



September 28, 2020
Volume 51, Issue 1
“POST TENEBRAS LUX”

The student press of Mercer County Community College since 1968

For students returning to campus, a fall like no other

College president says health comes ahead of all other concerns

By **Serena Bolitho**
Senior Reporter

Roughly 10-15 percent of MCCC’s currently enrolled 6,200 students have returned to campus for classes either full time or in a hybrid format this fall according to the admissions office.

The primary classes being offered include lab sciences, nursing, hospitality, aviation, and funeral services which fits with the official restart plan the college released back in early May.

In fact, “Mercer was the very first higher education institution in the state of New Jersey to submit a comprehensive plan” said President Dr. Wang.

According to John Simone, Assistant Dean of Students and a co-leader of the reopening task force, while enrollment “is about 16 percent down from where it was last year, that is not too bad as other colleges are reporting 30-40 percent down.”

That statistic is also expected to decrease as the college’s ten and seven week courses begin. Simone reports the college anticipated enrollment would be down 15 percent and budgeted accordingly.

In order to survive this deficit Mercer “didn’t cut anything but they did not fill some open positions. If people retired or left the college, we kept their positions open and only hired the positions that were critical to the college” Simone added.

Although some students and faculty reported positive tests for coronavirus over the summer, since the semester has started no students or faculty in the on campus classes has reported symptoms of covid-19.

According to College President Dr. Jianping Wang, “We have a very robust process in place.” The system includes students filling out a symptom tracking form prior to every campus visit.

According to Simone, this has two purposes, “one for contact tracing and also for



Nursing Professor Tracy Scaletti teaches Nursing 112 from a distance. Nursing and other lab science classes are among the first to offer face to face sections on MCCC’s campuses.

PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

someone to self evaluate how they are feeling prior to putting others at risk.”

Dr. Wang says, “It is in your best interest to honestly assess yourself and not cover up illnesses or symptoms. Without health, there will be no academic progress. With health everything is possible. A make up class is possible. Retaking a class is possible. Restarting a semester is possible. But if you are dead, nothing is possible.”

In order to increase safety, the college has provided faculty members and students on campus with “medical grade face shields” produced by our own manufacturing department.

In addition to that, MCCC has been taking extra precautions by cleaning the buildings and laboratories regularly after each class with EPA approved disinfectants.

Wang said, “A new mi-
See **STUDENTS** page 2



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Despite all the safety precautions, teaching Chemistry and Biology doesn’t always allow for distancing and looking through a microscope presents a unique concern since touching face and eyes is a key method of covid-19 transmission. But frequent disinfecting between uses is now the norm in MCCC classes.

INDEX

CAMPUS - pg 2 The dating scene
REVIEWS - pg 3 Blue Bears

LOCAL pgs 4-5 Drive in movies
ARTS - pgs 6-7 Trenton Art shows

ENTERTAINMENT - pg 8 QUIZ
VIEWPOINTS - pg 11 COVID slump

JUST FOR FUN - pg 12
Horoscopes are back!

GOT A NEWS TIP?

Contact us at mcccthevoice@gmail.com
We keep your information confidential!



@mcccvoice



@mcccvoice



@mercervoice

Dating apps are hot despite pandemic

Many young people ignore health risks in pursuit of romance

By **Serena Bolitho**
Senior Reporter

Colleges have gone fully remote, social events have been cancelled, and travel has been restricted, but young people aren't taking the situation lying down. Subscriptions to online dating apps such as Tinder are soaring and the companies are seeing massive revenue spikes.

An article released by the Dallas Morning News says Tinder, "known for swiping to like or dislike other users' profiles, continues to be the [Match Group's] key driver of growth, with a 15% spike in direct revenue in the three-month period ending June 30."

With continually changing, and often confusing, guidelines about what type of interactions are safe and appropriate during a global pandemic, apps like "Bumble" now lets its "users add a badge to their profiles that signifies what kind of dates they're comfortable with: virtual, socially distanced or socially distanced with a mask."

Dalia Badr a Psychology Professor at MCCC says, "It is ok if staying away is temporary" but explains there is a reason why young people might go on non-socially distanced dates anyway.

"Late teen and early adulthood brain development is very different in terms of priorities, expectations and fears. It's very different compared to full adulthood. Risk taking differs from someone 20 to someone 35+," Badr says.

Cameron Cox, a sophomore Biology major at Mercer says, "I haven't changed one bit. I've been working so haven't had more time to do anything out of the ordinary."

Badr's perspective seems to be borne out based on what Local gynecologist Maria Sophocles, Medical Director of Women's Healthcare of Princeton (WHP) is seeing day to day. While the predicted glut of pregnancies that some said might result from so many people being stuck home together never came, she says she has seen a dramatic uptick in chlamydia and requests for the morning after pill.

Sophocles says this is likely due to "the Laissez Faire attitude most are having right now."

Paradoxically, while young people may have a strong desire for a hookup, Sophocles says the pandemic also leaves them "afraid to go to pharmacies or stores to buy condoms and get access to the necessary protection."

By contrast, there are



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

For young people, dating has become a push and pull between a desire for connection and a need for safety during the pandemic.

"Late teen and early adulthood brain development is very different in terms of priorities, expectations and fears. It's very different compared to full adulthood. Risk taking differs from someone 20 to someone 35+."

Dalia Badr, Psychology Professor

a lot of people who are in committed relationships, living together who have lost the lovin' feeling.

Psychotherapist Dana Dofman says in an interview with the Washington Post that the lack of privacy plays a big role into lowered sex drive.

Moreso now than ever,

couples and families are forced to share and coexist in such small places that Dofman says we're all "aware of everyone's presence" in the home. And with "so few boundaries to delineate us" while we eat, sleep, work and navigate the same space all day long, she says, "the idea of merging [physically]

may no longer be of interest."

While some Mercer students may fall into the romance rut, the average age of students is early 20s, so no surprise that they are more likely to be in the dating app group.

When asked about any changes to his sexual practices during the pandemic Mercer student Alan Lester a sophomore Biology and Chemistry major says, "I haven't changed anything. [My ex-girlfriend] apologized for everything, so imma meet up with her soon and lay down that good pipe like usual."

Some students back in classrooms for fall, more likely to be in spring

Continued from page 1

nority owned New Jersey based cleaning company is deeply committed to public health and doing a great job. They're getting good feedback from faculty and staff across the campus compared to the previous cleaning company who was not doing a good job so we terminated their contract."

Diane Cardona, a second year Biology major, is currently taking classes on campus, she said, "I feel like being on campus gives me the hope of things going back to normal prior to Covid-19. Although I understand we will have to become accustomed to this new normal. I appreciate all of the new implementations in place to ensure cleanliness and safety for both students and staff. But it only makes me question what we have been exposed to in the past prior to these new sanitation measures."

Similarly, Sophia Boor, a second year Biology major, said "Attending class on campus was difficult to adjust to for the first few days. However, as a science major I am very grateful to be able to attend labs and better understand the material I'm studying. I believe the best part of the college experience is building relationships with professors and other students who

are pursuing the same goals. I am thankful that Mercer is still providing a means for me to be able to make those connections."

