



The student newspaper of Mercer County Community College since 1968

What to expect when you return to campus

More students will be on campus and new smart classrooms will be added

By Mandy Sidhu and
Elijah Parkman-Williams
Reporters



Health Sciences students have been back in the classroom since fall 2020 and more students will be soon.

PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Registration for fall classes will open on Monday, April 19 and students returning to campus in the fall will have more options for instruction than were available for the last two semesters, according to MCCC President Dr. Jianping Wang.

The familiar remote and online classes will still be available but more face to face sections of all classes will be offered and a new smart classroom option will exist, which MCCC President Wang says, "allows you to conference in so you don't have to be physically inside the classroom to join the class."

At least 18 classes will be outfitted with the smart classroom technology which will allow students to come in person or just stay home while staying in the same course with the same professor.

There will be other changes as well.

According to President Wang, the shuttle buses between the Trenton and West Windsor campuses will be

See **CAMPUS** page 3

"We have done everything we could to make the campus safe, and if people comply with face masks and social distancing, I think we're going to be ok."

- John Simone, Dean of Students, co-chair of MCCC Reopen Task Force

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JUST FOR FUN

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One step closer to legal weed sales in NJ

By Ashley Jackson &
Elijah Parkman-Williams
Senior Reporters

After signing a bill that stopped the arrests of small possessions of marijuana back in February, Governor Murphy has now appointed five people to a Regulatory Commission that will begin the discussion of the details on legalizing weed in the state.

A meeting will be held on Monday, April 12 to lay the groundwork for how

many dispensaries there are going to be as well as who can hold licenses to operate them in New Jersey.

"This will be the first meeting of many as we put the values of equity and safety into practice in regulating this new industry," Dianna Houenou, the commission's chair, said in a statement, according to NJ.com

There had been earlier snags when "the NAACP complained that the commission included no Black men, the demographic most disproportionately affected by marijuana

prohibition," NJ.com reported.

Murphy said at an unrelated press conference, "New Jersey's broken and indefensible marijuana laws, which permanently stained the records of many residents and short-circuited their futures, and which disproportionately hurt communities of color and failed the meaning of justice at every level, social or otherwise, are no more."

Seems like it is only a matter of time before New Jersey's economy can look forward to some weed profits.



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ARTS

Why do you want to be scared?

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FOOD

Mastoris in Bordentown
3 perspectives

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OPINION

Rebranding? No.
New mascot? Yes.

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After 52 years math Professor Art Schwartz retires

By **Elijah Parkman-Williams**
Senior Reporter

Professor Arthur "Art" Schwartz, one of Mercer's longest serving professors, retired on January 1, 2021 after 52 years of service in the Math department.

Professor Schwartz, who started at MCCC in 1969, attended Trenton High School, then completed his bachelor's degree in Mathematics at Trenton State College in 1966. He went on to earn his master's in Radiation Science at Rutgers University in 1968 then received a second master's in Mathematics from The College of New Jersey in 1972.

"I'm a Trenton boy," Professor Schwartz says. "When I say Trenton, you notice, we only have one 'T' in there!"

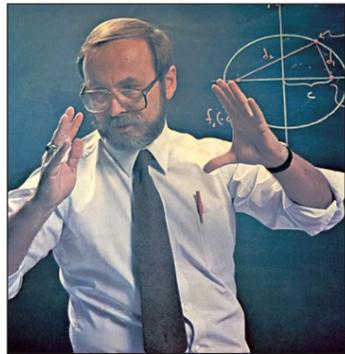
He says his hero is his older brother Frank who was also going into math as a profession.

"He was my mentor," Schwartz says, adding, "He taught me how to throw a football and he told me how to do different things."

Professor Schwartz followed in his brother's footsteps and then Frank decided to switch from teaching to a career in Computer Science.

"He wanted me to go with him and make some big money, and I said 'no Frank I'm happy where I'm at.'" Professor Schwartz says.

Professor Schwartz started at Mercer as an adjunct instructor but was later hired as a full-time professor. Eventually, he went on to be the Chair of the Mathematics department.



COLLEGE VOICE | FILE PHOTO

A photo of math Professor Art Schwartz teaching in 1984 used in college promotional materials.

