

When you have a past, can you put it behind you?

MCCC hosts community event on how to get criminal records expunged



PHOTO | MELISSA REYES

The Hon. Carolyn V. Chang, Esq. of the Association of Black Women Lawyers of NJ, Inc. served as panel moderator for the and even focussed on how to expunge past criminal records, held at MCCC's Trenton Campus on September 28, 2019.

By Melissa Reyes
Reporter

“I got in a lot of trouble as a teenager and in my early 20s. The first time I got arrested I was 17 and the first time I was incarcerated was at 21,” says Christine, a former Mercer student who asked to be identified by just her middle name so she could discuss her past openly.

Christine says when she was a teen and young adult she made impulsive decisions when facing life stressors. She was angry and got influenced by the wrong crowd. Her incarceration at age 21 was the beginning of a complicated future and a lengthy criminal record for this now 35-year-old mother of two.

At the age of 26, Christine began to take steps to turn her life around. She says she was determined to overcome her earlier choices and wanted

to pursue an education that could lead her to a career. She went on to earn a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Rider University and is now in her second year of graduate school at Temple University to complete a Masters of Science in Public Health, yet her past still haunts her.

“I went away and came back and pretty much changed my whole life, and now its almost 10 years later and it's just... my record, it's still there,” she says.

The Mercer County Prosecutor's Office, along with several other prominent legal and advocacy groups, hosted an event focussed specifically on how to expunge past criminal records at MCCC's James Kerney Campus on September, 28, 2019.

See **EXPUNGEMENT** page 4

Students changing majors grapple with their choices

By Jackson Earley
Reporter

Last year at Mercer, Brady Moore was taking classes in Health, Anatomy, and Biology, which he says he enjoyed. After the conclusion of the 2018-2019 school year, Moore transferred to Kean University.

“I am taking mostly sophomore-level classes for Exercise Science, so I'm about a year behind schedule.” Moore says, adding, “I am 22 and only have 48 credits for my new major.”

Moore's college career started back in 2016 at Jacksonville University where he was majoring in Liberal Arts. After the first semester he stopped attending.

“I wanted to take the best course for me and didn't want to waste money going down an unknown path,” Moore explains.

Then, feeling ready to try again, in 2017 Moore enrolled at Union County College. He describes his mindset at the time saying, “After missing a whole semester I felt I had enough time to think. I thought I had college and life figured out, so I started taking Psychology classes.”

The 2017-2018 college year went smoothly for Moore. However, at the end of his sophomore year, Moore decided he wanted to change direction again.

“I liked Psychology, but I lost interest in it by the end of

the year.” Moore says.

Last year, Moore transferred to MCCC. His Union County College credits transferred, but then he began another new major.

“I always had an interest in athletes and sports, so I decided to enroll in Exercise Science courses, but most of my second semester credits at Union were wasted,” he says.

Moore's experience is unusual but changing majors in college is common. In an anonymous survey of 40 Mercer students, conducted by The VOICE, 68% said they either already have changed their major at least once or they are seriously considering it.

Of the students surveyed who said they have already changed their major at least once, the majority, 64%, said it is somewhat likely that their decision to change majors will cause them to graduate later than originally planned.

Evan Janiec, a sophomore at Mercer, changed his major at the beginning of this year. He started as a Computer Engineering major and is now in Liberal Arts but is thinking about another change into “either Education or another science.” He says he is aware the changes will slow his overall time to graduation.

Another student facing the same situation is Mercer sophomore, Jordan Dickerson. He switched majors from Liberal Arts to Television Broadcasting

and says “I will have to take at least a fifth year of school to get my bachelor's degree because I mostly took science classes second semester.”

Dylan Ritchkoff, has transferred colleges three times on his way to Mercer and has changed his major as he went along.

“Because I switched schools and majors, I only have 13 valid credits to my major now,” Ritchkoff says, adding, “the cost is becoming close to overwhelming,” and that he is “having to take almost two semesters worth of classes in one.”

For Ritchkoff and others like him, the costs can be high, but overall, for students still finding their way and aren't sure what they want to focus on, community colleges offer many options for a much lower price point than other types of colleges.

A student who resides in Mercer County taking a typical 15 credit semester at MCCC can expect to pay \$2,737 this semester. At Rutgers the same student would be paying almost \$5,000 more, assuming they were living at home and commuting.

Princeton now accepts applications for transfer students from community colleges. For those who could get in, assuming they lived off-campus, they could expect to pay \$25,935 per semester (not including campus housing, food, or books) if they didn't get any financial

aid.

Associates degree programs in New Jersey require 60 credits to complete with some of the classes--like English 101 and 102--being General Education classes required for all majors. Ritchkoff likely has some of these classes already fulfilled from his other work, but of classes specific to his major he may have as many as 20-30 credits left to complete.

Advisors and success coaches often recommend students who have broad interests take a variety of courses to start

out with but pick ones that also fit into the General Education areas so the credits will most likely count toward their degree even if they change majors.

Emanuel Medina, an academic advisor at Mercer, says, “The advising department has multiple students changing their majors every week.”

Reflecting on his own experience, Randy Moore says, “I wish I had been more thoughtful of the future when making my decisions, but I'm glad I went to community college for two years to figure it out.”



ILLUSTRATION | ERIN SIMPSON

MCCC art gallery hosts faculty exhibit

By Caitlin Oliver

Reporter

The most recent exhibit at MCCC’s Art Gallery was titled “MCCC Visual Arts Faculty Exhibit.” It offered a variety of pieces in various mediums from sculpture to photography. Artwork came from full and part-time faculty and all pieces were new and relevant, having been made within the last two years.

Two of the most prominent pieces featured in the exhibit were called *Tick* and *Capitol Reef National Park*.

Tick, takes up an entire wall of the gallery and includes numerous different hung clocks. This “found objects” sculpture was created by Emily Buchalski, an Adjunct Professor in the Visual Arts department since fall 2018.

Buchalski says a found objects sculpture is “an item that you find and you work with, rather than constructing something.”

Alice K. Thompson has been the Gallery director for the past 13 months. She picks out the pieces that she says she feels will “work together” the best.

When individuals bring in pieces, Thompson is the one who selects which ones are featured in each exhibit.



Student Juliana Schott, who volunteers in the Art Gallery, observes faculty art exhibit piece “Tick” by Emily Buchalski.

PHOTO | CAITLIN OLIVER

She then hangs the pieces herself.

Another piece featured in the faculty exhibit was called *Capitol Reef National Park*. Ryann Casey, an adjunct instructor in Art History and Photography who has been at Mercer since 2014, had a photograph in the exhibit. She explains that her photograph was part of her series *Loss Event* which she created as a way to cope with the death of her best friend. The

idea behind the piece, she says, is to let people know that if they lose a loved one, they do not have to grieve alone.

A student volunteer who works at the Gallery, Aditya Nandigama, says his favorite piece in this exhibit is a painting called *St. Francis*, by Fine Arts Professor Kyle Stevenson.

