



Chem lab doors repeatedly found open

Faculty say chronic problem with open labs poses danger



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | SAAD AHMED

By Saad Ahmed
Senior Reporter

Chemistry professors say they are concerned that labs are being consistently left unlocked after hours. They say the problem poses both safety and academic integrity problems.

According to Chemistry Professor Michael Dorneman, when labs are left open, “Anybody can walk in and take anything they like. It’s a Chemistry lab you have access to a wide variety of potentially very hazardous substances concentrated acids and bases and solvents highly flammable materials.”

Biology Professor Ellen Genovesi spoke about an incident that in the past she observed where she had set up the lab to conduct an in-class experiment during an evening class and left the experiment set for class the following day. She says she left the door locked,

Faculty members say they have found Chemistry labs in Mercer’s MS building open after hours and this makes potentially dangerous chemicals easily accessible.

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Students, faculty question dorm prospect

By Caitlin Oliver
Reporter

College president Dr. Jianping Wang has announced her plan to build dorms for MCCC, which has traditionally been a commuter only college, and says the goal is to provide housing to a variety of students including international students and athletes as well as students in specialized programs.

“We, the college, have some very unique programs like Funeral Service. Most community colleges in our region don’t offer them. They become very popular,” Dr. Wang says, adding that because students come far and wide to take these programs, they need housing.

According to Dr. Robert Schreyer, Mercer’s Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, who has been at Mercer since June 2016, the goal to build dorms has “been a major part of the President’s initiative.”

Starting in fall 2016 the college began using dorms at Rider University in Lawrenceville for off-site student housing.

Asked about the Rider dorm use, Dr. Wang said the Rider dorms are “not convenient enough.” To get to the Mercer campuses students still need to drive or are “dependent on shuttle, which is not very frequent.” She added, “Rider’s dorms are not modern. They were built years ago, 40 to 50 years.”

Dr. Wang’s vision for the new dorms is that they would be built on land the school already owns, possibly the area across from the Conference Center. The second and the third floor would be bedrooms and the first floor would be for food service including a variety of eateries such as a “pizzeria, Panera, Chipotle,” Wang says.



COLLEGE VOICE | FILE

In MCCC president Jianping Wang’s vision, the new dorms would have rooms on second and third floors and eateries such as Panera and Chipotle would be located on the first floor.

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President's dorms plans raise questions

According to the United States Department of Education, there are 1,047 public community colleges and approximately 12%, or 128, offer some form of housing on campus, though no community colleges in New Jersey do.

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Most community colleges with housing are in rural areas where commuting distances are long. Just one has a campus in a state capital, as Mercer does, and that is Community College of Laramie Wyoming in Cheyenne.

Tuition rates there are roughly 24% lower per credit than those at MCCC for in-state residents. For those students who elect to live on campus for the full academic year, the lowest housing rate available adds \$7,354 to the base rate tuition which is \$3,546 for two 12 credit semesters. This brings the annual tuition total to \$10,900 before factoring in books and student fees. The cost is considerably higher for international students.

Architectural plans have not yet been drawn up, however, as the college is still conducting student interest surveys. When those are complete, Dr. Wang says, the next step is to put out a request for proposals from design companies.

As for how much money it would cost to build the dorms, Dr. Wang says the dorm construction itself will be covered by P3, which stands for "Private Public Partnership." Because of this, she says, "it won't cost the college anything."

Dr. Wang also says that rent to live in dorms would be cheaper than market rate, "because the land is a public land."

According to the most recent numbers from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for the region, market rate for a one bedroom apartment is \$1,350 in West Windsor. This figure is supported by the Apartment Home Living rental site which currently lists rentals on Nottingham Way, five minutes from campus, at \$1,400 per month, utilities not included.

If Mercer's dorm rental was 30% less than market rate, annual costs would still come in above \$10,000, not including tuition.

Asked if a student financial aid or FAFSA would cover housing costs, Dr. Wang said that it would, but noted that the "maximum FAFSA award is \$6,000."

First year student King Kamara said, "The dorm is useless because it defeats the pur-

pose of Mercer County Community College. Community college is meant to be affordable." He added, "I pay out of pocket, therefore you increase the cost of the community college, I won't be able to pay."

Professor Alwyn Haywood, when asked for faculty perspective on the prospect of dorms said, "We're not against vision, but this seems to be very dictatorial. Students are our number one concern but this idea seems to be more focused on money-making. Of course, we need money to teach, we're not knocking that. The question is, how do we go about making our money?"

Asked about the logistical issues of housing students, Dr. Wang said the college is not required to hire any additional security, health care or any resident assistants for dorms.

The developers would be responsible for "anything that happens in the compound," Dr. Wang said, adding, "college security will continue to patrol the road."

Professor of Communication Dylan Wolfe says he is not anti-student housing, but he's not confident that Mercer would not be held accountable for any problems that could happen with these dorms.

"There are questions of liability and management. I would want those answered before I could make a determination [about the value of having dorms]," Wolfe said.

According to Dr. Diane Campbell, the Vice President for Student Affairs historically, community colleges have not offered housing. But, she says,

"Now that's begun to change. There are a lot of community colleges that now offer housing for students."

According to the United States Department of Education, there are 1,047 public community colleges and approximately 12%, or 128, offer some form of housing on campus, though no community colleges in New Jersey do. Most community colleges with housing are in rural areas where commuting distances are long.

Communication Professor Alwyn Haywood said of the possibility of having dorms, "It would seem to me that it moves us from being a community college into something else, and I don't know what that something else is."

Although surveys of students are being gathered according to both Dr. Wang and Dr. Campbell, faculty say they have not had a specific opportunity to weigh in on the project.