Organic Chemistry is one of the classes that was considered Priority 1 for face to face instruction in the Restart Task Force document. It is now following a hybrid format and health precautions are being taken. Classroom students are given their own fume hoods to work in and wear masks, goggles, and gloves as well. They attend class in person once every other week for labs but meet weekly over Zoom for lectures.

Professor Tanzini who is teaching multiple sections of Organic Chemistry this fall said, "I'm really happy to have a hybrid course as I think it is very hard to teach labs online especially for organic chemistry." She added, "I feel very safe in the lab" and credits this to the preparation done by the Task Force.

As for whether or not more face to face classes will be added in the spring, such as the Priority 2 classes from the Restart Task Force plan--which include ones like Public Speaking and Dance- Simone says the task force is being reconvened to and will be "meeting soon" to work out the details of spring instruction.

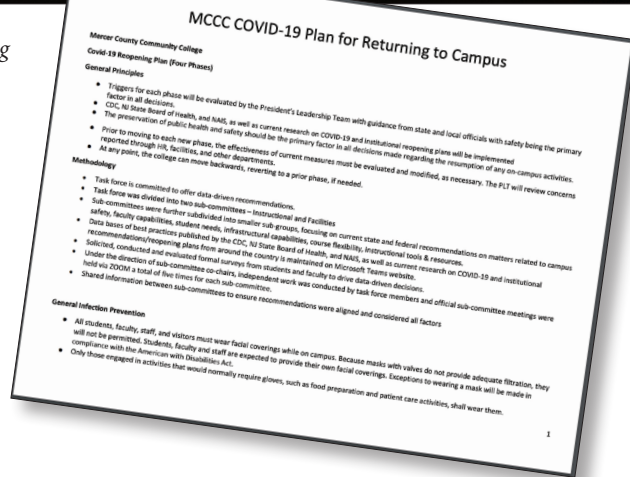


PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Students currently on campus take extra care cleaning their workspaces.



Read the full Restart Task Force document at mcccvoice.org/restart



The Blue Bears in Princeton stands out in every way

Featuring chefs with developmental disabilities, it's the food that stands out

By Elijah Parkman-Williams
Reporter

Since May of 2019 The Blue Bears restaurant has been serving European food and pastries in Princeton, at the shopping plaza on Harrison Street. The restaurant provides jobs for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Blue Bears serves as a teaching environment and a place to build self sufficiency and confidence. But it all still comes down to the food.

Upon your first visit to the Blue Bears kitchen you will be delighted in the fact that your experience will remain simple. The only thing complex about this restaurant lies not in the culinary talents of their artist-ry, but the hearts of every staff member there.

Chef Eric Wimmer and Chef Marco, two culinary greats that have made their way around Princeton and yet stand to serve their community at this restaurant. Blue Bears: Special Meals serves simple food with high class techniques, resulting in a dining experience that can barely be described through words.

Start with the soup and salad. Like most restaurants, these dishes are meant to pre-prepare the diner for the rest of the course, but Blue Bears already proves themselves as elite with this starter plate.

The lentil soup is rich and hearty especially for a vegan soup, but the star of this starting plate is the Cevenole Salad. The cevenole salad is essentially a fig salad. The dish consists of five ingredients; arugula, balsamic vinegar, croutons, goat feta, and black mission figs. As individual ingredients they shine on their own, but it's in combination that they transcend as an all star dish.

As you eat this dish you taste fresh arugula in partnership with the tangy homemade vinaigrette. Following this delightful pairing you will be met with the salty, crunchy croutons as well as its opposing textured partner in crime of the creamy feta cheese. The ingredients all come together with the true star, the black mission fig. It is vibrant and sweet, and when combined with the other ingredients creates a harmonious symphony of flavor that can be compared to their entree counterparts.

If you are interested in something heartier then look no further than the Lasagna. Chef Marco describes the lasagna as a collaboration of the most simple raw ingredients baked into a single dish. The beef will smack your taste buds straight into the chunky tomato sauce. The tomato sauce is rich, but its acidic notes are balanced by the slightly bitter spinach. It's only then you realize the swiss



The current employees of The Blue Bears in Princeton.

PHOTO | SERENA BOLITHO



PHOTO | ELIJAH PARKMAN-WILLIAMS

Every Blue Bears dessert is mouthwatering.

cheese is not overpowering, but a back seat flavor to the mouth-watering beef. All this only to be dressed in the decadent bechamel sauce that is absolutely to die for. Chef Marco describes it best “each ingredient speaks for itself.”

After a fresh salad and hearty beef lasagna try the perch fish cooked in browned butter and capers served on a bed of the best spinach. It will be the best preparation you will have ever experienced.

The weight of the fork tears the perch so tenderly, revealing its succulent meat, rich in brown buttery goodness. The anticipated bite will dance atop your taste buds in the most elegant way until you bite the capers. The capers are tiny bursts of salty bombs, pairing exelantly with the fish. This fish is exquisite, perfectly seasoned and balanced.

Below is a bed of spinach that rounds the dish to its building crescendo. This spinach soaks up the brown butter and capers into an entirely different combination of flavor,

but there is still one more pairing yet discovered. The perch and and spinach, these two in combination serve as the greatest flavor combinations to come.

The flavors jumble back and forth across the tongue until they marry into a cohesive bond, it is absolutely spectacular. This plate is more than underrated, it is an underdog dish that should be revered through all of Princeton, New Jersey and further.

What is a food review without dessert to tie it all together? Try the almond flour pineapple cake. Thinly sliced bright pineapple slices layered between puff pastry and baked in butter. What else could you want? It's sweet, salty, creamy, and so much more. It was the best dish possible to finish a meal such as this one.

The Blue Bears has proved to create some of the best dishes in all of Princeton, but how are they planning to grow in the future with the trials of being a young business during COVID-19?



PHOTO | ELIJAH PARKMAN-WILLIAMS

One of the best main course preparations includes the perch.

After facing a depleting market of traffic customers Blue Bears decided to start on-line orders. They are even preparing themselves for the Winter, ready to take their dining to a heated outdoors so people can still experience the restaurant. If you are looking forward to a new menu then you are also in luck.

Blue Bears changes their menu every day according to the season and ingredi-

ents, but the most exciting news is what they want to accomplish for their menu. The Blue Bears staff explain how they want to introduce a world of different flavors to the restaurant.

Chef Eric proudly proclaims “We are not an Italian restaurant. We are not a Chinese restaurant, we are not a French restaurant. We are an everyone restaurant.”

In pictures: The Summer of Covid



ABOVE: On June 6, 2020 hundreds of locals gathered in Trenton to protest the death of George Floyd. Events like it continued for days. Although most were peaceful and none seemed to cause any spike in covid-19 incidences a few escalated into violence.

PHOTO ESSAY | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

By Alessandro Rivero
Senior Reporter

In May, the death of George Floyd, a Black man who was killed by a police officer kneeling on his neck for 8 minutes, sparked a wave of protests against police brutality. The Black Lives Matter movement gained popular support. Rallies were held nationwide and in many other countries. They continue today despite the pandemic, flared by the deaths of people such as Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain, and many more.



At some Black Lives Matter rallies and George Floyd vigils, police there to help with safety and crowd control, took a knee in recognition of the validity of the cause and to show solidarity with the protestors. Many police departments began reevaluating the role of policing in the community.