The Gallery itself is a quiet space for students to take a break from studies. The over-

head lighting, the soft classical music, and the shape of the space with its separate sections for different installations creates opportunities for visitors to experience the pieces at their own pace.

Gallery exhibits usually are up for about a month and there is a reception at the start of each new exhibit that is open to the public. Usually the artists are at the reception and attendees can meet and talk

with them. The next exhibit will be “Transient Brevity” and will run from October 28 to December 19 with the reception on November 6.

There is a gallery on each campus. The one located at the West Windsor Campus is on the second floor of the Communications building. It is open Monday-Thursday from 11am to 3pm and Wednesdays from 11am to 7pm. The Gallery is free to all attendees.

How is the college handling climate change?

By Thomas Lillja

Reporter

On September 20, 2019, concerned citizens worldwide held a “Climate Strike” and protested to draw attention to the current climate crisis. The event was lead by young people inspired in part by the school strike for climate change initiated by Greta Thunberg.

Princeton High School junior and environmental activist Martin Mastnak helped organize the local event at Hinds Plaza in Princeton.

Mastnak says that over time he has come to realize global climate change’s severity and has been moved to action. He has joined groups like the Princeton Student Climate Initiative and New Jersey Student Climate Advocates. Additionally, he manages the Fridays for Future New Jersey Instagram account.

Mastnak worked with a number of classmates to organize the “Climate Strike” event at Hinds Plaza on September 20. At the event, Mastnak gave a speech condemning big business conglomerates like Koch Industries and Exxon Mobil who are considered to be major polluters and who downplay or even deny the problem of climate change.

In a recent interview, Mastnak characterized the Princeton event as “very energetic.”

He continued, “Seeing

around three, four, five hundred people walking around was a big shock for me. I wasn’t expecting such a big turnout.”

Princeton youth aren’t the only locals responding to the climate change crisis. Many of Mercer County Community College’s staff and faculty also have campus sustainability on their minds.

One notable effort to promote campus sustainability is Mercer’s solar farm.

According to Bryon Marshall, Mercer’s Director of College Safety and Facilities, the project’s construction began in December 2011 and was completed in October 2013.

A display in the Student Center provides statistics about the solar farm indicating it has generated 43,859,331 kilowatt-hours of energy since its completion, equating to 31,490 tons of CO₂, which equals 3,552,605 gallons of gasoline.

The Environmental Protection Agency’s Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator says that those 43,859,331 kilowatt-hours actually equate to 3,489,948 gallons of gasoline, that is 62,657 fewer gallons than the estimate provided in the college’s display.

Nevertheless, the solar program has had a measurable impact, whereas campus recycling has proved more challenging.

Professor Amy Ricco,



PHOTO | KRISTIN MILLER

MCCC’s West Windsor campus is surrounded by one of the largest solar fields housed on any college campus in the United States.

coordinator of the Ornamental Horticulture and Plant Science programs, served as head of Mercer’s Sustainability Committee but stepped down as 2016.

She says “I felt that we, as a committee, couldn’t accomplish basic tasks...I still feel like the college doesn’t recycle properly.”

According to Marshall, Mercer employs a single-stream model of recycling collection and processing, meaning one where all recyclables are placed into a single bin and are then taken to materials recovery facilities where they are sorted and prepared to be reused.

A VOICE article from May 2019 suggests that the recycling bins around campus are organized in such a way that they often collect a substantial

amount of regular trash that does not actually qualify for recycling.

When it comes to making the Student Center sustainable, the President of MCCC, Dr. Jianping Wang says, “We want [to] make it bright...but not very energy-costing, so we designed it in such a way that [the building] absorb[s] the daylight at the maximum....So instead of [having] lighting, it will be natural light.”

Third-year Liberal Arts major Heidy Montes suggests that in the Student Center Cafeteria “replacing plastic utensils with biodegradable utensils... would be more sustainable.”

Marshall sees another opportunity saying, “I believe the movement to paperless records and documents represents

a large item on the to-do list.” He adds, “The College, at large, needs to continue to explore and investigate [environmentally-friendly] alternatives, product specifications, and choices to provide for a more sustainable future.”

Institutional changes and grassroots activism are two responses to the issue of climate change.

Mastnak says that his hope is “to bring about some sort of meaningful and impactful change that will allow for our children and our grandchildren to grow up in a world where they don’t have to worry about the impacts of pollution...we want to transition to a greener future and a more liveable [and] more sustainable future.”

Proposed development of local Dam Site 21 faces some backlash

By Alessandro Rivero
Reporter

A proposal by the Mercer County Parks Commission to develop a section of land known as Dam Site 21 has generated public controversy. The space, which includes wetlands and woodlands, is located less than a mile from the MCCC’s West Windsor campus, on a 280 plot of land adjacent to Hughes Drive.

According to documents, on Mercer County’s official website, the Parks Commission is seeking a firm to create a “unique passive recreational park with a focus on the lake and water activities and to provide the citizens of Mercer County the opportunity to appreciate and enjoy the beauty of this special property. Specifically, we would like to include water-based programming and activities that don’t presently exist at the County’s other lake facilities.”

While the Parks Commission says the development will have recreational and financial benefits, a vocal group of residents opposed to the plan says it will be bad for the environment, costly, and will cause traffic and noise on Hughes Drive.

At a Hamilton Town Council meeting on October 1, Hamilton residents showed up with lawyer Dino Spadaccini serving as their leader.

He asked the council: “Why is the county not answering us? Is the county being underserved in terms of parks? Where does this come from?”

Speaking on behalf of the group he said that nearby residents already have access to many other green spaces includ-

ing Mercer County Park, Sayen Gardens, and Veterans Park.

He said that, despite having public meetings the Park Commission has been “hiding behind Mr. Simone,” referring to the project leader from Simone Collins Landscape Architecture firm.

Anthony Cucchi, the chair of the Advisory Committee for the project said in a letter to Hamilton’s mayor that the goal “is to balance sustainable use of this beautiful site with the concerns of neighbors.”

The Mercer County Parks Commission posted a public survey online to gauge public opinion. Seventy-five percent of people taking the survey said they believed their recreational needs in the county are already being met.

The survey had an anonymous comment section which has received 288 comments so far ranging from emphatic responses like “NO NEED FOR DAM SITE 21!!!!!!” to “Some great ideas, I’m particularly interested in seeing more environmentally conscious developments in the park.”

The issue has become so tense with residents that not only have they reached out to request support from the Town Council members to stop the project, but they are also organizing a protest on October 26, at Hughes Drive.

Not everyone is against the project, however, as shown in the survey. Residents from other townships have said they believe that the project will be good for the greater communities outside of just Hamilton Township.

Ted Pivovarnick, who



PHOTO | BIANCA MARTINEZ

The Mercer County Parks Commission hopes to transform an undeveloped space known as Dam Site 21 (above) into a recreational park.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Local yard signs protest the Dam Site 21 project.

owns property in both Robbinsville and Hamilton Township, says he wants to “keep [Dam Site 21],” but that he is not opposed to compromise and can accept “core trails” and other promised renovations.