"The president is supposed to, at minimum consult with and gain input from all parts of the college community, which includes faculty and staff, as well as students. There has been no such consultation. There has been no system of input just a system of output from the top down," Professor Wolfe said.

As for whether or not he thinks the project will come to fruition, Professor Haywood said, "As it looks right now unless the Board objects to how rapidly she moves, there's a chance that [Dr. Wang] might be able to accomplish this."

Women Entrepreneurship Week celebrated

By Thomas Lillja
Reporter

For the first time, Mercer celebrated Women Entrepreneurship Week on October 23. The college hosted a panel comprised of female entrepreneurs including Brittany Johnson, the owner and founder of the cosmetic company Eyes Ink, Chaya Pamula, the President and CEO of the IT company PamTen and SHETEK, Esther Tanz, Founder of ESTIR Inc. Insurance, and Denise Taylor, CEO and Founder of Diverse Style.

During the discussion, the entrepreneurs spoke to attendees about their struggles in the workforce and gave advice about starting and running businesses.

When asked as to why she spoke at the event, Pamula said that "I am really passionate about empowering women and girls, especially with my own story, where I really pushed myself to be where I am today, and I believe that if I can do it, everyone else can too...it's really important to provide those opportunities...for women and girls."

One student attendee, Zhanaubrie Spotwood, a health and science major, said, "one thing that stood out to me [during the panel] was the [entrepreneurs promoting] passion." For example, she continued, "They said [that] if you don't have passion and you're just doing it for money, then it's not gonna get you that far."

Women Entrepreneurship Week is the creation of Sharon Waters, the Program Manager for the Feliciano Center at Montclair State University. Waters says she created the event in 2014 because "The Feliciano Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation has a special mission to serve women entrepreneurs. As part of that mission, we decided to have 'an event' focused on female founders."

Waters also notes how when she did an online search for a week-long celebration for women entrepreneurs, she could not find any.

Now in its sixth year, Women Entrepreneurship Week was celebrated from the 21 to the 25 of October by 240 institutions in 32 countries. Waters intends

on expanding the event to more schools and people around the world in years to come.

Waters says that Mercer is also the first community college in New Jersey and the third community college in the nation to participate.

Women Entrepreneurship Week was brought to Mercer by President Dr. Jianping Wang and Project Manager Jill Marcus.

Marcus says that Mercer is hoping to celebrate Women Entrepreneurship Week next year and that workshops are organized along with discussion panels for future celebrations.

At Mercer's event, the discussion was followed by light refreshments and a meet-and-greet in the Communication building. A second event was held at the James Kerney campus on October 24.

Student attendee Spotwood said, "Men can sell themselves to the highest extent, but women sometimes downplay ourselves...we should always be confident in what we do no matter what."



PHOTO | THOMAS LILLJA

Esther Tanz (Left) and Brittany Johnson (right) were to local business owners who spoke at the Women Entrepreneurship Week panel held on MCCC's West Windsor campus on October 23, 2019.

Catchy performance of *Catch Me if You Can*



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PENNINGTON PLAYERS

The ensemble from *Catch Me if You Can* perform a high energy dance number with Scott Silagy playing the lead of Frank Abagnale Jr.

By **Melissa Reyes**
Reporter

The latest production at Kelsey Theater on MCCC's West Windsor campus, was the musical comedy, *Catch Me If You Can* presented by The Pennington Players.

Based on a true story, the play centers around a young man, Frank Abagnale, Jr., who uses his winning personality to scam his way into various identities which he uses to gain both prestige and money. He impersonates a pilot, a lawyer, and a doctor without ever stepping foot in the proper school for any of these practices.

The lively and entertaining production was directed by Laurie Gougher who has been a musical director for various productions at Kelsey Theatre and has performed in some.

She explains her vision for the show saying, "It should feel like a show within a show. Frank is telling his story to the audience in real-time."

The production begins by grabbing the audience's attention with a busy ensemble, hustling, and bustling at a train station in which Frank is attempting to escape from FBI detectives. Once caught he pleads with the detectives to tell let him tell his side of the story. He is essentially telling it to the audience.

The interaction between the performers and the audience is what Gougher explains is the importance of live theater versus other forms of entertainment.

She says, "It's important to experience something. First of all, there's the connection. When you're watching TV they don't hear you, they can't see you, they can't feel your energy. There's a real connection between the au-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PENNINGTON PLAYERS

FBI Agents work to catch con artist Frank Abagnale Jr. in Pennington Players production of *Catch Me if You Can*.

"When you're watching TV they don't hear you, they can't see you, they can't feel your energy. There's a real connection between the audience and the performers when you're seeing a show live. And there's that excitement of never knowing what's going to happen.... No two performances are exactly the same."

- Laurie Gougher, Director

dience and the performers when you're seeing a show live. And there's that excitement of never knowing what's going to happen. No two performances are exactly the same."

Live theater leaves room for surprises, one of which came after the first few scenes of the Sunday, October 27 show when a voice-over asked for the audience's patience as the lights went up and EMTs came in to take get an older audience member who had taken ill.

Despite the interruption, the show went on. The performers kept their focus and energy high and got the audience

reengaged despite the break in the middle of the scene.

Frank went on to describe his dream for excitement and a better life for him and his family. Frank's relationship with his father is central and we can see how it leads him into some of his choices.

The spectacle of energetic dance numbers and songs, combined with a live band kept the pace moving, but the larger themes of how father figures and male role models can influence a person's life gave the show its center.

Frank ultimately ends up developing a kind of relation-

ship with the detective, Agent Carl Hanratty, who is investigating him and determined to catch him.