LEFT: On June 6, 2020 members of the Trenton Police Department took a knee to show support for a Black Lives Matter rally that converged on the steps of City Hall.

In March of 2020 to slow the spread of Covid-19 lockdown started. Everything closed except essential businesses like hospitals and supermarkets. Schools converted to online instruction.



ABOVE: New Jersey's Governor, Phil Murphy, officially locked down the state on March 18, 2020. Many schools, including MCCC had already suspended classes and moved online several days earlier.



With social distancing a key method of reducing virus spread, people had to get creative about celebrating birthdays, graduations, and other accomplishments. Drive by processions became popular.

LEFT: A Jersey resident celebrated her family member Larry's 70th birthday with a sign waved as she drove by in her camper. BELOW: At Ground for Sculpture in Trenton even the sculptures took up mask wearing for safety.



By June, everyone had a mask, but at first masks were hard to find and with shortages of protective gear for medical workers, regular people were asked not to buy them. By summer's end health officials made it clear that masks were a key factor in fighting transmission of covid-19. At the same time, mask wearing became politicized during a heated presidential election cycle, with conservatives saying masks violate their personal liberties.

Graffiti Pier: private property for public expression

By **Alessandro Rivero**
Senior Reporter

Forty minutes from MCCC’s Trenton campus, on private property owned by Conrail at the edge of the Delaware River lies “graffiti pier.”

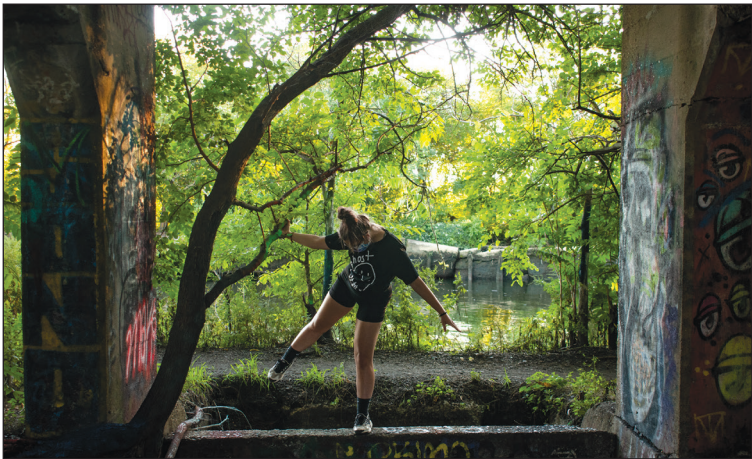
Every part of concrete is covered in paint or art. Often when you go you can find an artist, cans sprawled on the floor, working on a new piece. Fishermen crowd the edge, teens climb trees to the roof, and lovers set up tents and watch the stars.

The exact location of the pier was long kept secret. Visitors passed on how to get there by word of mouth. But despite occasional efforts by police to crack down on trespassers for safety’s sake, most of the time no one has enforced security for years. The gate is cut open, and a clear path surrounded by parked cars leads inside.

The tag #graffitipier has more than 14 thousand hits on Instagram. Tik Tok has 206.6 thousand hits for the same hashtag with one minute videos showing the area and how to get there.

Hamilton resident Jaymin Patel said she found the pier after “My cousin and I were just talking and the place came up in one of his stories about a friend.”

Months of covid-19 lockdown has lead to quarantine fatigue and young people have been busted for holding



Top Left: Ben Franklin bridge in the distance beyond Graffiti Pier. Bottom Left: Young people participating in UrbanX flock to Graffiti Pier. Right: The graffiti art and murals adorn the space.

PHOTOS | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

parties on the beaches and now on college campuses as some schools open. For those who are trying to stay safe and “low risk” the key to live outdoors.

A growing number of young people have taken up a hobby called “Urbex” or Urban Exploration and graffiti pier has provided a perfect outlet. As the title says, it’s all about exploring urban areas. Most of the places found are abandoned or hidden. With its combination of

cement structures and arches, Graffiti park feels urban but it also has lots of green space.

This unofficial park is so popular and accepted that the city of Philadelphia has formed plans to make it the first of its kind: A legal, publicly funded, graffiti park.

The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation has signed a deal to with Conrail, which locked up the space back in 1980, to turn it into a legal,

greenspace and officially sanctioned art park.

DRWC has commissioned Studio-Zewde to develop the complete concept design.

The person in charge of redoing it is Sara Zewde, an urbanist, landscaper, and public artist who also co-founded Studio Zewde.

According to Studio Zewde, “The next evolution of

the site will ensure the continuation of the stories, meanings, and cultural production embedded in the site today.”

Other than adding extra safety precautions like making the rooftops more accessible, the park is to remain pretty much the same, a great option for young people to get out, explore, see art, and still stay safely distanced.

Drive in movies at Mercer County Park are a fall hit

By **Jules Schott**
Senior Reporter

Mercer County Park has been hosting drive-in movie nights every Friday evening since September 4 and they plan to continue. The movies shown are family friendly so community members of all ages attend these events.

In earlier weeks the Park Commission has shown “Harry Potter and The Sorcerer’s Stone” as well as Disney’s “Moana.”

On September 18, 2020 they showed the Halloween classic “The Addams Family.”

Lakshmi Sinha, Ridhi Reddy, Maya Mabry, Kenya Chatterjee, Ishelly Otwani, and Aleansha Singh who were all at the September 18 showing of “The Addams Family” said, “We had so much fun! We will definitely be back! No matter how far away from the screen you are, you can always relax and play a game of UNO!”

Zoe, Greyson, and Matt Brown said it was their “first time there and a great event.”

The following day the MCP held a live music event, also part of a seasonal line up.



Mercer County Park’s Friday drive-in movie on September 4 attracted a crowd to see “The Addams Family.” Drive in events like this one are becoming popular due to the need for social connection paired with the need for social distancing during the pandemic.

PHOTO | JULES SCHOTT

On September 19 two soul groups *Kindred Spirits* and *Sensational Soul Cruisers* played on the cricket pitch.

Even though the parking area looked very crowded for the drive-in movie, closer to the screen there was much

more space. Movie goers created a variety of seating setups. There were people sitting in their trunks, on the roofs of their cars, and out on the grass.

The temperature was chilly so everyone dressed accordingly with jackets and many brought blankets.

The movie is projected onto a large screen that could be seen from the back of the parking area. The sound quality of the movie was great but slowly decreased after the middle section of the allocated parking.

There was security on duty, helping to guide parking

and making sure everyone was staying safe. The location was easy to find as there were signs throughout the park.

For more information on live music and movie event in the park visit: facebook.com/MercerCountyPark-Commission/

Trenton hosts p Jersey Fresh Jam and Art All

By Jason Norton
Reporter

The Jersey Fresh Jam, held at the global environmental organization TerraCycle in Trenton and now in its fifteenth year, is the longest running graffiti art event in New Jersey. It is noted for gathering top artists and for creating an atmosphere of camaraderie.

This year's event took place September 12, 2020 and showcased more than 20 artists from as far away as Australia and Spain as well as from many states including Texas, Vermont, and Pennsylvania, as well as Trenton itself.