The situation will remain in limbo until November 12th, when the presentation of the Draft Master Plan will be revealed by Mercer County Park Commission in or after the third public meeting.



PHOTO | BIANCA MARTINEZ

MIDDLE: Residents in Hamilton have organized to try to stop the Dam Site 21 project. Lawn signs indicate their protest, website has been established, they have attended Town Council meetings in large numbers, and a project on Hughes Drive is planned for October 26. ABOVE: The Parks Commission hopes to turn the undeveloped land and water into additional recreational space.

REVIEW: The Moth Coffeehouse is 20 minutes from campus and a perfect study hangout

By Kaylee Reyes
Reporter

The Moth Coffeehouse, with its calming views of the Conines Millpond, is located in Allentown, NJ and is owned by Zoe, Corky and Kris Danch. It was created in 2015 on the lowest floor of the old mill and is named after the luna moth.

According to Zoe Danch they chose the name when they started the business since “the luna moth signifies new beginnings.” It has been almost four years exactly since that date and business is booming.

If you’ve ever seen a cafe in a movie, where everyone seems to know each other in a small town and the environment is peaceful inside and out, that’s the vibe that the Moth has. Also, it features healthy and tasty vegan and vegetarian food and is less than 20 minutes from MCCC.

Their drinks menu consists of items like espressos, cappuccinos, kombucha, and cold brews and there are many non-dairy milk options.

The prices range from \$1.85 to \$5.50.

The food menu offers varying types of healthy dishes like beet burgers, chickpea sliders, vegan sausage sandwiches, and more with prices starting at \$4.75 for the daily soup. One of their most popular dishes is the vegan mac and cheese, priced at \$6.75.

Nida Bajwa, a Liberal Arts major at Mercer, says, “I love how they have a variety of vegan options to choose from since I don’t eat meat. If I were to choose my favorite one it would have to be the beet burger!”

On a typical Saturday, you can expect to find the place filling up at lunchtime with a line almost out the door. The line usually moves smoothly as customers order and pay at the counter and then the food is brought to the table.

The seating area inside has comfortable chairs and a couch in one corner. There are high top tables at the windows and green low-top tables featuring images and clippings from vintage local newspapers glazed onto the top. Natural

wood is featured throughout. It is a perfect environment for studying or grabbing brunch with your friends.

Angelica Pettinato, a Liberal Arts major at Mercer, says of the Moth, “I like the decor and setting, it is very cozy and inviting. The staff is always very friendly and their coffee tastes amazing.”

A good lunch option is the Grilled Veg. The nan bread is soft, chewy and lightly toasted. Inside, there is a combination of flavorful grilled vegetables such as zucchini, mushrooms, peppers, onions, with melted cheese blending in between the vegetables.

The Grilled Veg, priced at \$8.50, comes with a side salad of lettuce, shredded carrots, red cabbage, tomatoes, and cucumber, topped off with what appears to be balsamic vinaigrette.

Sarah Miller, 19, said, “The first thing I thought when I walked in was...it is such a cute coffee place.”

If there is any aspect where the Moth comes up short it is the minimal amount of parking provided outside in



PHOTO | JUSTIN WILLEVER

The Moth coffeehouse has a variety of vegan and vegetarian fresh food and bakery items made daily. ABOVE: Vegan coconut cake.

a small gravel lot that is shared with several other businesses housed in and beside the old mill building.

The gravel path leads down to a larger lot but it is intended for people headed to Heritage Park which is just behind the Moth. Most patrons

have to park on the street. One tip for busy times is to turn onto Lakeview Drive which is a block north of the Moth and has two parking areas.

The Moth is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m and is a perfect spot for students.

Moving beyond the stigma of a past criminal record

Continued from page 1

Expungement is a process that allows people with certain types of criminal records, who have paid their debt to society and kept out of all trouble for five to ten years or more, to get their record erased. If they complete the process and are approved by the court for expungement, they don't have to indicate that they ever had a conviction when they are applying for jobs or loans, and their previous records are no longer available for anyone to access.

The event was free for locals and attendees received a free expungement packet, which usually costs anywhere from \$80-\$100. There were speakers who explained the process and participants had the chance to ask questions to a panel of lawyers, including an Assistant Attorney for the Mercer County Prosecutor's office, who gave advice on the expungement process.

The information session was presented by various groups, including: The MCCC Upward Bound Parent's Association, the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office, the Association of Black Women Lawyers of New Jersey, From the Block to the Boardroom, The Greater Princeton Chapter of Drifters, The Ivy League Educational Foundation, and The National Congress of Black Women.

Attendee Zalika Johnson said she learned about the event through Facebook.

"It really pushed me. 'Cause I'm like I need a career



PHOTO | MELISSA REYES

Panelists at the seminar on expunging criminal records, held at the MCCC Trenton Campus, included representatives from the Mercer County Prosecutor's office, and the Association of Black Women Lawyers among others.

and they're [going to] do a lot of criminal background checks at jobs," Johnson said.

The MC of the event, Nicole Williams, a volunteer at the Greater Princeton Chapter of Drifters, Inc., explained that "People go on about their daily lives, and forget about [their record] until they apply for that one type of job that really does a different type of background check...As long as it never comes up, people don't often seek to get it removed from their record."

Williams also said that many people are not even aware of what expungement is, or do not have the financial resources to go through the process. Expungement is a legal process that can take from six months to two years to complete and can cost anywhere from \$100-\$2,000 according to the information provided.

But for someone like

Christine, expungement can be the key to moving forward.

She says, "I would like to start a career and having a criminal record stops you from even getting your foot in the door to a lot of places. The first thing they do on the paper interviews is ask 'Have you ever been accused of a felony?' and you have to check 'Yes' in case they do a background check, and then most of the times you won't even make it to a second interview."

Christine is a strong candidate for expungement. In addition to going to college, getting a degree, and avoiding any further criminal activities for the past decade, she also has made meaningful contributions to her community, something the judge will look at when making the expungement decision.

Christine works with people with autism, has vol-

unteered at a homeless shelter for pregnant and postpartum women, and has volunteered with Caravan of Love to take homemade blankets as gifts to children from birth to age 17.

Other things that the court looks at when individuals seek expungement include the type of crimes they were involved in, the completion of any drug treatment programs, keeping up with parole obligations, and payment of fines. Certain types of major crimes are never eligible for expungement including homicide, sexual assault, robbery and human trafficking among others.

But Christine's crimes don't fall into those categories and expungement for her would have long-term benefits that extend beyond her own well-being to the rest of her family.

Stacey Denton, the Director of Upward Bound, a pro-

gram that prepares high school students for college, says she was inspired to help organize the event because she saw the need for expungement extending beyond just the people who have gotten into criminal trouble in the past.

She said, "When it was time to do financial aid for our students they were saying, I can't do that."