Scott Silagy, a first-semester student at MCCC, plays Frank Abagnale. This is Silagy's first performance at Kelsey. He says one of the highlights of the show was the other people he got to work with.

He said of his co-star, Thomas "TC" Coppolecchia, who plays Agent Carl Hanratty, "TC was great...he made sure I was ready to do anything."

The chemistry between the two characters is brought to life by the performers in an intriguing way. Agent Hanratty understands that Frank is just a boy making some bad choices. He's determined to catch Frank, but there is a kind of sympathy there and in the end, he's the one who gives Frank an actual role in life, realizing he can be a great asset to the FBI in helping prevent frauds and scams.

Coppolecchia, who has had many other roles on stage says of his experience, "It's an escape from reality...It's nice for a couple of hours to just sit there, just let it all go."

The show concludes back at the first scene in the train station in which Frank is caught by Agent Hanratty and then the busy crowd slowly fades away leaving only the two main characters on stage telling the story of the real Frank Abagnale Jr.

They explain how he went on to work with the FBI to catch scammers and investigate fraud, then opening up his own security company.

From the cast to the production team, to the orchestra, to even the audience members, the show definitely created a riveting world to be a part of for a few hours.

Source of open chemistry lab doors remains unclear

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but the next morning when she came in to teach her morning class the lab door was left open.

She says, "We set up our lab practical exams and a lot of the labs connect together, so if a student was here in the evening and it was unlocked they could go in and see all the questions. They could take pictures of all the exam questions. And that's definitely an academic integrity concern if it's left unlocked."

As far as how the doors get unlocked, Professor Genovesi says, "Perhaps, the cleaning staff when they come in and empty the garbage leave it unlocked. There needs to be someone at the end of the shift to ensure that the doors are all locked."

Bryon Marshall the director of Facilities, College Safety, and Security says of the cleaning staff, "It's an outside company. They pour in here anywhere from 10-11 o'clock at night and all through the night and they open everything, so putting it all back together is a bit of a puzzle." He says, however, that security officers do keep track of the cleaning staff and ensure things are locked up.

Marshall says the problem may lie elsewhere.

"A lot of folks have their own key, which is problematic because we'll find out that a TA will open a room and we'll get told 'a room is open!' and then we find out it was one of the teaching assistants who was in there."

Professor Dorneman says that the possibility that a door is being left open by a student or faculty member is highly unlikely.

"We spend a significant amount of time in the first lab period laying down the rules and fully restating them and following up every single lab period. The students know that they don't go in the lab unless there's an instructor in the lab, and they don't."

As far as teaching assistants, Professor Dorneman adds, "All the faculty and the student assistants are trained thoroughly and told explicitly make sure the doors are locked when you leave."

Two cleaning employees were asked about the issue. They declined to be named but one said they do their job correctly. Their company ABM did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

DeLorenzo's Tomato Pies: running on tradition

By Brent Grocott
Reporter

Alexander "Chick" De Lorenzo was born in 1922, as one of twelve children to Pasquale and Maria De Lorenzo who immigrated from Southern Italy in the early 1900s.

In 1947 Chick decided it was time for a place of his own and he established 'DeLorenzo's Tomato Pies' at 530 Hudson Street, also known as "DeLo's" for short.

Chick is a U.S. Army Veteran of World War II and with his late wife Sophie, he owned and operated the DeLorenzo's on Hudson Street in Trenton for 50 years before he retired and gave the restaurant to his daughter and son in law, Eileen and Gary Amico.

Sam Amico is the grandson of the original owner Chick De Lorenzo. He opened the Robbinsville location in late 2007. This new location opened soon after Chick passed away in September of the same year.

It operated simultaneously with the Hudson Street location until early 2012 when his parents, Gary and Eileen, decided to retire and close the doors for good. Amico says a need for a second restaurant was the reason for the Robbinsville establishment opening.

"We were in a position

where we knew we had the room and resources to expand so we figured why not," says Amico.

He continues, "We just felt like we were popular and could be making a bigger killing. We expanded to Robbinsville because it was in proximity, and it has paid off. I became the owner here and my parents continued running the Hudson Street location until it closed in 2007."

When you enter the restaurant, you notice the reiteration of the name. 'DeLorenzo's Tomato Pies' is printed on every single pizza box as well as the walls and doors. There are booths and tables that face the kitchen, normally filled with large families. The kitchen and pizza counter overlook the dining room, giving the guest the ability to watch their pizza or salad as it's made.

Wanting to make his grandfather proud, Amico and the rest of the DeLorenzo's team are big on keeping that Italian tradition remnant in their restaurant. Amico made it a point that the way the staff dresses is very important as well.

He says, "The staff and management always dress in a button-down shirt with a black tie and dress pants. This is how the pizza makers at the original store on Hudson Street made it. At the Robbinsville location, bussers wear a white button-down and black tie, waiters wear

the same thing with a black vest on top, and pizza makers just wear a plain white shirt. We always want to look clean, never sloppy."

Pizza-maker and bussier, Luke Young, who has worked at DeLorenzo's for two years explained the tradition of cutting the pizza into squares and rectangles instead of regular slices.

"We cut the pizza into shapes, vertically, because that's been a tradition since the first restaurant opened in 1947. It's cut with a normal knife rather than a pizza cutter," says Young.

At the location in Robbinsville, customers will get these square or rectangular pieces of pizza. Some pieces have no crust and are only part of the pie as they are cut from the middle. Some have crusts on one or two sides. This is something that no other local pizza place around does and will never change at DeLorenzo's because it is a tradition that has been there since the beginning.

"The oddest part about the tradition is that we really don't have an explanation for it," Amico says, adding, "When the first DeLorenzo's opened, and my grandfather needed to start cutting pizzas all he had was a knife. It worked in the beginning, so we just continued with it."

