

MCCC enrollment down by 16% What will that mean for spring semester?

By **Serena Bolitho**
Senior Reporter

Student enrollment at MCCC is down 16% this fall, putting the college's financial stability into question for the long term, particularly when state funding to community colleges is not being provided.

Based on student preferences, revealed through data gathered in a survey last May, it's possible that offering more face to face classes could help stop the enrollment free fall. For the 111 students surveyed who said they had decided not to come back to MCCC this fall, 55% said the reason was that they didn't want to do mostly online learning.

Out of the 573 students who said they were planning to return to MCCC this fall, 54% said their preference for instructional style was face-to-face (including hybrid) even if that meant they might have to go back to fully remote instruction if the state went back into lock down.

At the moment, MCCC is offering 10-15% of classes at least partly in person, in particular hard sciences that re-

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PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Students in fall hybrid classes that have some days of on campus instruction are trying to work together while staying apart.

Election 2020 - Students gear up to vote despite covid-19

By **Natalie Tellez**
Reporter

With the 2020 presidential election being affected by covid-19, first-time voters are taking on a new responsibility.

Unlike normal circumstances, New Jersey is automatically sending out mail-in ballots to all New Jersey residents who are registered and able to vote. These have already been sent out and can be filled out and mailed back well before election day.

Another option for voters is to fill out the ballot they get in the mail and then put them in official, tamper-proof, drop boxes around their county. This is the link for finding the one closest to you: <https://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-secure-drop-boxes.shtml>.

Some people prefer the drop box because they are worried about problems with the US mail service that developed over the summer.

Although every registered voter in NJ will be receiving mail-in ballots, there will still be some polling locations available for those who would rather vote in-person, but in person votes will only be "provisional" meaning they will not be counted automatically the way they normally are if you vote at a polling place. They have to go through an additional layer of verification after the polls close that can delay them being counted.

Chelsea Colavita, 23, is a recent MCCC graduate who will be working the polls this election day, November 3. That means she will be at a polling

station throughout the day, organizing people as they arrive, sending them to the right booths and so on. Often senior citizens sign up to be poll workers. Colavita says she has registered to be a poll worker less for the pay and more to keep the older generations from being exposed to Covid-19.

Colavita says that "New Jersey is one of the states that has made voting easier for all by doing mail-in ballots. A lot of other states are seeing problems."

Mandy Ortiz, a Trenton resident, says she votes "to represent groups of people, ethnically, who can't vote," she adds that as a woman she sees voting as even more important "because it's a right women didn't always have."

For many young adults there is motivation to vote from



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Ballot drop boxes are a safe way for NJ residents to submit their votes this fall.

their peers as well as celebrities and influencers on social media.

Davon Parker, 20, a MCCC Fashion major had been heavily influenced through so-

cial media to vote for the first time in this election. He says, "Instagram, where I spend a lot of my time, has educated me and has made me become more aware about voting."

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What will the spring semester look like?

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quire lab time and also game design and arts classes that can be distanced. Safety precautions require anyone coming to campus to fill out a symptom tracking form every day. Masks are also mandatory and face shields must be used for lab classes.

When asked about plans for the spring instruction, John Simone, Assistant Dean of Students and the co-leader of the task force organizing return to campus, he said, "The draft of the plan for the spring semester is done...The draft plan is to increase the number of hybrid classes by 5 to 10%."

When asked about the college's finances playing a role in the decision to add more face to face or hybrid classes in the spring, MCCC president Dr. Jianping Wang said, "Finance is not so much a concern for us at Mercer. Not because we have unlimited resources, but because we have done a very good job of planning early. It is not the lack of money that we aren't opening, it is the lack of assurance of safety due to a lack of a cure."

Dean Kevin Duffy who is co-chairing the restart task force with Dean Simone says, "We don't necessarily have to offer more face to face classes, we just have to make sure we are getting all of our classes fully enrolled and offer the modality that students prefer."

However, classes may not see an increase in enrollment as covid numbers in NJ are back on the rise. According to the New York Times database, "Over the past week, there have been an average of 835 cases per day, an increase of 35



Students taking hybrid classes this semester can still study on campus.

PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

"We understand and hear you [students] loud and clear that you would love to have more in person contact with your instructors...On one hand students want more in person time with faculty, but on the other, in no way shape or form is this pandemic dying down. We are trying to balance these two: the need to be in person, [and] the need to protect your safety and the instructors' safety."

-MCCC President Dr. Jianping Wang

percent from the average two weeks earlier."

Outbreaks of covid-19 on college campuses have contributed to the rise in cases. For example, Monmouth University had an outbreak of 39 cases in September that ballooned to 291 by October.

Even non-residential colleges have been affected. For example, Middlesex Vocational and Technical School has already dealt with positive infections. NJ.com reports, "A freshman...tested positive for the coronavirus, prompting district

officials to switch to all-remote learning for two weeks."

Mercer has not had to lock down, but the college notified staff on October 12 that "a member of the campus community tested positive for COVID-19." The email added that "The individual's last visit to campus was on October 2, 2020," and said that contact tracing was in progress.

Communication Professor Mitch Canter who teaches radio classes as well as public speaking said that being online for the fall has been "very re-

warding," in terms of the public speaking class. However, he says, his technical classes are another story.

"I've been making instructional videos in advance for these lessons so instead of just meeting and having a discussion and listening to instructions...It has been a lot of extra work... but if I have to do this again in the spring at least all these videos and projects are created already."

Colleen Heffernan, a second year Biology major said, "I would prefer in person class-

es [in the spring] because on-line classes are very impersonal and it's hard to learn maths and sciences online."

College president Dr. Jianping Wang says "We understand and hear you [students] loud and clear that you would love to have more in person contact with your instructors."

However, she says there is a lot to balance. "On one hand students want more in person time with faculty, but on the other, in no way shape or form is this pandemic dying down. We are trying to balance these two: the need to be in person, [and] the need to protect your safety and the instructors' safety."