According to Denton, students were deciding to not go to college because their parent's past criminal records could affect their qualification to receive financial aid, making education impossible.

The Upward Bound program collaborated with Tracey Syphax, a Trenton local who runs From the Block to the Boardroom, Inc. and is an expert on reentry programs for former inmates. Syphax knows the experience from the inside out, having gone, by his own account, from being a drug dealer to a successful entrepreneur. Syphax has devoted himself to creating and supporting events like the one held on September 28, focussing on the Trenton community in particular.

Narline Casimir, an Assistant Prosecutor with the Mercer County Prosecutor's office who participated in the event, says of expungement, "It's about making our community better and safer, and it's for people to know, even if things happened in the past, and they made mistakes, there's redemption."

Artists everywhere participate in Inktober challenge



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMES KAMINSKI

Local artist and animator, James Kaminski, participates in Inktober.

By Kristina Hontz
Reporter

This month artists everywhere are participating in a challenge known as Inktober. Anyone can participate simply by following daily prompts--usually a single word--as inspiration to create a piece of artwork using ink-based tools like pen and ink, sharpies, and outliners.

There is no money involved. The goal is just to build consistency of artistic habits. Many people who participate choose to share all or some of their works on social media.

Inktober began in 2009 and was originated by artist Jake Parker, an illustrator, writer and teacher based in Utah. According to his website, his original goal was to challenge myself to improve his inking skills and to "develop positive drawing habits."

The list of daily prompt words can be found on Parker's website mrjakeparker.com. The 2019 list features terms like: misfit, injured and ripe.

Since Parker began Inktober, many other artists have created spin-offs with their own themes such as the

goth inspired Goretober and mermaid centered MerMay. However, Inktober still remains the most popular.

According to Mercer Game Design major Gianna Grindlinger Inktober "helps me get used to drawing a little every day" and "opens up more of my imagination."

Grindlinger says she first got into Inktober in high school when her friends would share their Inktober drawings and creations which made her want to join in. She says she soon realized the habit of daily drawing expanded her creativity and opened her mind to new ideas.

Sometimes artists experience a lack of motivation to draw because they can't think of any good ideas, experiencing a kind of artist's block. Even professional artists find Inktober useful for pushing through and finding reserves of creative inspiration.

One such artist is James Kaminski an illustrator, designer and animator who specializes in the inking stages of artwork. He has worked for Nickelodeon and on comics such as Archie, Sonic the



Hedgehog and Mega Man. He lived in the Mercer area until he recently moved to Pennsylvania with his wife and their new baby.

Kaminski says he found out about Inktober through his illustrator friends in 2012, but at the time it was not as popular as it is now and he was not sure if it was right for him. However, he says he got into it in 2014, when he was feeling artistically isolated after finishing college.

Kaminski says the challenge helps him as he strives to make as "clean and cohesive of a product as possible."

Kaminski explains the event and its purpose saying: "Inktober created a mass group of folks online doing the same thing and motivating each other to work."

Mercer offers free yoga classes twice a week

By Pamela Hernandez
Reporter

Tracey Ulshafer, the owner of “One Yoga Center” in Hightstown, NJ, serves as one of the instructors at Mercer’s free twice-weekly yoga classes. She teaches a style of yoga known as Hatha. It is one of the main branches of yoga that includes physical practices, such as postures and breathing techniques.

“One of the main benefits is the increase of flexibility and range of motion. Also, at the same time you gain strength and tone. So it’s creating a balance in your muscular system, gaining flexibility where you need it and strength where you need it.” Ulshafer says.

While all forms of yoga help with the overall calming of the mind and strengthening of the body, the health benefits go beyond than what people might imagine.

Ulshafer says, “There have been many many studies on the benefits of yoga...The endocrine glands secrete hormones that we need and each one is different, from the thyroid to the pancreas...We know by twisting and squeezing these organs they are getting massaged.”

The act of squeezing and twisting assists our internal organs, as well, she says, benefiting every system in the body.

Suzette Stoffard, another yoga instructor from “One Yoga Center,” has 20 years of experience and takes her students through steps of self-healing with her techniques.

Stoffard says the benefits of practicing being mentally



Chemistry Professor Helen Tanzini is also a yoga instructor in the Vinyasa style. She teaches yoga classes as part of the free sessions open to all MCCC students and staff



PHOTO | PAMELA HERNANDEZ

present in the moment are numerous. This is accomplished through mindful movements, overall breathing, and thought pattern improvement.

Present moment awareness specifically focuses on letting go of the past and the

anxiety that the practitioner feels towards the future, so that they can enjoy the moment that they are in.

Anjali Patel, a second-year student at Mercer stated, “Taking these yoga classes helped me a lot. Between school

and my internship I barely have a moment to myself. Yoga gives me the mental clarity that I need to get through the week.”

According to the instructors, yoga helps to decrease people’s respiration rate so it induces a state of relax-

ation. The actual systems of the brain are able to switch into a more sympathetic system so that the body is able to relax.

Even professors attend and participate in the free yoga classes.

Shelly Botwinick, a Wellness Professor at Mercer says she brings her students to some of the yoga sessions,

“It is nice to move the body in a non vigorous way but really get results. You’re holding a pose for even 10 to 15 seconds and your body is working. I think people who have never taken yoga before do not understand how hard the body and mind work together.” Botwinick says.

Helen Tanzini, a Chemistry Professor at Mercer has also been a yoga instructor for 10 years and teaches the Vinyasa, a more active form of yoga than Hatha. Vinyasa connects all movements and breathing in motion.

Tanzini states, “Yoga keeps you present at the time that you are in. Most students get that stress of the next exam and all that, and it’s good to calm down. You learn better when you’re calm.”

No experience is necessary to participate and all equipment needed, such as yoga mats, are provided during the class, though participants can bring their own and are encouraged to dress in comfortable attire.

Yoga classes are held in the PE building on the West Windsor campus, Mondays from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and Wednesdays from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. All students and staff are welcome, free of charge.

Students try to handle the STRESS

By Cassie Webb
Senior Reporter

Being a college student comes with stress related to studies, work, money, personal relationships and more. In a survey conducted by the VOICE, out of 30 students, 53% said school is their main stressor.

Maya Gordon, a 19-year old student at Mercer, says, “I could say what you want to hear [about how I deal with stress] like different coping mechanisms and things of the sort but as I’ve gotten older I’ve realized it’s easier said than done.”

Instead, Gordon says the reality is, “I tend to shut down and cry in my room.”

According to Bud Livingston, a Health Professor at Mercer, the first step in managing stress is managing the causes and being aware of symptoms. A reaction to stress is the flight or fight concept, he says: your instinct it to handle the situation is fight or run.

While much research and many tests have been done



Students at MCCC are facing chronic stress with limited coping skills.

ILLUSTRATION | ERIN SIMPSON

on stress, The Franklin Institute for the Sciences website states, “As science gains greater insight into the consequences of stress on the brain, the picture that emerges is not a pretty one.”