Jack Bell, 75, a resident of Robbinsville, says he tries to



PHOTO | BRENT GROCCOTT

Gary Amico, his son Sam Amico and cook Matthew Longo.

make it into DeLo's at least once a week. He likes the old-fashioned ambiance he says.

"I've been going to the same restaurant ever since I was

a little kid...I remember going to the first DeLo's, on Hudson Street when I was a kid in the 1960s. This place takes me right back there, puts me right at the table with my parents and brother."



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House of Cupcakes serves up seasonal sensations

By Aaliyah Patel
Reporter

House of Cupcakes, located on Witherspoon Street in Princeton is owned by Ruth and Ron Bzdewka. They are known for having won the prestigious Food Network competition show “Cupcake Wars” in 2011, and receiving the \$10,000 grand prize after producing a 1,000 cupcake display in the finale. Since then, the business has expanded and Princeton is now one of four locations with business ventures expanding as far as Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Ruth Bzdewka says that “Variety, locations, and good products” are some of the reasons why House of Cupcakes is different from other traditional bakeries.

The range of cupcakes exceeds over 35 flavors, with signature cupcakes priced at \$2.95 each. For a ½ dozen, it costs \$14.95. For quantities of 100 or more, it costs \$2.50 each.

Alondra Avalos, a House of Cupcakes employee, says that they change up the menu to add seasonal

cupcake flavors.

“Pumpkin spice is currently already out and I’m pretty sure that we do something different for December,” she said.

Other seasonal cupcakes include caramel apple and maple walnut. As December approaches, there will be additional festive flavors appearing on the menu.

She adds that “Everything is made daily.” However due to the lengthy process, “The only thing that is not made daily is the sugar cookies because those need to be dried out.”

Entering the shop patrons will see a menu displayed on a television monitor screen above the colorful cupcake display, listing all of the items.

Alongside cupcakes, there are other items such as cookie favors starting at \$3.99, individual gourmet donuts for \$2.00, and drinks such as coffee and tea starting at \$2.49.

One of the stand-out flavors is the signature red velvet cupcake with whipped cream cheese frosting. Another favorite is the peanut butter cup which



Cupcake variety pack from House of Cupcakes in Princeton.

PHOTO | AALIYAH PATEL

includes a peanut butter buttercream topped with broken pieces of peanut butter cups.

Fiona Weber, a Nursing major at Mercer says, “They have so many flavors that are different than the usual cupcake flavors and they’re really good. The best ones I’ve had are salted caramel and chocolate chip

cookie dough.”

Ruth Bzdewka notes that the bakery has options such as “gluten-free and vegan cupcakes.”

Maryam Mansoor, a Biology and Psychology major attending both TCNJ and Mercer says that “They are very delectable desserts.”

The shop accommodates customers with plenty

of comfortable seating options indoors, however, most customers tend to grab their items and go, as the bakery tends to fill up quickly with lines that reach the door.

House of Cupcakes is open Sunday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Italian Villa offers comfort food and warm service

Loyal customers stick with mom and pop business even after a move

By Andrea Barratt
Reporter

Italian Villa restaurant in Cream Ridge, is owned by mom and pop team Biagio and Raffaella Scotto, or “Benny” and “Mama Scotto” as customers refer to them.

Operating a successful restaurant is nothing new to these energetic owners. Their previous restaurant, Romeo’s, was located in Fort Dix, N.J. Eventually, they sold it because they wanted a less hectic schedule and more family time.

However, after a few years of retirement, Benny says they were missing the hustle and bustle of running a restaurant.

They purchased the Italian Villa restaurant and customers from the old establishment followed them.

The familiar and comforting aromas of garlic, basil and thyme fill the air with the warmth from the pizza oven embracing you as you enter the restaurant.

Dominic Tesar, a customer before he joined the staff as a server says, “I

love the food and everyone is so nice here. Raffaella and Benny are really understanding and they work with you.”

The smell of pizza hot out of the oven on a cool afternoon is irresistible. The thin crust slice, when folded in half, retains its shape and integrity. The cheese and sauce do not pool into a messy clump on the plate.

One of their best sellers at the restaurant is fresh, homemade pasta. Benny cranks out six different types for their weekly specials. There is a wide variety to choose from, with the most popular choice being the Vodka Rigatoni.

Benny explains they have added whole wheat pasta and some gluten-free options to the menu, too, like a cauliflower pizza crust.

He says, “We want to make our customers happy, so we try to accommodate their special needs.”

Lucia Scotto, the owners’ daughter who also works as a server says, “That’s the advantage of cooking everything from scratch, you can customize it. Nothing is

frozen, we use fresh, quality ingredients for our dishes.”

Vidwatee Sewdass, a customer from Princeton, NJ, says she makes the 45-minute drive to the restaurant regularly.

Sewdass says it’s worth it for, “Really good Italian food and better than homemade desserts.”

The owners and staff work to create an atmosphere that lives up to the motto emblazoned on their T-shirt, “Come as friends, leave as family.” They greet folks with a friendly hello and a welcoming wave on the way in.

The restaurant area can seat up to 40 patrons in the dining room, with an additional five seats at the countertops. Weather permitting, guests can sit on the patio and enjoy takeout.

Located on 445 Route 539, Cream Ridge, New Jersey, Italian Villa is minutes away from the Jackson Outlets and Six Flags Great Adventure theme park. They are open Monday to Saturday from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 9 p.m.



PHOTO | ANDREA BARRATT

Benny and Raffaella Scotto, owners of Italian Villa in Cream Ridge, NJ.