During the event, every artist stakes their claim to a section of the exterior walls and sets about transforming a once blank cinder block wall into a piece of art with their own individual style.

The Jam has seen some changes over time but has a throwback to the early 1980s as multiple DJs spin a plethora of hip-hop music throughout the day.

Event organizer and graffiti artist Leon "Rain" Rainbow--a MCCC alumn who has previously been profiled in The VOICE--says of the event, "It's a celebration of Hip-Hop" where artist can come together and celebrate that influence in their lives.

Spectators watch the artists as they progress from a sketch on the wall to the last drop of paint when the piece is finished. Locals are apt to see the evidence of the event by driving or walking by but may never see the artists behind the face masks used to protect them from spray paint fumes.

Nathan Nordstrom, a graffiti artist from Texas who goes by the name "Sloke" said of this year's event, "It was chill, laid back. No one was ego trippin'. No drama. Respect all around. Not competitive."

He says he looks for-



PHOTO | MICAELA LYONS
Artist Luk Man's work features drawings of prominent figures in African American History.

ward to coming back to Trenton next year to get down on the wall again and meeting new artists. The event brings community and artists together in a peaceful open outside setting while being able to appreciate graffiti art up close and personal. The open setting works well for the social distancing precautions needed to handle coronavirus.

Jam DJ known as "It's Just Ahmad" who has been spinning his turntables for the event since 2010 says, "The graffiti is like hieroglyphics for an urban community." He describes how the artform has its origins in ancient Egyptian art with writings and carvings on the walls.

It's Just Ahmad says he plans for the event a year in advance and that it is always a highlight for him being able to witness all the creativity and community engagement coming together to celebrate art in the city of Trenton where such positivity is lacking.

Jim Gordon a Tren-

ton resident and volunteer at the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (aka TASK) and for A-Team which is a group of local artists that attends the Jersey Fresh Jam every year says he was to see the new wave of graffiti artist.

Gordon says of Jersey Fresh Jam, "The vitality and energy that [the event] brings to the city of Trenton is for everyone to have a place to engage and experience the positivity of graffiti art, which usually receives a bad reputation."

The energy Gordon describes can be heard and seen as one navigates through the maze of scaffolding and onlookers with attentive eyes and positive words of reinforcement bouncing back and forth from each artist.

Reese Yarbrough who attended the event as a family gathering with her 12-year-old son and her brother who attends the School of Visual Arts in New York, said she appreciates the "amazing exposure it offers for my son to see creativity in this type of up-close atmosphere and the opportunity for my brother to take some pho-



tos he can use to build portfolio." Yarbrough added that they don't miss the event, ever.

Photographer Habiyyb Shu'aib described the event saying, "Being exposed at a young age has allowed me to see graffiti as art, while some find it difficult to do so." The photos he takes he says help to improve his craft of photography on an individual level. He shares his work with the Trenton Photo Club.

The careful planning by each graffiti artist that goes into every detail and letter helps dispel stereotypes that people often hold about graffiti as a form of vandalism rather than art.

While once graffiti tags lowered the property values these days there has been a shift. Having sought after artists create graffiti murals on a building can actually increase its value.



Top: This year's Jersey Fresh Jam at Terracycle in art work collaboration. Above: Before there was a strength face masks to protect their health.



PHOTO | JASON NORTON

In Trenton, a city often associated with tear down houses and urban blight, the act of creating is a sign of defiance as seen in this work from Jersey Fresh Jam.



PHOTO | MICAELA LYONS

Kids enjoyed skateboarding at pop-up skate park sponsored by Freedom Skate Park at Art All Day in Trenton.



Old school graffiti tags have evolved into represented in this work from Jersey Fresh

Public art events

All Day splash city with color



PHOTO | JASON NORTON



PHOTO | JASON NORTON

Trenton attracted graffiti artists from as far away as Australia to participate in a day long event. Due to COVID-19 there were fume from spray paint which require graffiti artists to wear industrial

By Jason Norton & Micaela Lyons
Reporters

For eight years Trenton Artworks has hosted Art All Night and its companion event Art All Day, two events that highlight the work of local artists and are free to the public.

This year's Art All Day was held September 19, 2020 in historic Mill Hill Park, NJ on a bright, end-of-summer afternoon. Despite a cold snap tents and tables sprang up over the course of the day, housing artists while they worked.

Kids contributed sidewalk chalk drawings, a string quartet played, the Trash Parade beating drums and clattering plastic soda bottles went by, and the Trenton Circus Squad performed acrobatics.

Artist Luk Man, whose works feature intricate line work often highlighting images of powerful figures in Black history held up a picture that combined portraits of Martin Luther King Jr, President Barack Obama, and Malcolm X. "I call this one Black Messiahs," he said.

While the event is free and open to the public, artists hope to sell their pieces.

"I sold last year. I did a piece of Trenton. I did a ghetto part of Trenton...It had a building, and all of these cats running across it, all of the tom cats. A ghetto with clothes hanging in the pathway, and an apartment complex, and somebody actually brought it. I was proud it had even sold."

Near Man's stall cruising bicyclists had the streets to themselves participating in the Ciclovía: Open Streets Trenton. Punk music played out of the open doors of a van. Freedom Skate Park, the volunteer organization set up a pop-up skate park on the barricaded streets.

Jake McNichol, founder of the non-profit, partnered with Dogwood Skate Shop, Skate Jawn, and Ciclovía, to showcase "alternative use of the street."

McNichol said he wishes for the community, "learn the life lesson that skating teaches,"