According to Mercer’s Senior Counselor, Dorothy Gasparro, who has been a counselor for 14 years, students struggle with the transition from high school to college, managing the differences between expectations and reality, and not having adequate support networks.

In a VOICE survey of 50 students conducted for a previous article, 75 percent said they have problems with anxiety and 65 percent said they suffer from depression. Taking time to deal with these issues can cause students to miss class and assignments which in turn leads to more stress.

Professor Livingston suggests a variety of ways to begin to think about handling stress. These include: trying to shift how you view your prob-

lems, controlling emotions through meditation and exercise, building a social support network including family and friends, doing activities like deep breathing, praying, and trying to get seven to eight hours of sleep per night.

With so many common stressors among students, Gasparro says, “There are a lot of resources; there’s me, the success coaches, clubs, and SGA to get involved and to reach out to for help.”

STRESS STRATEGIES

1 PANIC ATTACKS

Panic attacks can be terrifying.

One method psychologists recommend to help get through a panic attack is called “grounding.” They say to find and focus on: five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can feel, two things you can smell and one thing you can taste.

2 RECOVERY

Recovery from addiction is a long process, but there are some free apps that can be useful. One free app is called NOMO. It has quick games to help you refocus, and calendars to help track sobriety.

3 STRESS

There are many phone apps to help fight daily stress. Calm and Happily both have free trials (and discounts for people in high stress jobs). They include breathing, meditation and sleep tools.

Lambertville's spooktacular Halloween



By Bianca Martin
Senior

Halloween lights in Lambertville are out even before it's time to turn them on, as residents begin decorating their homes for the holiday in this riverside town.

One particularly well-known display is the "Halloween House" on North Union Street, owned by Dragan, a retired school art teacher. The house's display featuring spooky, life-sized figures is a local attraction.

Dragan has lived in Lambertville for 25 years and began the Halloween display in 1998.

In a short film by NBC's Kristin Weir, Dragan explains how she creates her figures from the people that she knows, not as exact replicas, but rather as caricatures that capture a person's essence in caricature.

She uses blacklight paint to create a spectral glow. Dragan says she was once taught they had a blacklight paint class for slight learning disabilities and she decided to use the idea.

Maria Tsardoulas, a teacher at the elementary school, says, "We've been in her art class."

Maria McGrath, a local resident, talks about Dragan's display from her house, which is also a competitive for the blocks.





neez & Kristen Miller
Reporters

Lambertville, New Jersey bring people
trick-or-treat. The tradition of go-
for the holiday is well established

Well known spot is known as “Hal-
Union Street. Each year Dolores
t teacher, creates an elaborate
e-zied paper mache figures.
in Lambertville for the past 20
ween House the tradition back

ew Hope videographer, Bob
ow many of her ideas come
knows. The figures are not
reflect some aspect of the
ture form.

s to give the white figures a
that at the school where she
t theatre for children who had
and this was where she got the

student in Dragan’s art class in
used to do paper mache when

cal resident that also decorates
n and how she “makes it very
around here.”



TOP: Many houses in Lambertville’s Halloween tradition feature lifesize decorations. This display includes a pair of zombie farmers with full sized skeletal horse. ABOVE: Dolores Dragan whose haunting annual displays are among the most elaborate, uses black lights to add a spooky glow to her hand crafted paper mache figures. RIGHT: Dragan has so many visitors that she sets up a donation jar for the Lambertville Community Kitchen. LEFT: A deathly angel by Dolores Dragan in paper mache, accompanied by glowing severed head.

PHOTOS | KRISTEN MILLER



Women’s soccer falls at home to CCBC Essex

By Patrick Mulligan
Senior Reporter

The Mercer women’s soccer team fell 3-2 at home to the Community College of Baltimore County-Essex on Saturday, October 5, despite a late push in the second half that almost saw the Lady Vikings erase a three goal deficit.

Neither team was able to break through in the first half, although CCBC Essex came closest to breaking the deadlock. A last-second goal-line clearance from Vikings defender #18 Gianna Gollinge allowed the home team to head into the break with a clean sheet still intact.

Four minutes into the second half, CCBC Essex forward #7 Taylor West found the back of the net after she volleyed a pass from teammate #12 Dani Zacierka off her left foot and past Mercer goalkeeper Courtney Fox.

CCBC Essex doubled their advantage two minutes later with a goal from #10 Kara Dietrich.

After receiving a pass down the left-hand side of the field, the Knights midfielder found space in Mercer’s six yard box and buried her shot at the near post.

CCBC Essex extended



PHOTO | ARES RODRIGUEZ

Mercer women’s Vikings soccer team competed against Community College of Baltimore on October 5, losing 3-2 at home.

their lead even further with a goal from a corner kick fourteen minutes into the second half. #5 Emily Vetri whipped the ball into the box and #15 midfielder Ryleigh Fachler connected with her right boot, sending the ball into the back of the net.

“I thought the first 25 [minutes] of the second half

went very well; it was about as well as we have moved the ball this year,” CCBC Essex head coach Joe Fiedler said.

Mercer’s top scorer overall, Jamie Ervin, felt the Vikings had the Knights in their grasp but let them slip away.

“I believe we had them the whole time, like we have

the capability to win but we just came out flat in the second half.

We definitely had the opportunity to score more goals than we did,” she said.

The Mercer women’s soccer team’s record is 10-5 this season so far, compared to last year’s losing 4-11-1 record. Ervin thinks the numbers should

be slanted even more in Mercer’s favor this season.

“I just think we had the opportunity to win more games than we actually do. Every game this season we lost, we actually had the opportunity to win. We just need to give it our all. We’re not all giving 100 percent,” she said.

Mercer softball prepares for spring season with fall scrimmages



COLLEGE VOICE | FILE PHOTO

Each year Mercer the Mercer Vikings softball team welcomes new players and works to get the whole team ready for the new season.

By Brent Grocott
Reporter

Mercer’s softball team is gearing up to make another run at the College World Series in Clinton, Mississippi this Spring. This will be the Vikings’ attempt to make up for last season’s disappointing end that saw the team fail to qualify.

During its 2018 season, Mercer advanced through the Region Final and won the District Tournament, which qualified the

Lady Vikings for the College World Series. Mercer lost in the Regional Finals last season which prevented the Vikings from playing in the World Series or the District tournament.

Catcher Gabby Estrada is confident in her team and its ability to reach its goals this season.

“I can see the team winning regions and I think we definitely have what it takes to make it to the World Series,” Estrada said.

The Vikings’ roster

consists of 16 players, seven of whom return from last year’s team that lost in the Regional Finals. Mercer’s veteran coach Ryan Zegarski enters his 16th season and is looking to bring his team back to the World Series once again.

“Last year we struggled a lot more, we had a lot of injuries, which ultimately cost us a lot of wins,” Estrada continued. “I really think we have what it takes to go really far this season and be successful.”

gan its Spring season with only 12 girls and one pitcher. It now carries four healthy pitchers and a squad of 16 girls.

Last season, pitcher Heather Clevenger struggled through a torn labrum in the postseason. Three additional pitchers have since been added to the Vikings’ roster, reflecting the depth of Mercer’s bullpen.

Mercer Athletic Director John Simone says he hired Zagarski because of his Mercer roots and Zagarski’s abil-

ity to get his athletes to play well together.

“He’s a Mercer [alumnus] and had a strong background as a player and a reputation as a student of the game and was always personable with his teammates and coaches,” Simone explained. “We put much stock into player communication with staff.”

Zegarski’s view on the upcoming season is similar to Estrada’s: he is expecting the team to make a deep run in the postseason.

“This year’s team looks right now to be a little deeper than years past and people are really competing for positions,” Zegarski said. “We’re looking for all our returning Sophomores to lead by example.”

Mercer defeated Brookdale 8-5 on Saturday, September 28, bringing the team’s record to 6-7 in fall scrimmages this season. The win was capped off by a homerun by left-fielder Taylor Hawkes and an RBI triple from third-basemen McKayla Krajcsovics. Heather Clevenger was dominant on the mound, followed by Amanda Gonzalez in relief.

In 2018, the team be-

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Calculating the exact value of club participation

My Perspective



Justin Willever

A lot of students come to Mercer, sit quietly in class, then go home or to work and never participate in life on campus. This can be isolating and even make it harder to feel motivated.

One way to build interest and connection is to join a club. There are more than 45 of them and according to Gerson Martinez, the Orientation Coordinator at Mercer, 35 are currently active.

Most clubs meet at least once a month and have two events of some kind within a semester. That could be anything from a party on the quad to a fundraiser for Toys for Tots.

In a VOICE survey of 30 students who were hanging out in the Student Center, which is where the club offices are located, 93% said that they have made friends because they joined a club.

Some clubs are academic or career-focused, like the Criminal Justice Club or the Physical Therapy Assistants' Club, others are social and cultural such as African Students Organization, Carribean Vibes and the Rainbow Coalition, while others are just interest-based like the Gaming and Adventure Clubs.

All the clubs are free to join, and some people even start new clubs based on common interests. Once they find a faculty adviser and fill out some paperwork they can qualify to get a budget to use for events according to Martinez.

In a study titled "The Impact of Extracurricular Activity on Student Academic

Performance," researchers Jing Wang and Jonathan Shiveley found that students who graduated high school with a 3.0 GPA and joined a club in their first semester at college saw stability in their academic performance. By contrast, students who finished high school with the same GPA but who did not join a club ended up with an average GPA drop from 3.0 to 2.2.

That data is supported by students here at Mercer. In the same VOICE survey, 70 percent of students who joined a club said they saw their GPA go up after doing so. So if not to end the lonely monotony, joining a club is academically a smart move.

HIGH GPA? JOIN PTK!

If you have a GPA of 3.5 or higher and have completed 12 credits or more of classes at the 100+ level you may be qualified for the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society.

Members have access to lots of benefits including potential scholarships!

Find out more by stopping by the PTK Student Club office in SC. Or contact Professor Huang at

huangj@mccc.edu

Volunteering is valuable even for the busiest college student

IN MY VIEW



Cesia Guadron

The demands of being a full-time student, who works and hopes to maintain some form of a social life generally doesn't allow for volunteer work. That's why I trembled when Daisy De

Paz, a recent Water Quality intern at Delaware River Basin Commission asked me if I could volunteer to face-paint children with her for a day at Trenton's Capital City farm (the city's first commercial urban farm). Despite feeling like there was no time in my schedule for this event, I chose to volunteer anyway, and the result was incredible.

Going into it I was full of nerves, my main concern being that I simply wouldn't do a good job. As I watched the yellow school bus approach, full of children from the Boys and Girls after school program, all of my fears began to built. Yet they vanished moments later as we were bombarded by anxious

and excited five-year-olds.

"Can you make me look like Avatar the Last Air Bender?" they asked.

I painted ladybugs, Spidermans, and Avatar the Last Airbender on more kids than I can count. And somewhere amongst the chaos, the paint, the questions about the number of legs on spiders, and whether or not I could paint them, I had two feelings I had not experienced since I started college: peace and purpose.

Being presented with a single task, so simple and without consequences, was freeing; and the smiles and bright eyes of the children as they saw their faces painted was rewarding on its own.

Shahrukh Malik, a fellow student at Mercer, who is majoring in Biology also resonated with this experience and says that the last time he did volunteer work he left, "Bubbly and really happy."

According to the American Psychological Association, volunteering "is good for your mind and body," and it "helps you make new friends, expand your network, and boost your social skills." This may be due to the fact that volunteering leaves people with a sense of fulfillment and purpose, while also allowing them to interact with others in their community.

The simplicity of knowing that you have done something for someone else, and that

you have in some way made their day better, can help relieve some of the stress that comes with being a student. If you're thinking, "What can I possibly offer the world?" volunteering can offer the answer.

Ultimately, no matter how little we have, we always have something to offer, and community service can help college students forget about their issues while possibly finding a bit of peace along the way.

"It makes me feel good, not only because I'm helping but because I know that I am showing someone that there is kindness in the world." De Paz says.

CUFFING SEASON: A Princeton date on \$25 or less? It can be done!

A NEW VOICE



ERIN SIMPSON

Can you feel that chill in the air? Are you buttoning your jacket? Do you notice the dwindling daylight hours? Sure enough, it's cuffing season, and it's stressful enough trying to find your perfect match while simultaneously trying to be someone's perfect match and mixed

into that nerve-racking, nail-biting ordeal is the question of what to do on a first date without going broke in the process.

Princeton is certainly not most people's first thought of where to go for romance on a budget, but there are plenty of places to get your heart a thumpin' without breaking the bank, you just need to know where to look.

Start with ice cream. Yes, it's cold, but how better to cool off the sweat of a first date? Try Halo Pub on Hulfish with its 48 all natural flavors for a reasonable \$2.45. Stroll through Palmer Square and make small talk about the Colonial Revival style architecture.

Next, head to the Princeton Record Exchange

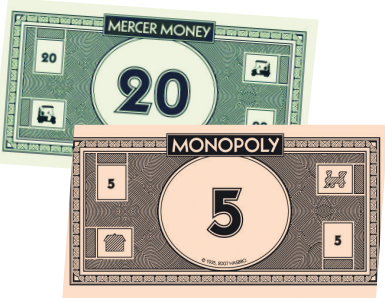
(aka P-rex), one of the most famous vinyl shops in the country. The store soundtrack never repeats itself but the most magical thing about Prex is that you do not need to spend a cent there to have fun time. Start a convo with your swipe right by talking about albums they blast on their car stereo with all the windows down. See who can find the weirdest named album in the \$1 record bins. In my searches, Who knows? Maybe in one of these records with become your song.

Musicked out? Head to Jammin' Crepes for the "Banh Mi Crepe," a playful spin on the classic Vietnamese sandwich. It'll set you back \$9, so maybe try their "Apple Toasty Crepe" with local orchard apples,

browned butter, and signature cinnamon sugar for only \$6.50.