Mercer addresses student **HUNGER** *with food pantry*

By Justin Willever
Senior Reporter

In a recent food access survey of 50 Mercer students, half reported that they had gone hungry because they didn't have money for food and 41% said they had qualified for state or federal food assistance programs.

The cost of student hunger is greater than just discomfort. A bill introduced in the NJ state Assembly on October 18, 2018 that expands student access to food stamps reads, "Food insecurity carries serious consequences for student success. In one study, the majority of students experiencing food insecurity reported missing classes and study sessions, and not buying required textbooks.

Hunger also impairs cognitive development into adolescence and adulthood, leading to poorer test scores and the inability to fully engage in classes."

A year ago The VOICE learned that the college aimed to help hungry students by establishing food pantries on both campuses, but information about where the pantries were located or if they even existed was conflicting.

Now, however, there are signs on bulletin boards reading "Help fight hunger on campus!" and announcing the opening of a Pantry on the Kerney campus in Trenton in Room KC403.

According to Bryan O'Neal who is Assistant to the Dean at the James Kerney Campus, the food pantry "should be up and running in two weeks...we will be opening up right before Thanksgiving".

The food pantry well on its way. It already contains items like Cup O' Noodles and cans of beans and is almost ready to be open.

As to how the food pantry will be stocked, it is currently up to the generosity of people who can afford to help.

Dr. Diane Campbell, Vice President of Student Affairs says the way to get food for the pantry will be through donations. She says "we will have a holiday party and as a part of coming to the holiday party, we will ask people to bring food donations."

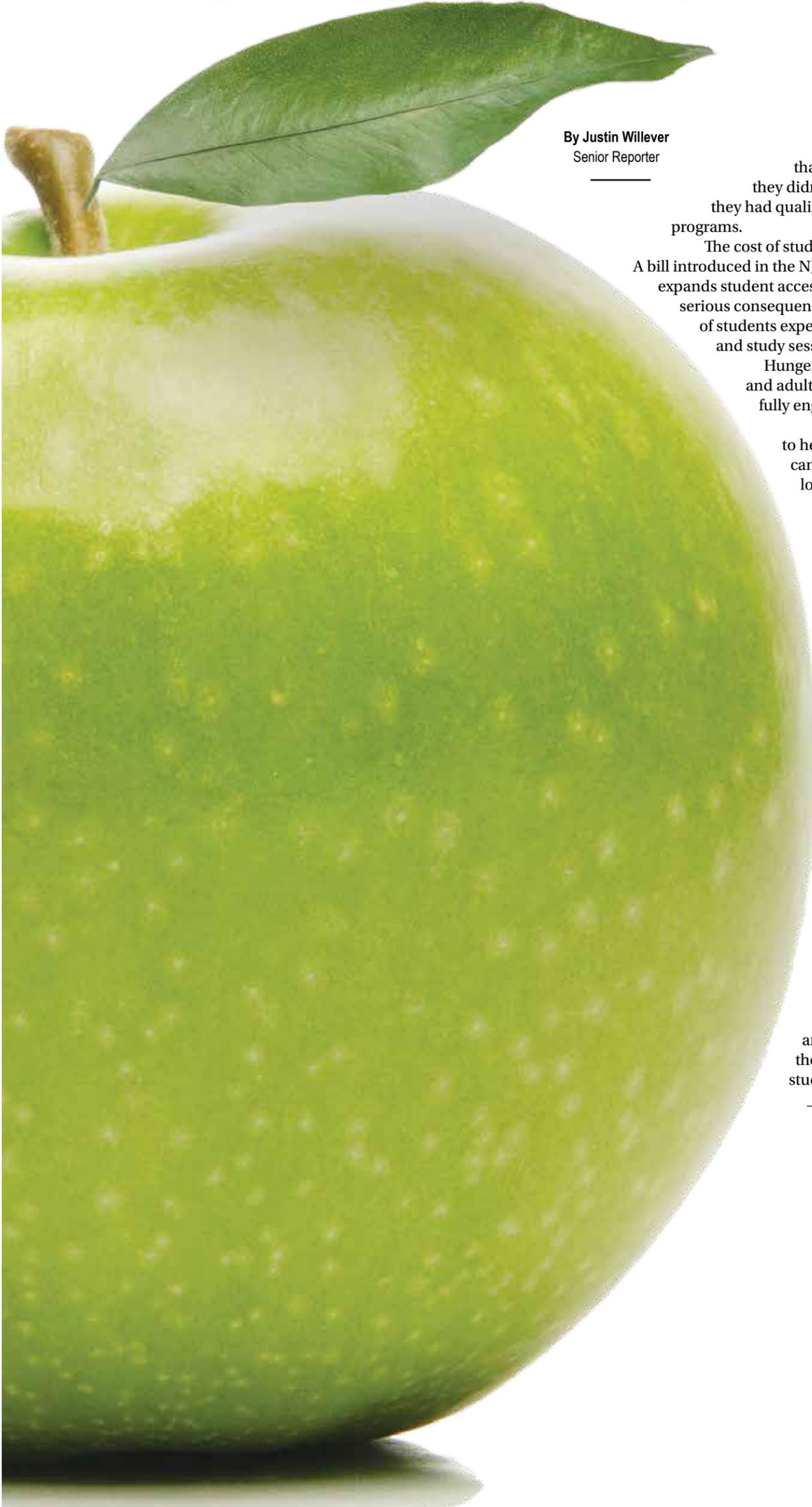
In a flyer that was created by the school, they mention what types of food and supplies are needed. Nonperishable items are key. They mention needing oatmeal, fruit cups, peanut butter, and toiletries among other things.