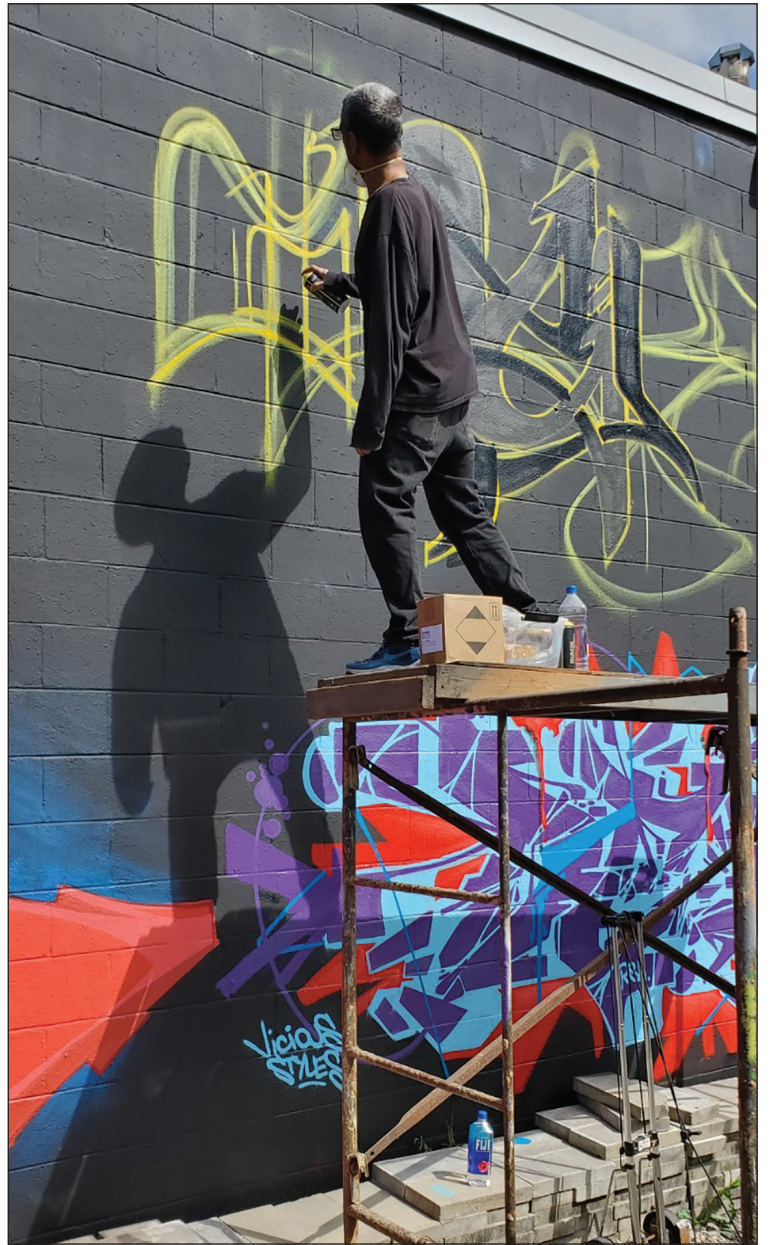


PHOTO | JASON NORTON

The progression from sketch to finished graffiti project can become a meditation and reflection of oneself as seen at Jersey Fresh Jam.

adding "The whole process of skateboarding is based around seeing something in front of you that would be considered an obstacle or something mundane in the city, thinking creatively, and transforming that from something that's in your way, in your path, turning it into something that's a venue for creative pursuit."

South Indian artist and active Trenton community member Srikanth Ranaswamy stood on the chalk-patterned wooden planks of a red iron bridge. His record attempt 60 foot long oil painting of a forest scene was fixed to the trusses, spanning the

length of the structure.

"I was worried about all of the nature events happening, like the wildfires and deforestation," Ranaswamy said, adding, "I wanted to use one of my powerful mediums, which is art, to kind of bring an awareness to the people around the globe - to preserve the nature for the future generations."

This year's event required some public safety adjustments due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the need for social distancing. There is usually a walking and trolley tour but this year the trolley was left out and walking was the key means of viewing the event.



PHOTO | JASON NORTON

o cultural commentary on identity is
sh Jam.



PHOTO | JASON NORTON

Graffiti, once seen only as a form of vandalism, has come to be recognized as a powerful form of street art like this mural at Jersey Fresh Jam.

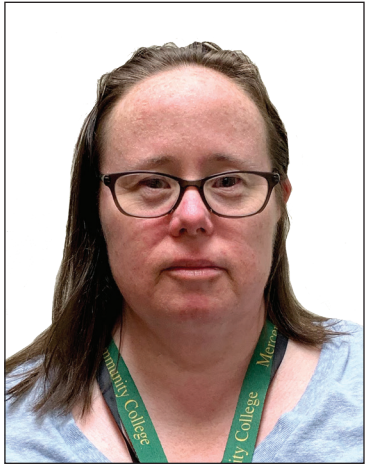


PHOTO | MICAELA LYONS

Trenton graffiti tag from Art All Day. The city is sometimes called the "Creative Capital."

15 Songs to see you through the rough times

LAURIE'S CORNER



We are all going through a lot during coronavirus and we have to stay at home which can be very stressful. So here are the top 15 songs to help everybody to handle what is going on around us and to lift people's spirits. Each one was selected by a member of The VOICE staff.

By Laurie Gallagher
With support from
the Staff of The College VOICE

THE COLLEGE VOICE PLAYLIST



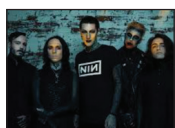
"Roar"
by Katy Perry

Picked by: Laurie Gallagher
Newsroom Director



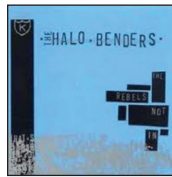
"Alive"
by Pearl Jam

Picked by: Jason Norton
Junior Reporter



"Somebody Told Me" cover by
Motionless in White

Picked by: Ashley Jackson
Junior Reporter



"Virginia Reel around the Fountain"
by Halo Benders

Picked by: Micaela Lyons
Junior Reporter



"My Shot"
from Hamilton
(Lin Manuel Miranda)

Picked by: Alessandro Rivero
Senior Reporter and Photographer



"Sunday Best"
by Surfaces

Picked by: Kristina Hontz
Senior Reporter and Artist



"Run to the Hills"
by Iron Maiden

Picked by: Ben Levitt
Senior Reporter



"What we Talkin' About?"
by Jay Z

Picked by: Frank DiNatale
Junior Reporter



"You're Never Fully Dressed Without a Smile"
from Annie

Picked by: Professor Holly Johnson
Media Co-Adviser



"Wing\$"
by Macklemore and Ryan Lewis

Picked by: Elijah Parkman-Williams
Junior Reporter



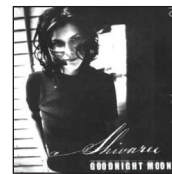
"Midnight Sky" by
Miley Cyrus

Picked by: Jules Schott
Senior Reporter



"Looking Up"
by Paramore

Picked by: Donny Neuls
Editor in Chief



"Goodnight Moon"
by Shivaree

Picked by: Jerry Katty
Junior Reporter



"Magic in the Hamptons"
by Social House

Picked by: Serena Bolitho
Managing Editor



"Miles Away"
by Winger

Picked by: Allison Tamasi
Junior Reporter

QUIZ: Where should you virtually travel this fall?

We may still be in quarantine, but that doesn't mean we can't explore. Take the quiz below to find out where you should virtually travel next.

By Ashley Jackson
Reporter

QUESTIONS

What are you missing most during quarantine?

- A. Fresh air, sunshine, and wide open spaces.
- B. Hitting museums and catching concerts.
- C. Gathering to eat with friends and family.
- D. Sleeping in.

How have you been keeping busy?

- A. Soaking up the sun on my patio.
- B. Making TikToks and scrolling through Insta.
- C. Baking like I'm training for the Great British Bake Off.
- D. Working like crazy.

Who's been keeping you company?

- A. My pet. They love getting in some extra walks and playtime.
- B. My friends, but virtually. Zoom is life now.
- C. My significant other. Cooking

dinner together has become our new favorite pastime.

D. My family. Home is where the heart is.

Where is the first place you want to travel post-quarantine?

- A. Somewhere in nature with a breathtaking view.
- B. A large, bustling city with lots of excitement.
- C. Anywhere the food's good.
- D. Straight to my couch.

Where will you be once campus restarts all face to face classes?

- A. Playing soccer at the athletics center.
- B. Seeing a show at the Kelsey Theatre.
- C. Hanging with my friends in the cafeteria.
- D. Catching up on my studies in the library.

ANSWERS

MOSTLY A's

You should travel to the great outdoors -- virtually! Take a trip through nature with the National Park Foundation. Their website offers virtual tours of more than 30 different parks.