After lunch, it's time to walk through the Princeton campus until you get to the Art Museum. For free you can check out art from Vincent Van Gogh, Claude Monet, Andy Warhol, and Leonardo Da Vinci.

On the floor of the ancient Roman art section, you will find a breathtaking mosaic of the head of Medusa that, remarkably, you are welcome to walk on; even though it dates back to the 2nd century. While your date is captivated by each intricate tile, slip your hand into theirs. Steal a kiss as you both stand on the ancient mosaic where perhaps the Roman poet Catullus once stood when he wrote:



Give me a thousand kisses, then a hundred, then another thousand, and then another hundred, and, when we've counted up the many thousands, let us confuse them so as not to know them all, so that no enemy may cast an evil eye, when he finds out that there were so many kisses.

Final stop: the Fountain of Freedom. Sit at the water's edge and rest your head on your date's shoulder while you talk about everything and nothing. Or take your date by the hand and dance in the shadow of the fountain like nobody's watching.

MAIL CALL

What do you think? Do you agree with the opinions you see here? Do you like our coverage of College and local issues? Is there a topic you really want us to cover? DROP US A LINE AND LET US KNOW!



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top ten

GEN Z Social Media

1. Instagram
2. YouTube
3. Snap
4. Facebook
5. Twitter
6. Facebook Messenger
7. Pinterest
8. TikTok
9. Discord
10. Tumblr

Source: Business Insider survey

The lonely stress of spring transfer

What happens when you leave MCCC in December, not May

My Perspective



Bianca Martinez

For those who plan to graduate from Mercer with an Associate's degree, completion within two years may be your goal at first but isn't always realistic for a variety of reasons like inability to take summer classes or too many hours spent working.

Whether you end up at Mercer for one extra semester or three it's entirely possible that you will end up graduating in December rather than May, and it can often feel like you're the only one.

The spring transfer process happens every year, yet not a lot of information is available both online and on campus. When researching how to prepare for a transfer, there are countless articles out there geared towards those following the traditional pattern of entering in the fall but very little info for students transferring mid-year.

One thing that remains the same is the required paperwork. All students, no matter the semester, always have to submit their application, college transcripts, financial aid papers, etc. depending on the number of credits they've taken.

Due to this, some may argue that the time of year does

not matter, that the information provided in these articles can apply to both types of transfer students, but that's not really true. Spring transfers face specific issues.

Deadline dates are different. Some schools only accept for fall admission and admitted spring students can be ineligible for certain scholarships.

For example, Rowan University, a four-year public university located in Glassboro, NJ, has a specific scholarship titled as their Transfer Trustee Scholarship, with special consideration given to students from New Jersey's community colleges.

For this specific scholarship, as stated on their website, "Students entering during the spring term are not eligible for scholarships."

In addition, there's the stress of trying to finish class assignments during the fall semester while filling out these transfer applications. There is no summer break to make preparations for the next transition. The paperwork is the same, but has to be submitted in a short amount of time. Jumping to a new school mid-year is particularly intimidating.

Julia Nemec, a Communication Studies major at Mercer, says she believes there is definitely a time crunch.

"When you transfer in the fall, you have the entire summer to make arrangements for housing, with lots of time to plan out finances and apply for financial aid. For the spring there is more of a sense of urgency and deadlines approach quickly," Nemec says.

Laurene Jones, the Director of Transfer Services at

Mercer, says, "Well, it is true. You only have about three weeks or so in between semesters so it requires you to get things done a lot faster. So you finish here and you have to pick your classes and get school started..."

This feels especially true for community college transfer students, who may not be used to large four-year universities, for example.

If they are moving on campus, they need to know what to pack and which supplies to get. It is vastly different than being a commuter at Mercer.

Jones does recommend trying to find people within your major. It can make a student body of 15,000 feel as if it's been reduced down to just the people in your classes.

If you're the type of person comfortable in joining a club or organization, doing that can also enable you to find people like you due to shared interests.

Spring transfers need to feel assured in their choices and ready to move on. It can be hard if they feel rushed or underprepared. It can be why some students opt out of the decision.

Jones says, "For some people, they sometimes will say to me, 'I'm gonna wait for the fall just because I wanna start when most people start'...but that's not everybody."

In Nemec's case, she also has had doubts.

She states, "Spring transfers really only have the end of December and beginning of January to make big, important decisions about the next 2 years. Because of this extreme time crunch, I might have

to defer transferring until next fall. It's just not enough time to get everything sorted! But I'm trying my best to make it work."

There is also the question of graduation and leaving with a diploma. For those who finish their degree and transfer in the spring, they do not close the Mercer chapter in their life with a cap and gown ceremony in January.

Mercer does offer the option for spring graduates to participate in the commencement ceremony in May, but it is not required. For some students like myself, it can feel too detached once you're already at a new school.

Jones states, "I think that's a personal decision because you will have moved on, you'll be at another school and then you have to say, 'Well I wanna go back for my graduation,' so it's up to you if you think that that's an important thing to you...but a lot of students do go."

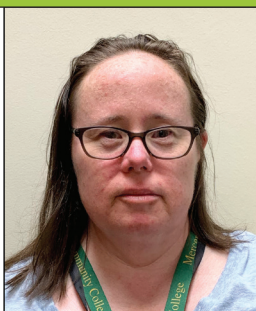
Nemec is also thinking about the decision she will have to make.

She says, "I am planning to come back for the big ceremony in the spring, but I'm not sure if it will be as impactful since I will already be studying at a new institution. I think my parents will want me to walk more for their own sake than mine."

The concept of transferring in the spring can seem daunting, but students should not have to feel as if they are the only ones going through it. Building a support system of family and friends can help, and contacting your school's transfer services as early as possible can help make the process easier.

What you should know about disability discrimination

LEARN FROM ME



Laurie Gallagher

Each month Laurie offers readers a lesson on an important topic from her unique perspective in our "Learn from Me" feature.

The word "ableism" means when people treat those with disabilities as if they are inferior and not worth as much in society. Like other "isms" including racism and sexism, ableism is harmful to our communities.

You can find ableism in plain sight, such as the way that people with disabilities are portrayed on TV. According to statistics from Shift, a group organized to change perspectives

and stigmas, "63% of references to mental health in TV soap operas and drama are pejorative flippant or unsympathetic."

In the article "Rethinking disability: the social model of disability and chronic disease" by Sara Goering, she explains that often times, people view non-disabled individuals as the standard of normal living. This results in building public and private places, education opportunities and social work programs to serve "standard" people, and excluding those with various disabilities. (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov).

It is true that there are laws that protect against overt discrimination in the workplace and in schools. Those laws came as a result of many people fighting in the Civil Rights movement.

But laws by themselves are not enough. Having one or two people in TV shows who have Down Syndrome like me, or use a wheelchair is not enough to change how people view us. That change has to come by people making the effort to look into themselves and see the human value in all of us.