Dr. Wang and Dr. Campbell say the only requirement for a student to receive help from the food pantry is that they be hungry. However, a form has also been created that asks for information such as a student identification number, address, and whether the student receives government benefits such as SNAP (food stamps).

Jennifer Famularo who asked for food support in the past and was given some direct help, says "when times were rough, the college was able to provide some food so I could continue to study."

**INFOGRAPH Statistical information is drawn from two surveys conducted by The VOICE in 2019. The first analyzed self-reported data from 50 current students on the West Windsor campus. The second had 30 student respondents from each of the two campuses.*

50%



0% of Mercer students have gone hungry because they didn't have money for food*

The college has prepared information sheets about what the Food Pantry contains, a sign up for students requesting food, and a flyer describing how people can donate.

Food Pantry Information Documents Available
 Find pdf versions of these documents at The VOICE website mcccvoice.org/hunger



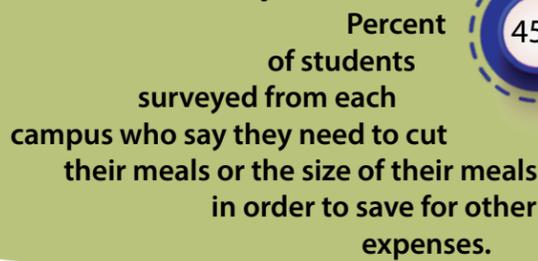
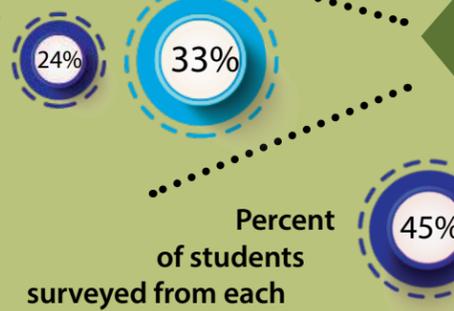
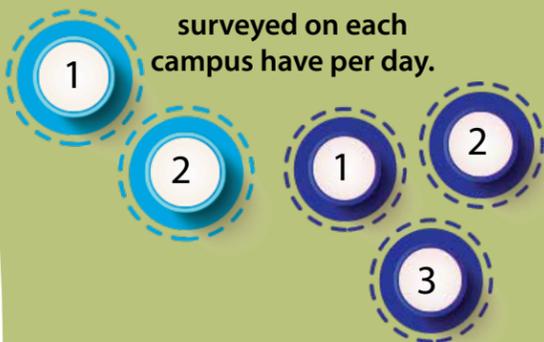
Comparing Campuses

Average number of meals students surveyed on each campus have per day.

Students on Mercer's Trenton campus are facing higher levels of food insecurity. Percent of students surveyed from each campus who report that they receive state or federal food assistance.

Percent of students surveyed from each campus who say they worry that they might run out of food before they get more money.

Students at Mercer's Trenton campus are facing higher levels of food insecurity*



● West Windsor
 ● Trenton



Mercer's new food pantry is located in KC403

41% of Mercer students have qualified for food stamps*

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Men's Lacrosse looks to build on first year success



Now in its second year, MCCC men's lacrosse team seeks to duplicate 2018 success.

PHOTO COURTESY OF EVAN MCGOVERN



PHOTO COURTESY OF EVAN MCGOVERN

MCCC's 2019 men's lacrosse team prepare for a game.

By **Tori Pender**
Senior Reporter

The Mercer County Community College Men's Lacrosse team is preparing to pick up where it left off last season. In its first year the Vikings were Region IX champions. They had a season record of 10-6, good enough to earn entrance to the NJCAA Lacrosse Tour-

namment where they finally fell 32-3.

Head coach, Rob Siris, a chairman of the U.S. Lacrosse Central New Jersey stated, "The success is attainable again. The previous season had a lot of success so, [we're] handling teams who want to beat us and rising to that level."

With 20 returning sophomore

"Even with freshman on the college field for the first time, the coaching staff did a great job implementing all the new rules."

- Sophomore, Evan Janiec

players and 20 freshmen, Siris says, "We have acclimated players, which helps [this season]."

In preparation for their second season, the team has

already played five exhibition games and scrimmages.

Mercer Athletic Director John Simone said, "Hopefully the team will do as well as they did last year and win the regional championship and advance to the national tournament like they did last year."

Sophomore defensive player Evan Janiec says,

"The same mistakes weren't made from last year, Coach has really preached on moving the ball faster. Even with freshman on the college field for the first time, the coaching staff did a great job implementing all the new rules."

Sophomore midfielder, Jake Filor says now that finding

out how to win was figured out last year, it is all about perfecting the way the team plays.

The option of establishing a women's lacrosse team at Mercer has been considered, but right now the focus is on women's tennis and cross country, according to Simone.

PROFILE: Team captain Jaimie Ervin motivates new players

By **Chiara Tramo**
& Staff of The College VOICE

Jaimie Ervin has made it her goal to keep soccer a part of her life as long as she can. In her childhood, Ervin played on multiple travel and recreational teams, allowing her to expand her talent on the field. Ervin's previous teams include the Ewing Hurricanes and MFC, along with Fisher Middle School and Ewing High School's team.

As a freshman, Ervin scored 25 of Mercer's 30 goals and was selected for the All-Region first team.

Ervin has a total of 18 goals out of the nine games played in the 2019 season so far and she is striving for more as she is also the captain of the team.

Mercer wom-

en's soccer team assistant coach Karissa Estelle says Ervin is a "versatile player who can play with anybody and is a player that just lifts you up on and off the field."

Estelle says she is lucky to have played with Ervin on the field last year before becoming a coach because she knows how Jaimie played with her and how she plays with others.

Ervin stated "we are a whole new team. We've been in it since day one and since the first game we've been ready to play."