MOSTLY B's

You should travel to a new museum--virtually! Ditch the crowd and take a virtual tour. Mentalfloss.com has compiled a list of 12 World-Class Museums to start your journey.



MOSTLY C's

You should travel to the coast of Italy--virtually! Take a trip with the youtube channel "Pasta Grannies" as you explore new recipes through old-world cooking traditions for your own kitchen.



MOSTLY D's

You should travel home for a staycation! Quarantine has been tough and you deserve some TLC. Build a blanket fort and camp out to stream your favorite Netflix binges.





ARE YOU ONE OF US?



**Meetings
Every
Monday and
Thursday**



12PM-1PM
Room ET127
the college
VOICE



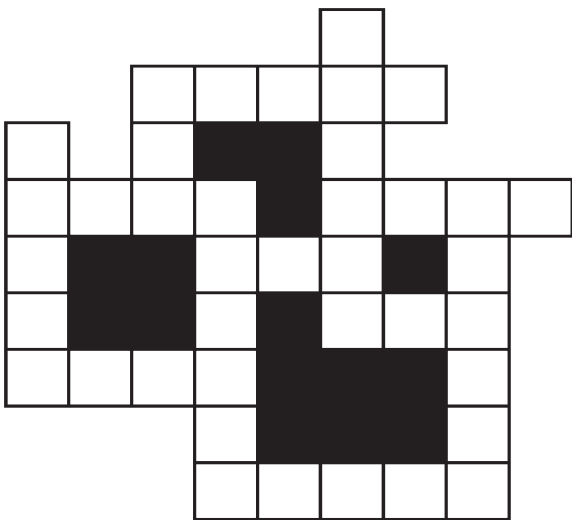
Join The College VOICE today!



PUZZLES EXTRA



AWX
USELAX
♥ORSEW
SKUT
♥ARKSET
♥RKI
♥ERLO
RUKLN
♥WOT
SWOBET
♥DIXNE
♥KOSA



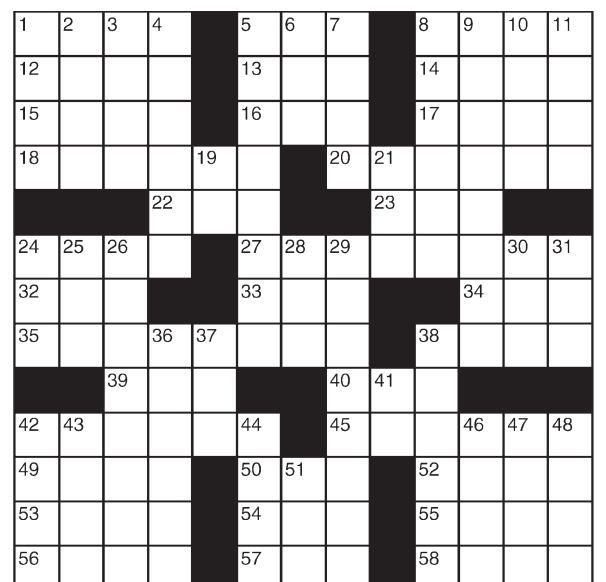
©2020 King Features Syndicate. All rights reserved.

Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. **HAGNEC** becomes **CHANGE**). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥**RATHE** becomes **HATER** or **EARTH** or **HEART**). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Waller or Domino
5 "— not choose to run"
8 Stoolie
12 Hardly ruddy
13 Calendar abbr.
14 In due time
15 Noble gas
16 Born
17 Loosen
18 Cowpoke of the pampas
20 Get new actors
22 Car-pool lane abbr.
23 Profit
24 Elevator name
27 Crucial experiment
32 See 12-Across
33 Heavy weight
34 Mainlander's memento
35 Midday party
38 Favorable votes
39 Raw rock
40 Boom times
42 Merry
45 This or that, it matters not
49 Sheltered
50 Possess




DOWN

- | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Vampire tooth | 26 Guiltless | writer |
| 2 Cruising | 28 Bill and — | 47 Hebrew |
| 3 Grand | 29 Sly slur | month |
| 4 Harmonizes | 30 Glimpse | 48 Stench |
| 5 Start some-
thing new | 31 "— the sea-
son ..." | 51 Simple card
game |
| 6 Buck's mate | 36 Vinegar bot- | |

Can't get anything done? You're not the only one
Two ways to help fight the productivity slump

PERSPECTIVES



Donny Neuls

It is hardly a surprise that many of us are facing a productivity slump right now. You should not put yourself down for having the problem but there are ways to push through. Here are two easy ideas to help.

#1 - Create a Plan for Your Day

Once you have woken up for the day, whether you got up straight away or hit snooze seven times, create a list of everything you want to do for the day. This list should include work,

chores, and relaxation time.

When writing down the more broad tasks (i.e. clean the kitchen, complete project, etc.), break them up into smaller tasks. As you complete the smaller parts of each task, you will feel more accomplished and motivated.

AN EXAMPLE LIST:

- Complete class project
- >research
- >answer essay questions
- Do shift at job
- Answer work
- Clean Kitchen
- >wipe down counters
- >do the dishes
- >clean stove
- Watch episode of "Umbrella Academy" on Netflix
- Video chat with Aaron

TIP: You do not have to complete tasks in the order in which they appear. Complete them as you wish to.

#2 - Avoid the Phone Distraction

For most of us, our homes are not designed to be "work friendly" as we usually have a work or school environment to go to on a daily basis. At home you are likely surrounded by objects and technology that we associate with free time and can become distracting.

One of those technologies is likely your phone: a handy tool or the easiest and worst distraction ever.

Leaving your phone in another room while you're working will help you in avoiding the urge to use it to check Instagram, text friends, or play a phone game. If you must keep it near you for whatever reason (work, emergencies, etc.), simply turn on the Do Not Disturb setting and keep your phone face down. Better yet, keep the phone behind you somewhere or place an object on top, like a book or a few pieces of paper. This will stop it from making distracting noises and stop you from wanting to pick it up so quickly.

Remember, even if you can't handle these two suggestions, or if you can only do one, that's perfectly fine!

PHOTOS OF THE WEEK

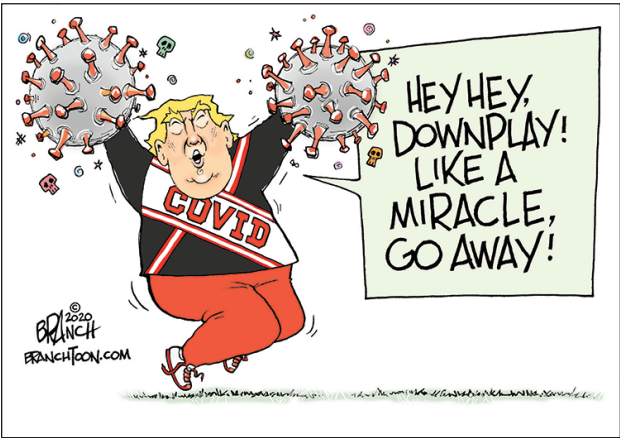
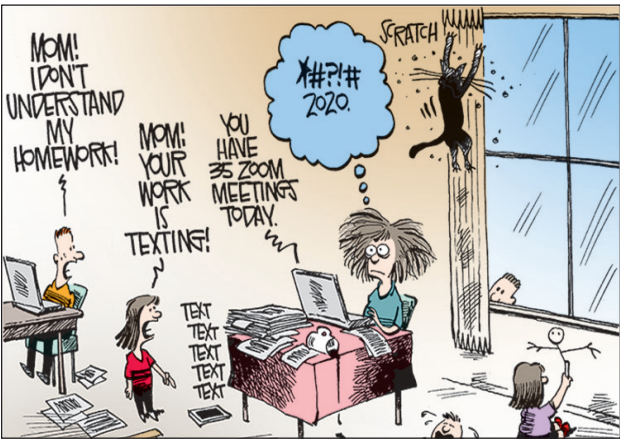
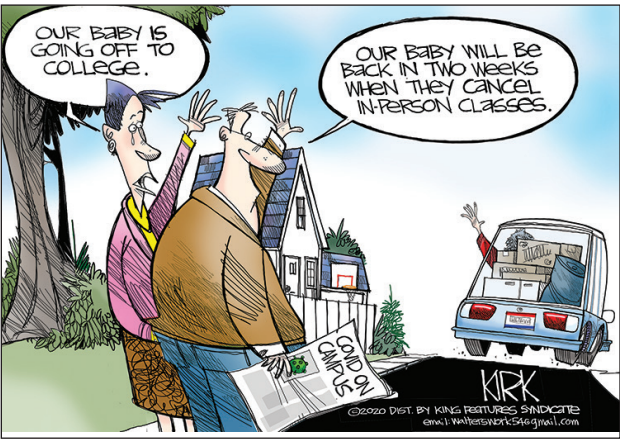
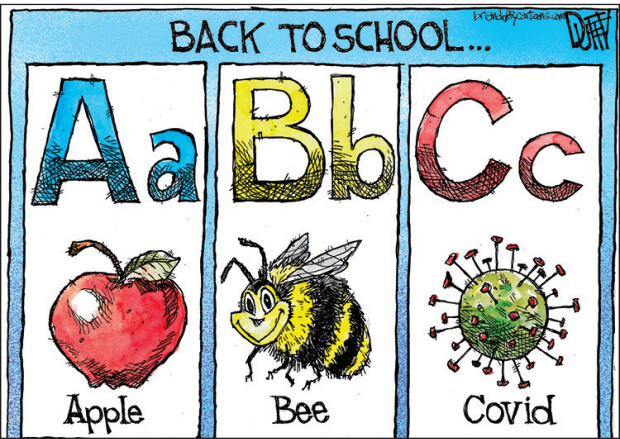


PHOTOS | ALESSANDRO RIVERO



"Everyone is working hard, but some students are dummies."

EDITORIAL CARTOONS



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!



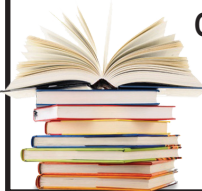
Do you see a typo?

Good. Join the staff and help us fix it!

Mon + Thur
12-1:15 in ET 127

NOTICE

MCCC LIBRARY
NOW OFFERING
CURB SIDE
PICK UP





VOICE STAFF

Editorial Board

Donny Neuls, *Editor in Chief*
Serena Bolitho, *Managing Editor*
Elliot Smith, *Photography Editor*
Laurie Gallagher, *Newsroom Manager*

Staff

Cesia Gaudron, *Senior Reporter*
Kristina Hontz, *Senior Reporter & Artist*
Ben Levitt, *Senior Reporter*
Alessandro Rivero, *Senior Reporter*
Juliana Schott, *Senior Reporter*
Brian Amigh, *Reporter*
Amelia DeGuzman, *Reporter*
Frank DiNatale, *Reporter*
Ken Fantry, *Reporter*
Alex Gonzalez, *Reporter*
Mohamed Haddara, *Reporter*
Ashley Jackson, *Reporter*
Jerry Katty, *Reporter*
Micaela Lyons, *Reporter*
Elijah Parkman-Williams, *Reporter*
Jason Norton, *Reporter*
Ashley Peng, *Reporter*
Allison Tamasi, *Reporter*
Azra Thomas, *Reporter*

Faculty Advisers

Professor Matt Kochis, *Co-adviser*
Professor Holly Johnson, *Co-adviser*

What's up



Kristina Hontz

Starting this school year feels another chapter in an epic saga that should be titled: *The College Experience*. It's a chapter doesn't feel new. It never seems to end.

Spring 2020 started like any other semester, but as each week passed, there were talks of a virus spreading across the globe. The news was particularly worrying for college students who are just stepping into a world, finding their own independence.

And then, on March 16, it happened. Every student was sent home and all classes went strictly online.

One student who was a freshman at the time and who asked to remain anonymous said, "the seriousness of the quarantine forcing me to be inside makes me so scared for the future. I can't help but think about the negative impacts that coronavirus and the quarantine have on not only me, but the global community at large."

The VOICE surveyed 12 students on their experiences with remote learning. Thirty-three percent said online classes are more stressful than learning in person. Fifty percent said they felt just as stressed regardless of style of learning.

Dr. Heather Jennings, a Psychology professor at MCCC, says of the stress, "It makes sense that this pandemic would have a significant impact on one's mental health since our lives have been significantly altered...The uncertainty to this whole situation is likely to cause stress."

Sophomore student Daniella Haskins says, "Not being allowed to take care of your own personal business is such a hindrance for people who pre-



ORIGINAL ART | KRISTINA HONTZ

fer to get things done sooner rather than later can cause such an irritation for persons with exceptional organizational skills."

As if the generalized stress wasn't bad enough, it can be accompanied by or trigger clinical anxiety and depression. Financial and educational concerns, fear future goals, and of course fear of getting sick from covid-19 itself just pile on.

Anxiety and depression, whether formally diagnosed or not, have hit Mercer students just as hard. About 75% of Mercer students say they have faced anxiety or depression during quarantine.

Dr. Jennings says, "Recent research has shown that anxiety and concerns about illness have increased among people across the country, creating a new term called, coronophobia which describes anxiety that relates to COVID-19, contracting the illness, and all the variables associated with

living in a COVID-19 pandemic."

Learning in a college setting used to be fun and enjoyable to most students, and each day felt new and exciting. The energy was more inviting and gave students a reason to get up and start the day.

It can seem like there's no hope in this story of isolation and trying to learn with mental monsters surrounding every corner. However, after so many months of uncertainty and dread, students at Mercer have been able to fight off the negativity and sorrow..

They have been fighting hard to overcome it all with self care and building support networks.

In the VOICE survey, 50 percent of students said their relationships have been maintained through COVID-19, and 42 percent even said their relationships grew even stronger in these troubling times.

Even the most dreadful,

dark thoughts and feelings can't bring Mercer students down. As stressful and draining this adjustment has been, students have been fighting through everyday like superheroes. A whopping 83 percent of Mercer students surveyed said they have been able to adjust to this new and scary world.

As for the other 17 percent of those who may feel like they're fighting this battle alone, don't be afraid. Every student, professor, and faculty member is fighting their own mental monsters as well. Find friends, join a club even if it meets through Zoom, keep up with selfcare.

No matter how dark the world may seem, there's always a light around the corner, and even the worst chapters have an end.

For those interested you can find counselling support at MCCC. Visit mccc.edu/student_services_counseling_personal_resources.shtml

top ten

Girl Names With Most Spellings

1. Aaliyah
2. Kaylee
3. Makayla
4. Riley
5. Jocelyn
6. Eliana
7. Ariana
8. Aria
9. Kaelyn
10. Adalyn

Source: babycenter.com



Find us online at mcccvoice.org

FAST JLAW FACT

Many people think it's against the law to photograph children in public. It's not. If you take a picture at a ball game there are always kids in the back. Fair game.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Articles that are most likely to go viral are ones that include sex, religion, and politics. Students who write on these topics have to be prepared for backlash.

JOURNO LINGO

Most newspapers the size of The VOICE are five columns per page. If a column is wider or narrower than normal width it's called "bastard width."

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Faculty media advisers can't be involved in the stories that student reporters cover so they may have to recuse themselves on articles they are too close to.

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.

How to contact us:

e-mail: kochism@mccc.edu
phone: (609) 586-4800 ext. 3594
write to: **The College VOICE**
c/o Prof. Matt Kochis
Mercer County College
1200 Edinburg Rd.
West Windsor, NJ 08690

ADVICE - ASK THE VOICE

HELP IS HERE!



Dear VOICE,
How's the turtle in the Biology lab doing?
Has he been tested for COVID?
-Trtlvr

Dear Trtlvr,
Kirby's publicist has notified us he is taking some time off from the pandemic interviews. He is asking someone else to "fill that seat" and let him eat in peace.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
During Zoom classes

how do I handle stepping out of frame to grab something when I'm not wearing pants??
-No Pants

Dear No Pants,
Stop, drop, and roll on the floor as quickly as you can without being noticed.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
What is the best online dating app during the pandemic? I have tried Tinder and Bumble but am looking for something more exotic?
-Broad Interests

Dear Broad Interests,
We've heard Pets Plus is starting a new interactive dating site for all creatures. Whether you're into *homo sapiens* or *felis catus* (Shane Dawson),

there is an exotic experience for everyone.
-The VOICE.

Dear VOICE,
How do I tell my Zoom classmate that I've been watching and admiring them every class period?
-Hot for Zoomer

Dear Hot for Zoomer,
Send them a chocolate scented N95 mask with a love note attached.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
Quick, I need a good pandemic pick up line!
-Asking for a Friend

Dear Asking for a Friend,
"You're so hot you're giving me a fever."
-The VOICE

NOTE: THIS FEATURE IS FOR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES ONLY.

HOROSCOPES



Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 19

This Halloween season will bring special joy. Take part of all the hayrides, pumpkin carving and apple picking you can!



Aquarius

Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Back to school is exciting for a dedicated worker like you, Aquarius. Now that you are settled into your new work schedule, it's time to relax and enjoy the fall.



Pisces

Feb. 19 - Mar. 20

Your workload may be extra stressful, but keep going, you're doing great! Remember Pisces, everyone works at different paces, be patient with yourself.



Aries

Mar. 21 - Apr. 19

Don't be nervous to speak up during class! & Remember Aries, be confident in your school assignments, you work hard enough.



Taurus

Apr. 20 - May 20

Fall weather is exciting for a fashionable person like you. Taurus, focus on your style and self-care this season. Self love will get you through this semester!



Gemini

May 21 - Jun. 20

Of course you miss summer, but please just put your jacket on Gemini to keep well. Also, make sure you're keeping track of all your due dates; an agenda may help.



Cancer

Jun. 21 - Jul. 22

It's pumpkin spice time. Remember to treat yourself to something pumpkin-flavored for all your hard work. You deserve it, Cancer! And if pumpkin isn't your bag, how about a nice hot cocoa?



Leo

Jul. 23 - Aug. 22

New friendships from the new classes are in your future, even though you're studying online. Have fun, expand your community, and still make time to get your work done.



Virgo

Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

You are working hard this semester, keep it up but don't over-work yourself. Make sure you're getting enough sleep, Virgo. Sleep will help you build a strong immune system.



Libra

Sept. 23 - Oct. 22

Libra season falls over into October. Coming to the end of your sign's season can make you tired. Try to switch up your regular routine to stay engaged.



Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

On October 22 the sun will enter Scorpio's constellation. The excitement that comes with it can also be overwhelming. Try meditation and alone-time to keep you relaxed.

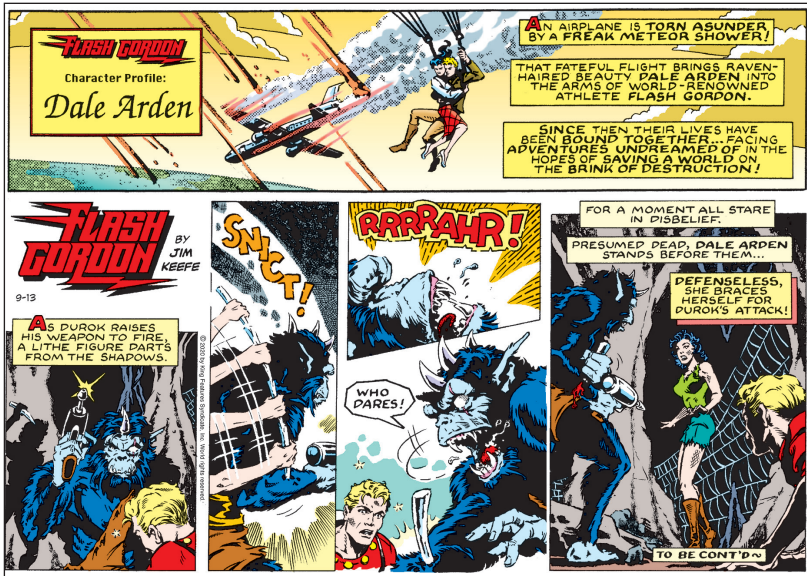


Sagittarius

Nov. 22 - Dec. 21

Everyone else may be feeling exhausted by the pandemic but you are finding your second wind. Take advantage of the quarantine to tackle things you left behind in the past.

FLASH GORDON



SUDOKU

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

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.

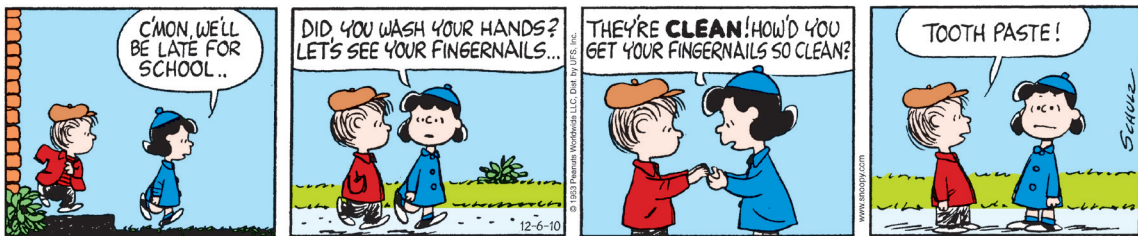
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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

Answer

2X PEANUTS 2X DILBERT



2X DILBERT