In terms of maintaining finances Dr. Wang says, "We are also doing other things to generate revenue. For example the college renovated the baseball fields before covid-19 hit us. It is outstanding and now that the state allows practices to happen, we are now renting the baseball and soccer fields out which has brought in revenue."

Other revenue stabilizers are also being considered.

"We want to give you as many choices as possible, we are even considering some classes having a late start because then the weather might be warmer so you might be able to hold your in person meeting outdoors," Dr. Wang said.

Get updates on this story at mcccvoice.org



Golf tournament raises \$25k for scholarships

By Elliot Smith
Reporter

The college raised more than \$25,000 for scholarships at the twenty-ninth annual MCCC Foundation Golf Outing played on October 5 at the Trenton Country Club in West Trenton. The Foundation oversees the distribution of the donations, individual and corporate, for the scholarships that MCCC offers.

According to John Simone, Athletic Director at MCCC and also the coordinator of the outing, it "is one of the prime sources of scholarship money for the student-athletes of MCCC".

Simone says the pandemic, in addition to the college cancelling most onsite classes since March 2020, has dampened the MCCC event

schedule.

However, the pandemic does not appear to have dampened the enthusiasm of corporate and individual donors in their contributions to the MCCC Foundation and its scholarship programs. Even with only half the normal participants, 60 this year as compared to 110 -120 golfers in past years, the Foundation was able to meet its goal of \$25,000.00, and exceeded last year's numbers according to official word from college administration.

Reggie Murray, the new head coach of the Vikings women's basketball helped organize the event and gave him a chance to meet others in MCCC athletics. Coach Murray's resume includes 600 wins at Trenton Central High School in his 32 years in NJ scholastic sports

Mercer's athletics pro-

gram according to Coach Murray is going to be "hampered by recruiting limitations imposed by the pandemic."

Although there have been some teams holding socially distanced practices in the fall, Murray and Simone say the goal date for resuming athletics will be January 1, 2021. However there will be an abbreviated schedule of 14 games or up to 22 if circumstances permit.

The question of how the lack of sports this fall will affect the eligibility of the student-athletes during their academic/athletic careers at MCCC is one the coaches say doesn't have a clear answer. However, Simone says the programs being instituted will "benefit the general student population as well as the student-athletes, attracting top-level student-athletes that will take the MCCC athletic programs to the next level."



PHOTO | ELLIOT SMITH

MCCC Director of Athletics, John Simon, ran the golf tournament scholarship fundraiser on Oct. 5.

Covid-19's impact on local dining

By Ken Fantry
Reporter

Many MCCC students work in food service and since stay at home orders were put in place back in March they have been fighting to keep their jobs while local restaurant owners have been fighting to keep their businesses afloat.

In addition to delivery and curb-side pick-up as options for diners, restaurants have also turned to outdoor dining to increase their revenue. As more has been learned about covid-19, it has become clear that being outdoors, in well ventilated areas and at a distance, is less risky than social gatherings of other kinds.

With that in mind, New Jersey's Governor Phil Murphy allowed restaurants to open for outdoor dining back in mid June, albeit with many safety precautions in place. Then, with constant pressure from bar and restaurant owners, especially ones at the Jersey Shore, Murphy opened up indoor dining just before Labor Day.

Samantha Campisi, a student at Washington University at St. Louis who is from Princeton and is taking classes at MCCC this semester, has been working as a server at Princeton's historic pub the

Alchemist and Barrister since before covid and is back there now.

She says they were fortunate to already feature outdoor dining on their covered patio, but nonetheless, covid has made many changes necessary. Indoor seating is capped at 25%, and customers indoors must be masked unless seated at the socially distanced table. No touch hand sanitizer dispensers are now at both entrances.

Many of the resulting differences are by now, expected. According to Campisi, previously the restaurant and its two bars were "a much more crowded environment. Now we try to distance the tables as much as possible, and seat fewer of them. So obviously we have fewer people in the restaurant in general." And, of course, "sanitization has definitely ramped up" she says.

In terms of her personal safety Campisi says, "I feel safe, the staff is always wearing their masks, we try our best to make sure we are washing our hands as often as we get the chance. The people who are working there are taking as many precautions as possible."

Are the customers complying with restrictions? According to Campisi it depends. "Some customers are



PHOTO | SERENA BOLITHO

Distanced dining has been a success in Princeton, but colder weather may curb patron's willingness to eat out.

extremely cautious, they put their masks on as soon as the server comes up to the table, just to be extra protective. Other customers, not so much. Some customers come in and walk up to the bar, and might not have their mask on, and we need to tell them to put in on. The vast majority of the time I believe customers are respectful of our Covid policies, but it's just the occasional person who comes in and doesn't want to put their

mask on," Campisi says.

But covid-19 cases are on the rise in New Jersey again with a +44% increase in the last two weeks according to statistics maintained by the New York Times and the office of the governor, and state Commissioner of Health Judith Persichilli says the state is "anticipating a second wave" that could turn into a "surge" if residents don't keep up with masking and distancing protocols.

Nationwide cases are up too, with new cases topping 50,000 to 60,000 per day, approaching the record highs back in July.

It is not clear when or if Governor Murphy may shut down indoor dining again, but outdoor dining will certainly be impacted by the approaching winter weather even for people otherwise willing to take the risk of restaurant dining.

Personal Experience: Surviving the line at the MVC

By the time you get inside the other people in line will be old friends

By Mohamed Haddara
Reporter

The temperature was a brisk 52 degrees and lines were wrapped around the Baker's Basin Motorvehicle Commission in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. People were tired since they had already been there, but there was a seemingly positive overall morale. At 8:30 a.m.

Three boys were standing in line, who appeared to be having a great time standing in this line — at least by comparison to everyone else. Standing in the middle was Adam, a tall man in his early 60s. He was there to finally register a car on which the registration lapsed over a year ago.

"We considered selling it," he said.

The two other men in this MVC line trio, while they will remain unnamed, were happy to chime in about their own MVC nightmare scenarios, as well as those of their friends. One man said "Google said the lines here were shorter." His wife had waited in line in Hazlet, NJ, all day a few weeks prior, only to be sent home without service. After that experience, they weren't going to make that

mistake again.