Written with support from the staff of The College VOICE

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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, tone or clarity.

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ASK THE VOICE: GOOD ANSWERS TO TOUGH QUESTIONS



Help is here!

Dear VOICE,
Whenever I try to get to class I am always follwed by the same fox. I don't know if it's because of my lovely scent, or the way I walk, but it's always hard to push him awa. And tips on getting rid of foxes? -Foxy Lady

Dear Foxy,
It's important to listen. What does the fox say? -The VOICE

Dear VOICE,

I am in love, but my vocabulary isn't articulate enough. How do I write a love poem? -Lovesick Loser

Dear Loser,
Write from the hard. But try not to sound desperate. -The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
I have an allergy to beef, yet I walk past the school cafeteria every day. I'm in chronic anaphylactic shock. Help. -Allergic Beef Student

Dear Allergic,
You need an alternate route. It's true, the second floor of the student center is blocked off by construction, but

climbing through dangerous equipment sounds like it could be the best option for you. -The VOICE.

Dear VOICE,
I'm broke. My fanancial aid is running out. What can I do. -UnPennywise

Dear UnPennywise,
Go to the vending machines on campus and see if anyone left any change in them. It's better than nothing. -The VOICE

NOTE: THIS FEATURE IS FOR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES ONLY. ANY RESEMBLANCE TO ACTUAL PROBLEMS IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL.

HOROSCOPES



Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 19

This is one of your most ambitious months. You'll find yourself wanting to make goal after goal. You can handle all of this goal-setting, so continue to get as much done as possible.



Aquarius

Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Keep a close eye on those around you, you may have a secret enemy this month. Make sure you keep your guard up, they want what you have.



Pisces

Feb. 19 - Mar. 20

This month you'll be pulled even further into your emotional shell. Do your best to prioritize the important stuff and not fall into old habits.



Aries

Mar. 21 - Apr. 19
October is your month for relationships. The stars will align to allow your synergies to come together. It won't be on the spur of the moment, it's been on your mind.



Taurus

Apr. 20 - May 20

It's time to restore some order in your life! This is your month to focus on your well-being and get the things you want. Be selfish this month.



Gemini

May 21 - Jun. 20

This is gonna be an extra fun month for you. Take this time to bask in your playfulness. When your friends ask you to hang out, say yes! Enjoy the finer things in life.



Cancer

Jun. 21 - Jul. 22

This month will open a window for an exciting new relationship or project. Seize the moment and be ready to be more social in order to get the things you want.



Leo

Jul. 23 - Aug. 22

Your month is packed with social events. Set your inner social butterfly in flight and go with the flow of things. Just remember to make time for your other obligations.



Virgo

Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

Your love life went through the wringer last month. Try to see where you and your love interest align and where you don't.



Libra

Sept. 23 - Oct. 22

Your balance is out of wack this month with your busy schedule. Find something small to do every day to find stability, like meditation or reading.



Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

Take this month to rest. You're not being lazy. Keep your schedule light and do an activity that helps you find yourself spiritually.



Sagittarius

Nov. 22 - Dec. 21

Your month is extra social. Maybe throw a Halloween party and invite all of your friends over. Go to a social event and make more friends (if you have room for it).

2X DILBERT



SUDOKU

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	4			3	1			8
		2		6		4		
7			8					6

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

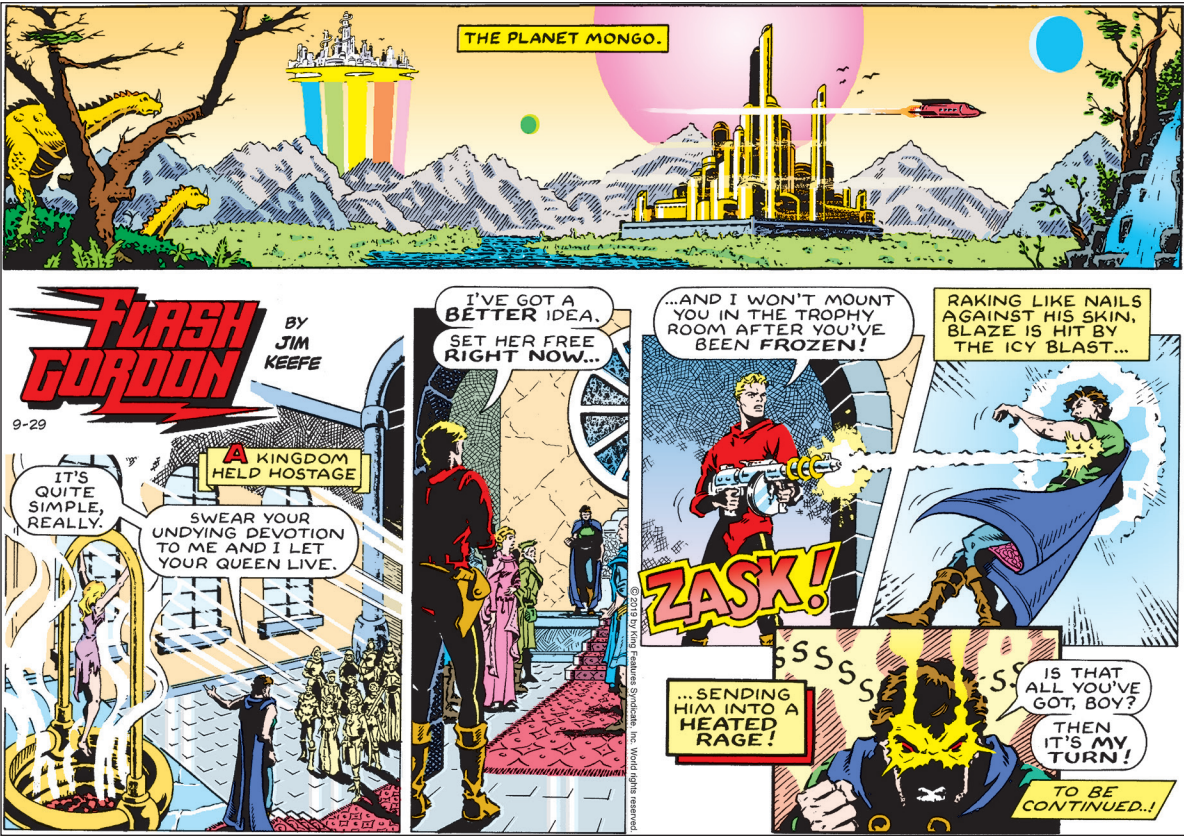
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

3	9	5	2	4	8	1	6	7
1	7	4	6	9	5	2	3	8
8	6	2	1	3	7	9	4	5
4	3	7	5	8	9	6	1	2
5	2	8	4	1	6	3	7	9
6	1	9	7	2	3	8	5	4
7	5	3	9	6	2	4	8	1
2	8	1	3	7	4	5	9	6
9	4	6	8	5	1	7	2	3

Answer

FLASH GORDON



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas

