor. Submissions should be no more than 300 words; longer submissions may be shortened. Submit materials in electronic format, and include your name and status at Mercer (major and year, faculty or staff position or alumnus). All materials submitted become the property of The College VOICE, which reserves the right to reject or edit material based on length, taste or clarity.

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SUDOKU

Difficulty: 4 (of 5)

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Find last month's Sudoku solution online at mcccvoice.org

THEME CROSSWORD: SOFT CENTERS

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ACROSS

1. June honorees
6. Not up yet
10. Tapers off
14. Disturbance
18. Blowhole
19. Blender output
20. Huron neighbor
21. Actress Turner
22. AC discoverer
23. Lunchbox treats
24. They may hold up a drunk
26. Required for most crossword solvers
29. Florida shipments
30. 14-legged crawler
31. TV Jeannie
33. Battery part
34. Split, so to speak
37. Miss Ward
38. "Great!"
40. Harvard's league
41. Withered
42. Pulls the trigger
43. Builds
47. Adds seasoning
49. Over again
50. Diagnostic process, for short
51. Bracelet holder
52. Create a chair, perhaps
53. Poet Ezra
55. Luce brainchild
56. "Mamma -"
57. Nursery-rhyme bush
60. Denpasar's island
61. Kay follower
62. Osmond hit of 1976
65. Measure of popular opinion
68. 1040 recipient
69. Blooming
70. More idealistic
71. Fuel
72. Polynesian carving
73. Rabbit
74. AAA recommendation
78. "- Today"
79. Poetic tribute
80. Instruction to driver
81. Sink feature
83. Mescaline source
85. Plump guy's nickname
86. Terse
87. Big dictionary, for short
88. Employer obligations
90. Font
91. Actress Paquin
92. City straddling the Rhine
95. Behold!
96. Fill with dismay
98. Accumulations
100. Star salesperson
105. Place for rejects
107. Layers
108. Father and daughter singers
110. Between a walk and a canter
111. Look for
112. To the point
113. Donald's ex
114. Evil marquis
115. To be in ancient Rome
116. Backtalk
117. Island of the Cyclades
118. Guess

DOWN

1. Time in Spokane
2. Mimics
3. Palatial
4. Left Bank coffee order
5. Names in lights
6. Nimbus
7. Miss Blethyn
8. Anti-discrimination agcy.
9. Lucille and -
10. Conger
11. Tonics
12. One of the Bahamas
13. Back-to-school mo.
14. Skirt feature
15. Vaquero's loop
16. Entered the game
17. Out of date
19. Corn cookers
25. Grassland
27. Tough question
28. Looked suggestively
32. Miss Barrymore
34. Clean a windshield
35. 50/50
36. Big Apple insignia
38. Cheap-sounding
39. Radioactive element
41. Fix with stitches
42. French composer, d. 1924
44. Medallion
45. Fluttering tone
46. Pocket-sized
48. "- and Circumstance"
50. Prefix for thousandth
53. Coke rival
54. Air France destination
55. Score
58. Sensationally
59. Down and out
60. Movie piglet
62. Unearth
63. Remove
64. Emerson work
65. Sack material
66. 1992 also-ran
67. Onstage telephone
70. Classifies
72. Calculate a sum
73. Slice of meat
75. "One - a time ..."
76. Adolescent
77. "Ring" role
80. Soft mineral
81. Guess
82. Take steps
84. Do surgery
85. Crew quarters
86. Evergreen tree
89. Has confidence in
90. Hoglike jungle creatures
91. Recess
92. Woody fibers
93. Ghana capital
94. Young cod
97. Crystal clear
99. Church area
101. Chooses
102. Appeal
103. Israeli carrier
104. City on the Truckee
105. Get by, barely
107. Stockholm arrival

Horoscopes



Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 19

Choose your words carefully this month as they can help you pave a way for personal and professional success. Let your colleagues and significant other know what is on your mind.



Taurus

Apr. 20 - May 20

Like the weather, events beyond your control will necessitate repairs (either to a car, house, or a relationship). Do not feel overwhelmed. Stay grounded and take one disaster at a time.



Virgo

Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

As all things begin, so must they end. Whether in your career or love life, the moment feels devastating. However, seize the opportunity to take a chance on something more worthwhile!



Aquarius

Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Feeling overwhelmed with anger and depression this month? It may be due to the absence of a friend or loved one. Focus your energy toward creative projects to reconnect.



Gemini

May 21 - Jun. 20

Financial and personal investments will perform poorly this month. Avoid unnecessary expenses or risks to shore up stability (both for your wallet and your relationship).



Libra

Sept. 23 - Oct. 22

Now is the perfect time to access your wild side. Try unusual foods, travel to exotic places, or introduce yourself to new and interesting people. The experiences will provide opportunities for creativity.



Pisces

Feb. 19 - Mar. 20

The unexpected will take you by surprise. Instead of feeling disconcerted or pretending to ignore the distraction, take the time to listen. It will open the pathway to self-improvement



Cancer

Jun. 21 - Jul. 22

Protect yourself. Temptations and traps will appear throughout the month. Instead of snapping, be patient. You will be rewarded by your perseverance.



Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

Success, although great, can also feel overwhelming. Although it may appear unexpected, your accomplishments are well deserved. Take a moment to enjoy the attention!



Aries

Mar. 21 - Apr. 19

Change is in the wind along with the hint of spring. Old friends, colleagues, and loved ones will visit you this month. Do not stay rooted in the past and accept the change.



Leo

Jul. 23 - Aug. 22

Whether it is simply choosing a new location to work or study or moving to a new apartment, a change in your surroundings will help you find a new perspective on life.



Sagittarius

Nov. 22 - Dec. 21

This month, the new position you have started has provided its share of stress and obstacles. Although the work appears endless and your efforts thankless, it will pay off. Steer clear from confrontations.

Get Fuzzy