As I surveyed the line, we joked around about different aspects of DMV and whether this wait was worse than driving around illegally. Another person in the line yelled out, "Sell the whole damn government to Walmart," which received quite a few laughs.

The government did not actually think this was such a bad idea at one point in time. In 1995 the state did, in fact, privatize what was then called the DMV, or Department of Motor Vehicles. However, in 2002, a state legislative report said that the privatization resulted in poor and inconsistent service as well as "poorly paid employees who have received inadequate benefits, resulting in a high turnover rate at DMV agencies." The DMV was returned to NJ state control in 2003.

After having lunch, I returned to the parking lot to do some exit polling. After being brushed off a couple times with "Sorry, in a rush" and "Have a good one, buddy," I was just about ready to call it quits. Then I encountered a familiar face: Adam, from earlier in the day. He recognized me and waved his registration papers over his head, signaling the day's success.

Five hours in line and he had emerged triumphant and "ready to mount a victory parade down Route 206," he said.

I asked him how his comrades in line fared, but the news was dismal. One man, who Adam referred to as his new best friend, finally got into the building where he said "The scary lady at the window [told] him there was a mistake in his paperwork and [that] he'll need to come back."

Check out the NJMVC website, www.state.nj.us/mvc/FAQ page information about extensions, changes to the law about online renewals, and much more, as well as some of the rules around why you may be having issues performing MVC tasks through the website. There is a lot of information that might very well save you a trip to the MVC and hours of waiting in line.

If, after all else, you must go in person, be sure to arrive prepared with all the correct paperwork, IDs, pins, activated credit cards, a checkbook incase of bad card reads, and whatever else you can think of. The more prepared you are before leaving for the MVC, the less of a chance you'll have of needing to return another day.

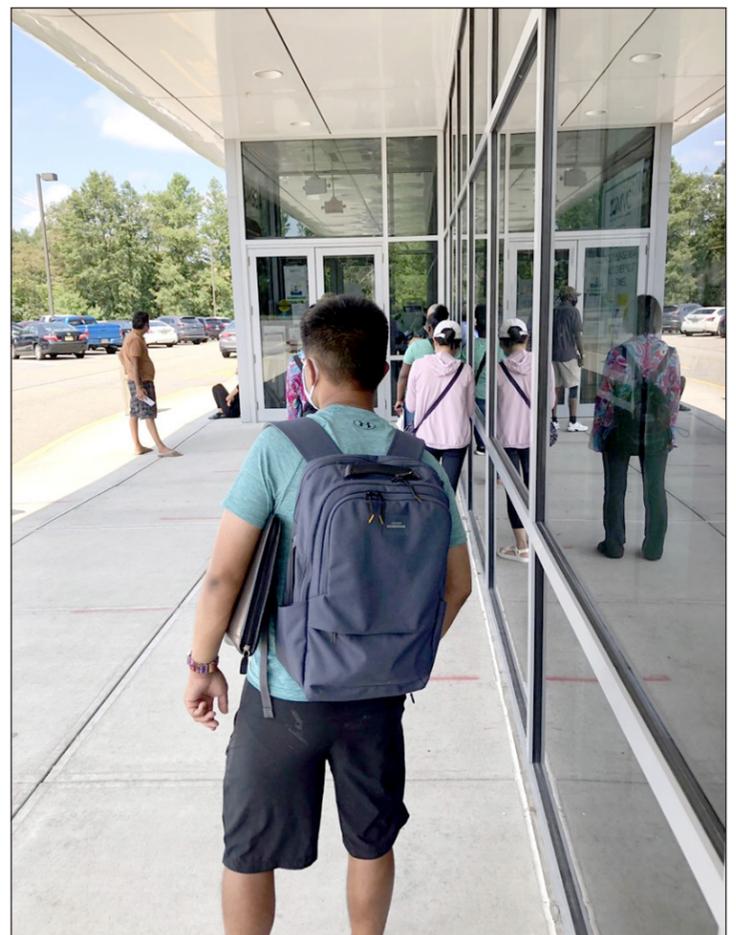


PHOTO | MOHAMED HADDARA

The lines at the Motorvehicle Commission are so long that by the time people get inside they have developed friendships with their fellow comrades.

CHALK MURALS

PHOTO | JASON NORTON

PHOTO | JASON NORTON

Princeton's Art & About brings color to the streets

PHOTO | JASON NORTON



PHOTO | JASON NORTON



PHOTO | JASON NORTON

By Jason Norton
Reporter

The Arts Council of Princeton held a free pop-up event called Chalk Murals on the streets of Princeton on October 3. It is one in a series of live interactive arts events taking place on weekend dates ending October 24.

At the Murals event the Paul Robeson Center for the Arts was the central hub.

Artist Andre's Duque was there creating a combination of contemporary and classical artwork. He worked from photos of masters from the Renaissance period such as Michelangelo, Botticelli and Da

Vinci, Duque and mixed these classical images with some famous Princeton faces such as Einstein and Paul Robeson himself.

Robeson, who died in 1976, was a Princeton native and Black man, famous as Broadway singer and actor. He was also a college football player at Rutgers inducted into the hall of fame, and later became a civil rights activist. Duque says Robeson is inspiring to him for his leadership and fight for civil rights, being a philanthropist and having the community at the center of everything he did.

Up the street from Duque's mural Susan DeCon-

cini, who has been a scenic artist for the McCarter Theater in Princeton since 2006 worked on her own mural. She used a piece of charcoal tied to the end of a bamboo stick to form an outline which she then filled in with a leaf mural in bright chalk colors.

DeConcini said events like the Chalk Mural benefit "People who have been starved of live visual art" due to the ongoing pandemic.

She added that "it is a good way to teach kids to appreciate the arts and the little freedoms available we can partake in together as a community!"

Around the corner, in front of Princeton Garden Theater, Rashad Davis was sprawled out on all fours working on a

mural creation of a character from Nickelodeon's animated series Avatar: The Last Airbender.

Davis is a published author and illustrator of children's picture books. He says he strives to "Give children of color a safe place between the pages of his books." He was inspired to do this after the death of Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old Black boy who was shot by a white police officer in Cleveland, Ohio in 2014.

He feels these events are important since "We can connect through art."

Another artist at the event, Marlon Davila aka "7ove Child" was working on a mural. Davila is a MCCC Alumn in Fine Arts is a muralist and painter.

TOP: Artist Marlon "Love Child" Davila works on a chalk mural featuring both the face and essence of pivotal women in art history. ABOVE: Mural by Andres Duque combining classical influences and local notables. FAR LEFT: Susan DeConcini uses charcoal on a stick to outline her chalk mural and bring out their vibrant colors. LEFT: Rashad Davis, children's book author, creating a mural of a character from Nickelodeon's Avatar: The Last Airbender.

Although he was initially interested in Graphic Design a professor nudged him toward painting and he fell in love with it and has been painting ever since. Davila says events like Chalk Murals "Are extremely important because art is not only self-healing, but it has the power to bring people together from all walks of life."

Maria Evans, Artistic Director at Arts Council for the last ten years said the new pop-up events "Are a way to reinvent things with the arts and community."

The remaining events include Plein Air Paint Out, Pop-Up Poetry, and Princeton Makes Art. To learn more visit: artscouncilofprinceton.org/calendar/.

Trenton's Punk Rock Flea Market overcomes covid



Jen Tracy, artist and podcaster, sells horror themed watercolor paintings at the Trenton Punk Rock Flea Market.

PHOTO | ELIJAH PARKMAN-WILLIAMS

By Elijah Parkman-Williams
Reporter

Trenton, once known for the droves of workers who flocked to the iron and steel factories, is now often regarded as a high crime city left impoverished when the industrial jobs moved out in the 1980s. But a variety of artists have been working steadily over the past decade to revive and reinvent the city's image by bringing culture back to Trenton.

One event that happens multiple times per year and which didn't get canceled this October, despite covid-19, is the Trenton Punk Rock Flea Market (TPRFM) with the theme Halloween Market. It was held on October 10 and 11 at Cure Insurance Arena and featured a food, culture, and masked, socially distanced individuals.

The flea market is what it sounds like, hundreds of booths with vendors selling everything from vintage records to sculptures, costume jewelry to hand stitched clothing unique to every designer. The event, which typically takes place five times per year has been ranked one of the best flea markets in America by the Huffington Post.

Joseph Kazemka, the flea market's founder, studied advertising design at MCCC back in the 1990s and went on to a career in graphic design but didn't get to finish his degree. He's back at MCCC now but balancing his classes against not only his work with the flea market but also organizing the Capitol City Food Truck Battle,



PHOTO | ELIJAH PARKMAN-WILLIAMS

Up and coming new business Secret Squirrel Cookies founders Michael Lipka and Paula Lopez started the business as a passion project during the covid-19 lockdown.

running his own punk rock hardcore label Hellminded Records, and serving as Event and Creative Director for Art All Night among other projects.

It was his work with Art All Night, another Trenton culture fest, that prompted Kuzemka to start the flea market back in 2013. He says he wanted to focus on the arts and promoting small businesses of which there were plenty at the Halloween Market.

Jen Tracy an artist and podcaster for the No Sleep Podcast, was there selling her horror themed watercolor paintings when two visitors passed

by saying, "I wish I had more money to shop." She sells her works throughout New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Blacksmith Daniel Lapidow is another vendor who was at the event. He is a local and owner of Hebrew Hammer who has been working with Art All Night and The Trenton Punk Rock Flea Market for years. He creates custom metal pieces that range from sculptures to dice to horseshoes and Bata-rangs (metal boomerangs shaped like bats). When not at festivals you can find him and his work on North Clinton Avenue in Trenton where he gives

demonstrations and aids in historical reenactments.

Lapidow said of the event, "people know me in the area, so it's the best show I do."

Another vendor that stood out was Secret Squirrel Cookies. Michael Lipka and founder Paula Lopez started the business as a passion project during covid-19 and it grew from there. Lopez said she wants to spread her love and passion for fun, giant cookies.

When asked why they chose the Trenton Punk Rock Flea Market as their first venue Lopez said, "We wanted to get out and during covid. It's really

hard to find outlets for being in the public." She went on to explain, "Cookies are one of those things you need to see and touch and feel."

The market was full of people young and old from every walk of life, each sporting their personal punk rock anthem in their attire. Friends talked about their favorite DC or Marvel prints. Families devoured burritos beside the food trucks. A herd of nerds waited around for an open spot at an antiques stand.

It was dangerous for anyone to come to the flea market hungry.

The heavy scent of Kielbasa from Cas' Pierogi & Kielbasa lingered in the air. People inhaled lobster rolls from Cousins Maine Lobster in mere seconds. Others emptied their wallets for the juiciest slabs of pork roll at Johnny's Pork Roll.

In the midst of this pandemic Joseph Kazemka says he realized the importance of still hosting this event. After spending months locked inside our homes it was clear people needed to de-stress, safely.

Kuzemka said, "By taking the artists and the makers we have here in Trenton and bringing in artists from out of town we wanted to create a really positive synergy that can impact the city."

Interested in TPRFM? The next big event is Trenton Wreck The Halls Flea Market coming this December. Learn more on their Facebook page at: facebook.com/TrentonPunkRockFleaMarket

FACING

Masks are now part of our lives.



Irma Vallieres - Queens, NY
 "I'm a New Yorker, I love New York. I'm loving Jersey a little, certain things, but I miss my hometown. My heart is in New York but my body is in Princeton."



Richard and Joan Druckman - Princeton Junction
 "Somebody sent them to us from Florida. There is an artist who's name is Britto and he has very unusual art. They made these masks and they sent them to us."



Ali McTar - Princeton, NJ
 "My ex-girlfriend and I stitched this mask as a part of a campaign in town to make masks back in March or April when things were really bad. I like wearing it because it isn't as sterile or as medical looking as other masks. I love the floral print."



Amit Bhattacharya
 "This one is camo and so it is the best one for me. I think it looks really nice."



Sagi Mathew - Woodbridge, NJ
 "We had been using the surgical masks for sometime but we had to buy a lot and they weren't getting here on time so we decided to make our own. My wife sewed them for us. It's much easier because we can wash them and reuse them again."



Tracy Tewksbury - Newtown, Pennsylvania
 "I'm a french teacher. All my masks are french themed or, thanks to my daughter-in-law, garden themed."



Samar El-Zein - Princeton, NJ
 "Tatreez is a unique craft in Palestine, a symbol of women's resistance that has been in danger of dying...I was thrilled when I saw it [on] Instagram. How wonderful to keep this craft alive! I love the coins [jingle] as well. I'm having so much fun wearing it."



Ashoke Bhattacharya
 "My wife picked this one for me. She obliged. You can put several colors from LIMELITE in Princeton. I own the business."



Merri Field - Bucks County, PA
 "Obviously I'm heavily supporting everything that RBG did. She's a superhero and this was a gift from my mother who is a very liberal democrat. Together we're continuing to fight and be as loud as we can now."



Cathy Oldakowski - Clinton, NJ
 "Someone gave me this mask, I'm starting to collect them as my friends buy me masks. This one I wore because I had a black shirt on."



Jeanette Mieses - Woodland Park - MCCC Student
 "I sewed up this mask and a few others myself. I loved the bright colors and style of this fabric right away. I wanted something that felt really global and represented who I am but would still feel contemporary. I ended up making a bunch more for donation after getting my technique right with these."



Hannah Moskowitz
 "I got my mask as a gift from my husband's sister. She sewed it for me. My husband's sister sews masks."

REALITY

. What do they reveal about us?



Pritya - Princeton, NJ
"It is pretty comfortable for me to use right now. It is nice and does the job."



Lisa Maul - Clinton, NJ
"This mask is from a dear friend, we are both cancer survivors, and a friend was selling them as a fundraiser so she bought me one. This is a gift and I wear it proudly."



Lisa Verniero - Clinton, NJ
"I like this mask because it is fun with flowers and I was wearing a green sweater and the greens matched. I like to match what I'm wearing with my mask. I go to a store and buy masks everywhere. I'm a little obsessed with masks right now."



Linda Lauchaire - Clinton, NJ
"I tried some beautiful masks that were made for me but I could not tolerate the tightness behind my ears so I have just now settled for the dollar-a-piece throw away ones and that works really well. So I'm not too fashionable, or fashionable at all, but that's my MO."



Pritya - Princeton, NJ
"I mask out so I decided to get several filters in it and it is in Princeton, my wife's friend bought it at the store."



Amelia Disanto - Princeton, NJ
"I'm a quilter and this is a piece of fabric I had left over from a quilt I made."



Jordan Volpe - Washington, D.C.
"I just needed a mask so I went to Dick's sporting goods and these were the ones they had so I just got it. I'm not really a wizards fan."



Kathleen Deangelis - Clinton, NJ
"I bought this myself because I thought it was pretty and then Kate Middleton had almost the exact same mask the week after I bought it, and then they all sold out. So I was so pleased with myself. I only wear it on special occasions, this is my special occasions mask."



Pritya - Washington, DC
"I got these for our microwedding. I got different masks for all of us to wear."



Lisa D'ambrogio - Princeton, NJ
Math Adjunct Professor at MCCC
"This was a fundraiser for Fair Fight, I believe that is the name of the organization. It's Stacy Abrahms's organization and she was selling these as a fundraiser."



Harley - Princeton, NJ
"If my mom can get me to wear a mask, you can wear one too!"



Drake Baer - Princeton, NJ
"The Summer and fall of Covid have made 2020 the first year in over 30 that my husband and I haven't fled Princeton for a few months. This scarf is from Edinburgh, where the annual Fringe Festival was virtual for the first time, like our summer and fall abroad."

QUIZ: What podcast should you listen to next?

Take the quiz below to find the right bingeable audio show for you.

By Ashley Jackson

QUESTIONS

How often do you listen to podcasts?

- A. Never, this would be my first.
- B. Occasionally, if they fit my niche interests.
- C. Pretty regularly, I already have some favorites.
- D. All the time. I'm a podcast devotee.

What's your favorite TV genre?

- A. Reality TV, I love pop culture.
- B. ESPN, I'm always watching the game.
- C. True Crime, I have a morbid sense of curiosity.
- D. The News, I want to stay up-to date.

When do you want to listen?

- A. While I'm cleaning, or hanging around the house.
- B. During my workouts to keep my energy up.

- C. On my commute, or on long car drives.
- D. In the shower, as I get ready for the day.

What vibe are you looking for?

- A. Like my friends and I are together chilling.
- B. Total chaos, an unpredictable wild time.
- C. Scary campfire stories, but they're all real.
- D. Informational and quick. I need to know while on the go.

How do you like to unwind?

- A. Scrolling through TikTok.
- B. Playing catch or frisbee.
- C. Binge watching my favorite cold case documentaries..
- D. Reading the newspaper.

ANSWERS

MOSTLY A's

You should check out VIEWS! TikTok Star David Dobrik and YouTuber Jason Nash offer a behind-the-scenes look at creating their vlogs. Perfect for fans of pop culture, celebrity gossip, and internet drama.



MOSTLY B's

You should check out Pardon My Take! This Barstool's commentary is about getting loud, wild, and hype about the latest sports takes. Perfect for sport fanatics and lovers of the air horn.



MOSTLY C's

You should check out Crime Junkie! The ultimate deep dive into bone chilling cases with hosts Ashley and Britt. Perfect for true crime lovers, cold case obsessors, and whodunit headscratchers.



MOSTLY D's

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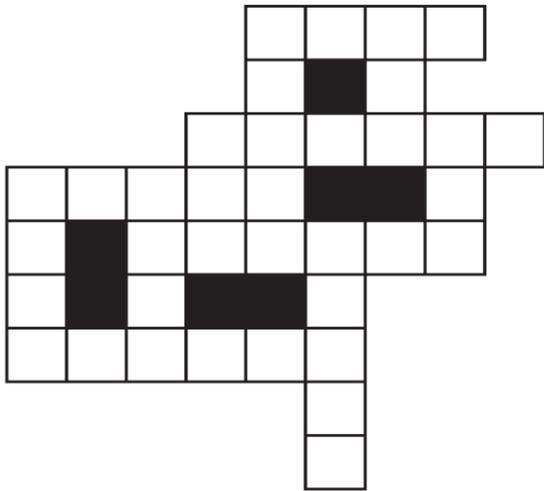
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PUZZLES EXTRA



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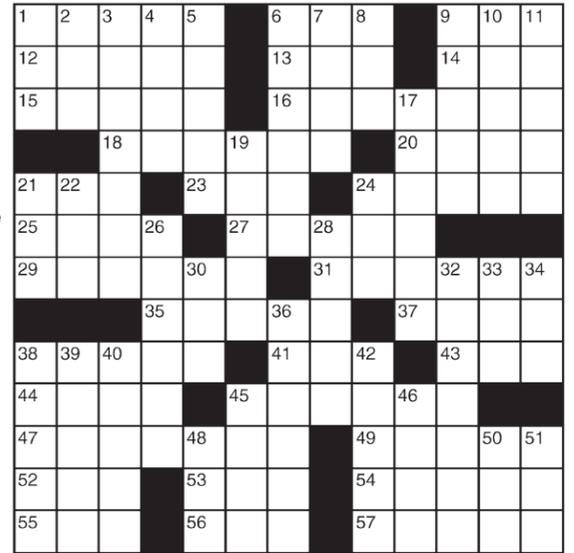
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Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. **HAGNEC** becomes **CHANGE**). Prepare to use only **ONE** word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥**RATHE** becomes **HATER**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

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Former freshmen
- 6 Squid squirt
- 9 Doctrine
- 12 Construction piece
- 13 Cattle call
- 14 IRS employee
- 15 1492 ship
- 16 SAT takers' equipment
- 18 Pet rodent, often
- 20 Warmth
- 21 Second person
- 23 More, to Manuel
- 24 Portion of a repair bill
- 25 Great Lake
- 27 Amulet
- 29 "Where the Wild Things Are" author
- 31 "Nighthawks" painter
- 35 Edition
- 37 Genesis maker
- 38 Sings like Ella
- 41 Apprehend
- 43 Promptly
- 44 Sea eagle
- 45 Downy ducks
- 47 Necklace ornament
- 49 "Psycho" star



- 52 Commotion
- 53 Tall tale
- 54 Rod of tennis lore
- 55 Actress Myrna
- 56 Toss in
- 57 Tools for duels
- 6 Mischievous
- 7 Yule refrain
- 8 "-Tiki"
- 9 Less friendly
- 10 Pie-in-the-face sound
- 11 Sail supports
- 17 Winners
- 19 Supports
- 21 "Certainly"
- 22 Mined find
- 24 Expert
- 26 Rewrote, maybe
- 28 Winning
- 30 Fool
- 32 Musingly
- 33 Swelled head
- 34 Uncooked
- 36 One
- 38 Calyx component
- 39 Guiding principle
- 40 Bother
- 42 Ball VIP
- 45 Oklahoma city
- 46 Harvest
- 48 Carte lead-in
- 50 "Golly!"
- 51 Storefront sign abbr.

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Three stories of covid-19 survival

VIEWPOINTS



Brian Amigh

I never expected I would get the virus as I had just spent the last two weeks holed up in a socially reclusive bubble recovering from bronchitis.

Unfortunately for me, the other members of my household are essential workers, so I quickly traded one illness for another. I remember the first day of symptoms vividly. At first, it was just mild fatigue, but it had blossomed into an inability to keep my eyes open by the end of the day.

My body felt like it had been boiled from the inside out and I had a temperature of 102F to prove it. I feared the worst was yet to come, only it never did.

I woke up the next day to find my temperature had lowered to 100F, and although my fatigue was still present it wasn't severe enough to keep me bedridden. On the third day, my breathing began to feel restricted but I had expected that, so it was not enough to

worry me.

I was more bothered by my new inability to smell or taste things because somewhere along the line in quarantine, eating had transitioned from a necessity to a hobby.

These symptoms persisted, fluctuating in intensity for the next two weeks, but they were never as bad as that first day. My experience with COVID-19 could be compared to walking a marathon, time-consuming, and tiresome but not deadly.

However, I've spoken with people whose experiences were more akin to sprinting across a field that never ends, and by that, I mean, intense periods of feeling on the verge of death, gasping for breath, wishing for it to all be over.

Two people I talked to are Cody and Jasmin. They asked that their real names not be used because of fear of the stigma still associated with the virus. Here are their stories.

Cody's feeling of invincibility was his downfall. He never took the virus seriously until it forced him to. It began with a slight cough, but by day 4 he was nearly unable to leave his room.

The fatigue he endured was so potent that it took all of his energy just to get up to go to the bathroom.

His family brought him food, but he recalls, "I was unable to taste anything so I rarely ate what they brought."

By week two, he was considering going into the emergency room because it was becoming more strenuous to breathe, with no signs of stopping.

Still, he says, "I didn't want to worry my family." So he stayed home to fight on his own.

Thankfully he made it through, but the virus didn't leave empty-handed. It took 15 lbs away from his body and three weeks away from his life before it began to fade away.

The after-effects of the virus lingered for another month before he "felt normal again," he says. But he was just grateful to have gotten through it.

For Jasmin it started with an innocent nosebleed in April, but by May she was hit with a full range of symptoms. She developed a fever and nausea. Vomiting became unavoidable.

Like me, she was also robbed of her sense of taste and smell, but that was the least of it. A week after she developed a fever, she was admitted to the emergency room.

It was there that they hooked her up to oxygen, and it was there that she lived for the next month.

Her first few days at the hospital were plagued with nightmares of drowning, and panic attacks, but because of the medication and oxygen administered, she was able to

calm down and survive.

Survive, not recover. That process would take much longer. After she left the hospital, everything from her chest up was in pain, sleeping became difficult, and the virus left her body functions feeling, "blocked up."

Her experience with the virus was a lengthy one and at the end of it she had this message to share: listen to federal and state officials about wearing masks and wash your hands. Prevention is the best way to deal with the virus.

Anecdotal stories aside, how deadly is Covid-19? As of October 9, 2020, the European CDC marks the American death rate of those infected with the virus at 2.8%.

This number doesn't initially seem high compared with pandemics of the past like the black death, the smallpox pandemic, or the Spanish flu, but that's what makes it so terrifying. It makes it easy to downplay the severity of the virus.

It makes it easy to take on a lax attitude with measures utilized to control the virus, and it makes it easy to have the invincible mindset that leads to infection and death.

I'll leave you all with a question, one my friend asked that helped me put things into perspective: If you were offered a bowl with 100 pieces of your favorite candy in it and told that three would kill you, would you have a piece?

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top ten

Lowest State Taxes

1. Alaska
2. Delaware
3. Montana
4. Nevada
5. Wyoming
6. Florida
7. Utah
8. Idaho
9. Colorado
10. Tennessee

Source: Wallet Hub

For artists looking for Inktober inspiration, we've got ideas

By Kristina Hontz
Senior Artist

Each year during the month of October, artists around the world get excited for the popular art prompt list called Inktober. The goal is for artists to build consistency and community by using a common prompt each day to inspire an image no matter how small or sketchy. The central premise was to share a goal and to have freedom to interpret the prompt in any way.

However, over the past year the creator of Inktober, Jake Parker, has taken that sense of freedom away. Parker

has bashed on artists for using digital ink tools instead of traditional ones on multiple occasions. Recently he has been attempting to brand Inktober, which has taken away the sense of a shared community from many artists. He has also allegedly plagiarized another artist's book for his own Inktober book, an action that has cut into Inktober's popularity.

The VOICE's Senior Artist, Kristina Hontz, is providing an alternative, a spooky prompt list to inspire the many artists in our community. There are no rules and no pressure, just take a word off the list and make art in any way you desire.

VOICE's Spooky Scary Prompt List

1. Undead	11. Alone	22. Howling
2. Circus	12. Abomination	23. Bones
3. Critter	13. Foggy	24. Petrified
4. Darkness	14. Spell	25. Creaking
5. Villainous	15. Falling	26. Haunt
6. Brain	16. Sharp	27. Rotting
7. Spirit	17. Broken	28. Tense
8. Needle	18. Disgust	29. Jumpy
9. Scar	19. Unknown	30. Shadow
10. Flames	20. Grizzly	31. Deception
	21. Voodoo	

created by: Kristina Hontz

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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

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For students like me, physical disabilities make college even harder during the pandemic

PERSPECTIVES



Alex Gonzalez

College is stressful, but for some students, like me, the stress is increased by having a physical disability. Because at-home learning seems like it would make things easier for people with mobility issues, there isn't much discussion about how the changes in how education is provided can make it even harder for us to succeed.

I have a medical condition called Spina Bifida where the spinal cord fails to develop properly in utero. Most people with this condition are in a wheelchair for life, they cannot feed themselves or take care of other basic needs.

I have been blessed by God because I am able to feed myself. I am able to walk, though I do use forearm crutches to support myself because of issues with balance. And my mom always stays with me to look after me in case I fall or to carry anything that I can't.

A year ago I was on the front page of The College VOICE because my mom and I went to the college Board of Trustees to ask for the elevators, which were frequently broken, to be fixed since she was having to carry me to my classrooms on the third floor of the BS building multiple times per week for weeks on end. I explained that plenty of people have mobility issues, whether they are short or long term, that the problem is bigger than just me. There has been improvement with the elevators, but this kind of advocacy takes time and energy.

Now add the challenge of the pandemic and the shifts we've all had to make to be in college right now.



The author, Alex Gonzalez, is among many students with mobility issues that compound the difficulties of learning during the covid epidemic.

My professors have always been willing to work with me and I know they will continue to do so, but taking time out for appointments and potentially surgery can set a student like me back. And adding the unpredictable element of the pandemic's impact on education puts students like me at further risk of falling behind or losing the education we need to be successful.

-Alex Gonzalez

This semester, I have two hybrid courses, one online class, and one remote class. The hybrid courses require me to go to campus once a week. The other days are scheduled on Zoom. It's a tricky schedule, bouncing back and forth between different modes of instruction, and the disability adds a layer of difficulty.

Over the last two years I have been dealing with chronic

pain and muscle spasms. With Spina Bifida, it is difficult to exercise. Physical therapists help people like me by giving us things that we can do to get some exercise and I have been consistent about following those protocols including doing stretches to warm up my body.

However, I woke up one day after working out with severe pain in my left leg. I went to the hospital to see what was

going on. The doctors sent me for X-Rays, noted that I had strained my left quad muscle and gave me muscle relaxants to minimize the pain and reduce muscle spasms. Then there was more physical therapy. I did everything I was told, all the stretches, but it didn't help.

So I had a follow up appointment via telemedicine. When I told the doctor that the therapy wasn't working, he told me to see a neurologist. The neurologist sent me for an MRI on September 3 of this year, 5 days before the start of the fall semester at MCCC. I was still having the pain and spasms when classes began on September 8.

I have continued classes for the past month, waiting to get the results of the MRI. When I finally got them on October 5, the doctor said that I have a tethered spinal cord which is when the spinal cord is pulled down and gets stuck in the spinal canal. This is what is causing the pain and spasms in my leg. It's a condition that can only be fixed with surgery.

So I am scheduled to see the neurosurgeon later this month, and after two years, we will go over what can be done to fix the tethered cord.

Now consider that the National Center for Education Statistics says that of students with disabilities on college campuses, 8% have mobility or orthopedic issues and that 2-year public colleges tend to see more students with disabilities who need care and may not be able to live in dorms away from home. The sad fact is, we are less likely to graduate from college than our able bodied peers. We are already having to fight harder to succeed.

My professors have always been willing to work with me and I know they will continue to do so, but taking time out for appointments and potentially surgery can set a student like me back. And adding the unpredictable element of the pandemic's impact on education puts students like me at further risk of falling behind or losing the education we need to be successful.

top ten

Hardest-Working Countries* Hours/worker

1. Mexico
2. Costa Rica
3. Korea
4. Russia
5. Greece
6. Chile
7. Israel
8. Poland
9. Czech Republic
10. USA

Source: OECD



FAST JLAW FACT

There is a list of things student reporters can't do because they are unethical. One is to promise favorable coverage in return for someone giving them info.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Most students who join the staff of The College VOICE and stick with it see their grades go up over time even though they are busier than the were before.

JOURNO LINGO

The title of a newspaper that appears at the top of the front page is called the "flag." Most papers keep the same flag for decades.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

A faculty media adviser at a community college student newspaper in NJ was fired in the 2000s because of an editorial cartoon spoofing the college's logo.

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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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 many skulls can you keep on your mantle until it's considered a "problem"?
-Mulder

Dear Mulder,
If you only have 1, it seems too amateurish, but more than 3 and you may have a serial problem that will require the expertise of an interior design consultant.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
Should I get rid of my

entire wardrobe and replace it all with sweatpants since nobody goes out anymore anyway?
-Jammies

Dear Jammies,
Sure.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
Does anyone else read manga like I do? If not are there any good books that don't have pictures?
-Eli

Dear Eli,
There are 15 professors in the English department at Mercer. I bet one of them might have a recommendation for you.
-The VOICE.

Dear VOICE,
How do you know if you have COVID or are just hitting the middle of the semester?
-MCCC student

Dear MCCC student,
It's not an either or situation. But yeah, they both feel about the same.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
Any updates on what the spring semester will look like in terms of campus access?
-Eager Beaver

Dear Beev,
We suggest you read the front page article again.
-The VOICE

NOTE: THIS FEATURE IS FOR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES ONLY.

FLASH GORDON



HOROSCOPES



Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 19

Capricorn, you will feel extra giving this month. Remember Capricorn, you can make gifts instead of buying them. Save your money!



Aquarius

Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Aquarius, you have been focused lately, good job! Remember this attitude, and keep it up!



Pisces

Feb. 19 - Mar. 20

Pisces, you will feel more artistic this month, use this feeling to create something new. It's Inktober! Check out the article inside.



Aries

Mar. 21 - Apr. 19

November will bring you peace and security. Remember, great things take time. Do not rush.



Taurus

Apr. 20 - May 20

You will feel inspired this month. Don't be afraid to try something new even if it's something small like a walk on an unfamiliar trail.



Gemini

May 21 - Jun. 20

You feel more thankful than usual. Remember to spread that gratitude and tell those in your life that you appreciate them. It will have a positive ripple effect.



Cancer

Jun. 21 - Jul. 22

You wish you had more time to spend with your loved ones, and it's hard to balance with all your work. Don't worry. You'll get a break soon.



Leo

Jul. 23 - Aug. 22

It's a busy month and you will have to rely on your lion-like temperament to keep from getting overwhelmed. Remember you are very brave.



Virgo

Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

November will bring you clarity. You may have made some mistakes in the past, but for the situations you are facing right now, you can trust your instincts.



Libra

Sept. 23 - Oct. 22

New opportunities will present themselves this month and you are eager to jump at them. But you know you have a tendency to get going too fast. Slow down!



Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

These past weeks may have been buzzing with energy and obligations, but you will soon have more time to relax. Try not to blow it by over scheduling yourself.



Sagittarius

Nov. 22 - Dec. 21

On November 21 the sun will enter Sagittarius's constellation. The beginning of your season will add lots of energy to your life. Remember to relax, Sagittarius.

SUDOKU

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		1			4	6		
6			2					5
	7		6	8	9			
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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.

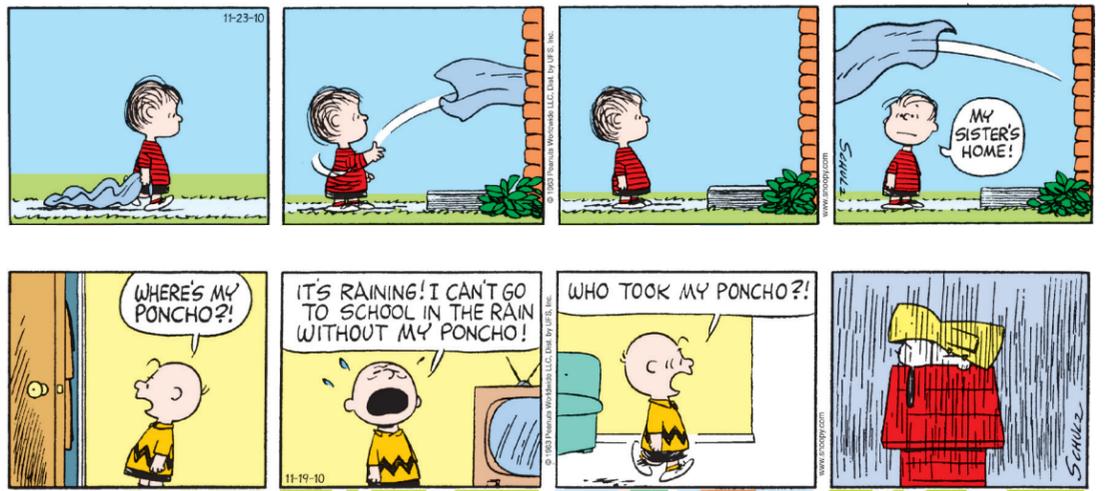
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

- ♦ Moderate
- ♦♦ Challenging
- ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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

Answer

2X PEANUTS 2X DILBERT



2X DILBERT