Ervin not only wants the best for herself but also the best for the women who play with her.

Player Gianna Gollinge says about



High scorer Jaimie Ervin on the soccer field at Mercer.

COLLEGE VOICE FILE PHOTO

her team "we all come from different areas, we have international players so I feel like the chemistry is so much more important before we even get on that

field."

The bond this team has built is evident when they take the field.

"We communicate well, we are always

together and practicing so when we are in a game we make good passes," says teammate Isabella Morales.

As Estelle watches her team

form, she gives props to Ervin for stepping up as captain and encouraging the other players in a way that helped make the team like a family.



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First, I had to save my own life

After a marriage at 18 and divorce at 21, college seemed impossible

By Melissa Reyes
Reporter

At 18 I married my first true love that I had been with since I was 15. Being raised Pentecostal Christian had engraved in me that having sex outside of marriage was wrong, and since I was already having sex, getting married was what seemed like the logical thing to do.

The moment I graduated high school, I knew that I wanted to go to college. I made sure it was known to my husband at the time that yes, I was going to be a wife, but I was still going to be a college student. I had so much excitement and drive during my first semester at MCCC and was an "A" student.

However, as the responsibilities of a household piled on once my ex-husband lost his job, I no longer thought of school as something to focus on or be grateful for. Instead, it felt as though college was just getting in the way of my "real" life. I began to withdraw from classes and even fail classes. My GPA tanked. I lost my financial aid.

At 22, when most students are getting ready for their college graduation, I was barely holding on to the dream of completing even one class at community college.

After many attempts to pass English 102, I figured it was time to take a break and let go of my college dream.

During the time after my divorce, I quickly lost myself in another relationship. This relationship became abusive and started a cycle I struggled to get out of for several years.

One night, while crying myself to sleep, because I felt scared to leave his house, I realized I had to make a drastic choice.

I went to a therapist. Although I had previously been in therapy, this time was different. I realized the biggest issue I was facing was that I did not love and value myself. So, I made a choice to start loving myself and life again. I wasn't sure exactly what that meant, but I started making small changes to create a new environment that I could be proud of.

I chose to be open to meeting new people and doing different things. I stepped outside of my comfort zone and went to a concert with people I didn't really know, which led me to sign up at a gym with a personal trainer. I began wak-

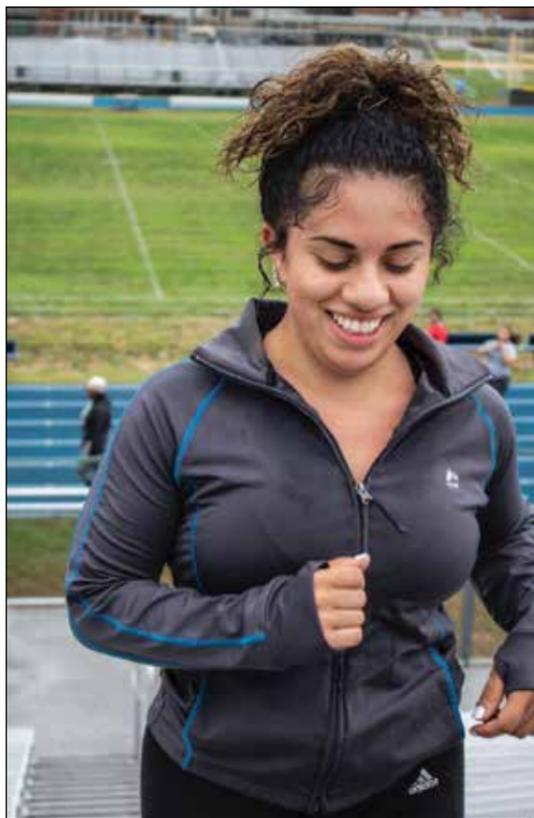


PHOTO COURTESY OF ADAM KHALIFA



ABOVE: Melissa Reyes in high school, 2009.
LEFT: Melissa Reyes completing a bleachers run in 2019 #BleacherswithBwiddy.

At 22, when most students are getting ready for their college graduation, I was barely holding on to the dream of completing even just one class at community college.

ing up earlier. I learned about meditation.

All of these small changes started to fill my mind with more positivity. I added daily meditations.

Even when I did not truly feel it or believe it, I learned to tell myself, "I love you and you are perfect because you are alive in this moment."

Throughout all this, that high school dream of earning a degree still lingered. I realized that I had to return to school in order to fulfill that dream and grow that self-love.

So I set that intention in my heart as a new year's resolution in 2019.

Coming back to school at the age of 25, post-divorce and post an abusive relationship, while dealing with anxiety, was one of the scariest choices I have ever made. I had to face my fears and past failures head-on.

Now, I was not part of the "traditionally" aged population of college students. I was so insecure because of all the

years that had gone by after graduating high school, combined with the truth of my GPA and withdrawals and fails on my transcript. The voice in my head filled me with self-doubt.

I had no idea how I would pay for school, or what I would even study for. I thought I had too many bills to have a crazy dream, that I needed to be realistic, maybe go to a trade school or earn some type of certification to help me grow in my job as an administrative assistant.

There was no real plan. I had learned before that my plans didn't always turn out as I hoped.

But as I kept up my fitness, meditation, and personal development, I slowly began to develop confidence again and decided to sign up for a class that had defeated me so many times, English 102.

Walking across campus this past August, I felt as though I was seeing MCCC for the first time. I was so grateful to be walking into a classroom

again that I got there early and sat right in front of the class, which was the total opposite of what I would have done at 18 or 19 years old.

Another student, Laura Hernandez, who was 27 when she came back to Mercer to study Education, told me "I was scared...I was just scared of having to be committed."

This was the same fear I felt when I registered for my class. However, in the midst of my anxiety and my self-doubt, I had a whole new focus and drive and knew I had to do things differently this time.

Melissa Rosen, a former Mercer student, who came back to college at 30, is now in graduate school at Temple University and explains that being an older student, "You take it more seriously, you focus more, it's not something that you feel you HAVE to do. It comes as a priority and it goes to the top of your to-do list...I wish I was more focused when I was at 19, but I was just not."

Talking to other students who have gone through it has helped a lot. I recognize myself in their own descriptions of anxiety and of determination.

I realize I am who I am now, and I know what I know now, because I am older and have learned to view things in a different way through the lessons I gained after high school.

College for me now isn't just something I feel is the next step, it is my redemption and hope, for which I am so grateful.

CORRECTIONS

The VOICE didn't actually receive any requests for factual corrections for our last issue in May 2019. But we take facts very seriously, so if you see a factual error let us know so we can fix it promptly.

VOICE ONLINE



Find us online at mcccvoice.org

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, tone or clarity.

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ASK THE VOICE: GOOD ANSWERS TO TOUGH QUESTIONS



Help is here!

my homework. Should I drop out?
-Milk Bone Essays

Dear Milk Bone Essays, Have you considered changing majors? The hospitality program allows you to eat your homework. That could keep Fido happy.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE, I'm a professor and I'm broke. I'm thinking of starting a meth lab on campus. Location suggestions?
-Walter White

Dear Professor White, Honestly, I think we already have one. Check for open classroom doors.
-The VOICE.

Dear VOICE, What kind of bear is best.
-Fozzy Lover

Dear Fozzy Lover, Obviously Smokey. He gets lit.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE, I left my flash drive in the AD lab. Have you seen it?
-Missing Homework

Dear Missing, You think you are ever going to see it again?
☹️☹️☹️
-The VOICE

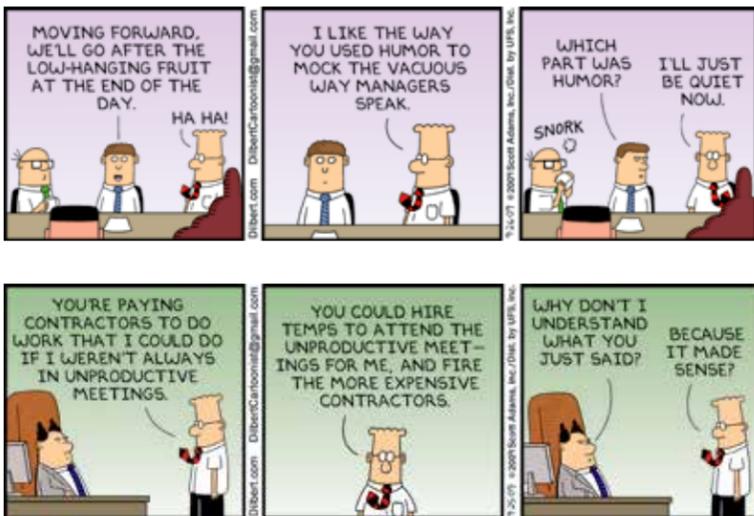
NOTE: THIS FEATURE IS FOR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES ONLY. ANY RESEMBLANCE TO ACTUAL PROBLEMS IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL.

Dear VOICE, So, I'm not doing well in my classes and the withdrawal deadline is coming fast. What should I do? Withdraw now or try harder to get passing grades.
-Hoping for a C

Dear Hoping for a C, The answer lies in your financial aid status. Try harder.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE, My dog keeps eating

2X DILBERT



HOROSCOPES



Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 19
It's starting to feel like nobody cares. They care about you but may be less interested in the things going on in your life. Try not to take it personally.



Aquarius

Jan. 20 - Feb. 18
Someone is leaving you hanging and stress is making you crazy. You can't make the world turn faster, so you have to slow your mind down. Sometimes a mindless phone game works.



Pisces

Feb. 19 - Mar. 20
When was the last time you took some time for your self? This month you need to get a little peace and quiet even if it means turning down a social invitation.



Aries

Mar. 21 - Apr. 19
Just when you think you have everything under control some new crisis hits. Your desire to control the universe will only undermine you this month. You have to let go.



Taurus

Apr. 20 - May 20
Everybody wants to rule the world, but if Donald Trump can't, neither can you. You'll have to settle for ruling your own little corner of it. Time to step up and take charge.



Gemini

May 21 - Jun. 20
Someone unusual drops by mid month and offers to help you with something. As independent as you always are, you may be tempted to say no. Fight the urge!



Cancer

Jun. 21 - Jul. 22
A long time ago a wise woman said "free your mind and the rest will follow." This is true for you right now. Time to change your mind set so you can be free.



Leo

Jul. 23 - Aug. 22
What's the last thing you remember about being a kid, before all the adult responsibilities? It's time to connect back to the things of youth. They will bring you new energy.



Virgo

Aug. 23 - Sept. 22
Some really good new streaming and TV shows are about to start. Save them for a special treat for after the semester is over.



Libra

Sept. 23 - Oct. 22
Procrastinate much? Although you've been known to manage your time, lately things have been starting to slide. It's more exhaustion than laziness. Take a day off.



Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
You are preparing for a major life change and you're not always crazy about changes. Trust the people around you to be there for you and support you through this.



Sagittarius

Nov. 22 - Dec. 21
Just once it would be nice if someone acknowledged all you do. Well, guess what? Finally someone will. It may be subtle, but that affirmation you need is coming for you.

SUDOKU

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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!

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

Answer

FLASH GORDON



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas