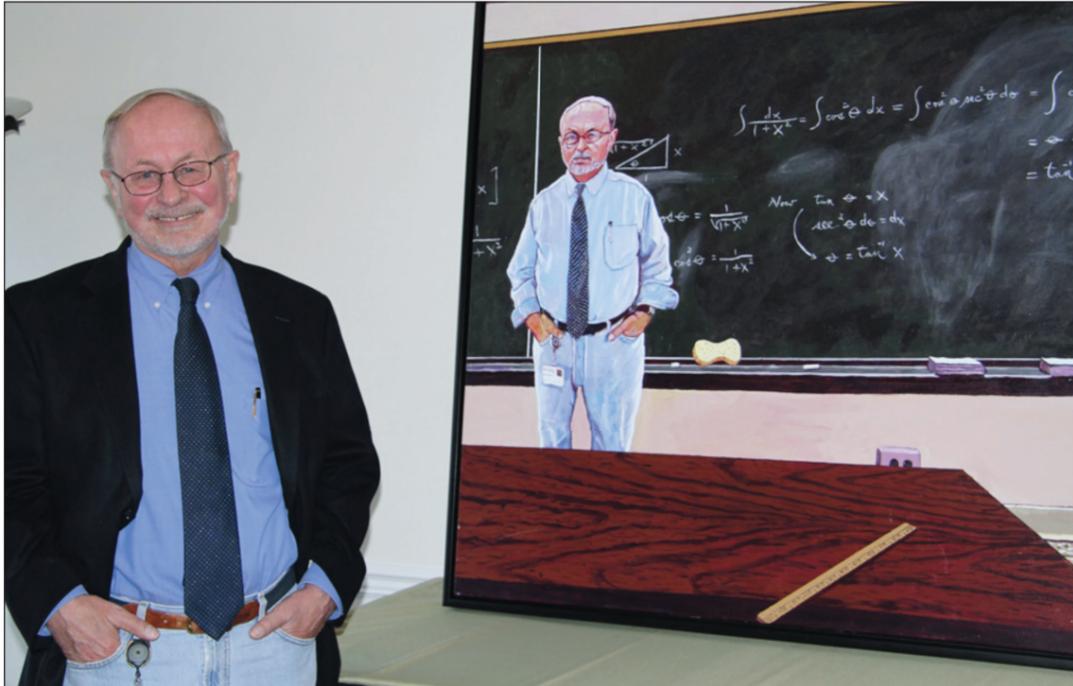
Professor Betty Peterson, the current Chair of Mathematics at Mercer, says, "He was a leader in caring. He went above and beyond to be able to reach out to students through their math classes."

Jerry Katty, says he first met Professor Schwartz as a substitute teacher in his pre-algebra class.

"He did it in a different way than our professor was doing it. He showed like three other different ways to do it and that basically changed my whole perspective on mathematics," Katty says, adding, "It's literally because of him that I became a Math major."

Daniel Kofi Adomina, a Business Administration who took precalculus with Professor Schwartz says, "He made it easy for us to be able to go to him. You know, get help when we needed to, and invest in our future."

Professor Schwartz says, "That's why I love teaching, It's to help people be better thinkers and make them feel better and do good in life."



COLLEGE VOICE | FILE PHOTO

Professor Art Schwartz beside a painting of himself in his classroom done by his colleague Emeritus Professor of Fine Art Mel Leipzig in 2012.

Throughout his years at Mercer, Professor Schwartz has been recognized for many achievements. In 1991 Professor Schwartz won Mercer's Distinguished Teacher Award. In 2004 the Mathematical Association of America chose him to receive the Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics Award

One of his most notable roles outside the classroom was serving as the MCCC Faculty Association President for many years.

Retired Professor of English and former Dean of Liberal Arts Robin Schore, who served MCCC for 43 years, says, "In the 1970s, [Art] transformed the faculty union from an inef-

fectual body to the strongest organization on campus serving as both president and, for many years, as chief negotiator. He was known in union circles throughout the state as 'the dean of negotiators.'"

Schore added, "He embodied the remarkable combination of street-wise tough guy and serious academic, qualities which served him well both in the classroom and at the negotiating table."

Math Professor Dan Rose, says, "I can't think of anyone who has instilled a greater sense of comfort and warmth." He adds, "[Art] was there for me and [he] cared about me as an employee of this college."

"He will definitely be

missed," says Professor Peterson.

Going forward, Arthur Schwartz says he looks forward to indulging in his hobbies, playing chess and golf, and traveling more. What he is looking forward to most is spending time with family.

Schwartz even considered remaining as a part of the Mercer County Community College family by teaching or tutoring at the James Kerney Campus in downtown Trenton, New Jersey.

Professor Schwartz says of his career, "What I would like to be remembered by if anything, outside my family, is teaching. That was my love and that is my love."

MCCC plans new dental program on Trenton campus

By **Lawrence Boadi**
Reporter

This coming fall MCCC is planning to open its own dental program on the college's Trenton campus. The college is partnering with Kindersmile, a local dental provider that serves low income families.

The new program will be held in the new Health and Wellness Education Center across from the James Kerney Campus on 101 North Broad Street in downtown Trenton.

According to Gonzalo Perez, the Dean for the Division for Lifelong Learning, the dental program will be broken into three sub-programs. The first program focuses on being a dental assistant. Going forward students would then need a radiography certification and finally wrap up their experience by pursuing the dental hygienist associate's degree.

In terms of what this program means to students, Perez says, "They can make up to \$75,000 per year," if they go into the profession.

This amount is close to

what is posted on both Indeed.com and Salary.com where the average salary of dental hygienists in New Jersey is listed respectively \$83,000 and \$83,441.

MCCC President Dr. Jianping Wang says, "I believe in the college's role in revitalizing the capital city" and added, "I felt that there was a need for health and wellness education in Trenton."

Health Professions Dean Kevin Duffy says, "With the class size itself we're going to start probably around 10 to 15 students."

Dean Duffy says, "The dental program makes a world of sense because it operates as what they call a dental home, which I love because it's free services to the community."

According to the American Pediatric Dentist, "The dental home is the ongoing relationship between the dentist and the patient, inclusive of all aspects of oral health care delivered in a comprehensive, continuously accessible, coordinated, and family-centered way."

Dr. Nicole McGrath Barnes, Founder & CEO of KinderSmile Foundation says,



PHOTO USED WITH PERMISSION FROM KINDERSMILE

MCCC's new dental program is teaming up with Kindersmile in Trenton, NJ.

"We are so excited to be here to serve the residents in the Trenton community. We have established a beautiful dental home for children and families to receive quality and affordable dental services while stressing Education, Intervention and Prevention." She adds, "Our

doors are open for the students and faculty members at Mercer County Community College."

On its website, KinderSmile describes its Oral Health Program (KSOHP) as one that "increases access to dental care for underserved children ages 0-18, regardless of insurance

status, by bringing dental care to schools or community centers at no cost to caretakers or the school system."

McGrath-Barnes says the goal is "Helping to increase oral care access for the community and also to increase job opportunities."

Things will look different returning to campus

Continued from page 1

larger to offer socially distanced seating. On the shuttle, students will be required to go by every other seat and will have to wear their masks.

Dean of Students John Simone, who is co-chair of the college's reopening task force says key areas of focus for the restart include "wearing masks and social distancing, implementing sanitization stations, [providing] mask vending machines, [managing] room usage, opening the library and bookstore, and the balancing of hybrid and remote classes."

There will be daily cleaning logs in classrooms and bathrooms, and hands free sensors in front of building entrances and sinks on campus to reduce touching communal surfaces.

In the case that someone is sick on campus, the individual will be isolated and if necessary, will receive emergency medical assistance. If the person refuses, they will be asked to leave the campus immediately.

A key safety upgrade is the ventilation system throughout the college to help improve airflow and quality. According to a recent presentation to the Faculty Association by the MCCC's Facilities and Operations Manager Joshua Johnson, HVAC upgrades are planned throughout both campuses.

The goal, according to the presentation, is to install high level filtration systems--MERV 8 for all classrooms and MERV 13 in all air handlers and rooftop units--with class-

room air passing through both. A MERV rating of 13 or higher is considered hospital level air quality.

Due to Mercer's older buildings, which, as The VOICE has covered in the past, have had ongoing problems with mold, there have been questions on how to implement these new precautions safely and with affordability in mind.

According to Johnson's presentation, the estimated costs for the upgrades in 2021 is \$2,070,000 and additional work in 2022 another \$1,148,000 which would be covered by funds known as "Chapter 12" which is an "ongoing but limited source of capital bond funds for the two-year colleges" according to the NJ Commission on Higher Education. Additional funds may come from the CARES Act or American Rescue Plan.

Dr. Wang emphasizes that the reopening has been going in phase and in accordance with state and local officials. So if needed or required by the state, the college can revert to a prior phase.

At this point, Dean Simone says, "We have most of the staff vaccinated." Vaccine appointments have been made available for employees on campus and everyone is eligible under the state's guidelines.

The restart task force conducted a student survey about reopening, the details of the results have not yet been shared, but according to Dean Simone while 20% of students were anxious about the safety of returning to campus 80% of



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

When students return to MCCC's West Windsor campus in the fall they can expect to see significant renovations have taken place. The University Center is complete as is a renovation of the One Stop Student Center.

students are anxious to return to face to face learning on campus.

Current student Kyle Goldware, a Communication major says, "As long as the college announces that all students have been thoroughly examined and are covid free, then I won't have any concerns."

This past year the college has been requiring anyone coming to campus to fill out an online health questionnaire each day, a process that is likely to continue based on safety and state requirements.

As far as feeling confident returning to campus, Shaun Peterson, a Liberal Arts major says, "I've been out and about. Going back to school

has no issue for me. If I can go to major corporations like Walmart, which is packed with 500 plus people, I surely can go back to school on campus with no problem."

Goldware, who has yet to see his college says, "I'm looking forward to seeing what the college actually looks like. I know professors and students who have said the campus is really nice and there are fun events you can participate in in person, so I want to experience that too."

Kelly Orlando, a Theater major, says, "I am expecting a good end to my time at Mercer, as next fall semester is my last," she adds, "I personally am looking forward to going

back to campus mainly to have a more hands-on learning experience and see productions at Kelsey Theatre."

Some students will be arriving back on campus before the fall to attend summer classes. Last year's summer course costs were discounted for students and many have asked if that will happen again this year. Dr. Wang says that the discount was based on the quick impact of covid and this year there will be no discounts, but she adds that some students may be given grants to cover the cost of summer tuition because of federal funding for education. President Wang says, "All you need to do is apply."

LEARN FROM ME: Life with Down Syndrome

In her ongoing "Learn from Me" column, Laurie Gallagher offers explanations and tips for students on every day topics.

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



I was born with Down Syndrome. It is a genetic condition also called Trisomy 21 because I have an extra chromosome 21. Here are some of the things that happen when you have Down Syndrome: you grow a little slower, it takes longer to learn things, and it can make it harder to fit in with others because you look different and people can discriminate.

On the other hand, if you are like me, you are intelligent, kind, funny, and fun to be around. I know I am different and so I try to be an

advocate for people with disabilities.

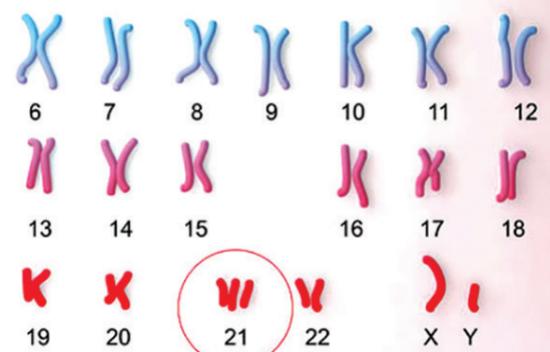
With the support of my parents, my two brothers and one sister, the obstacles and challenges I faced in my early years never stopped me from achieving my goals and dreams. I am now a college student. I write for the school newspaper which I love and which lets me speak my mind and helps me learn how to use my voice and be heard.

I also have amazing job at Staples, the office supply store. I love my boss and coworkers who always have my back and someday I would like to be manager. That is a goal for me.

As I continue my education I also dream that maybe someday I will even run my own business that will help people with disabilities learn to be independent like me.

I have achieved my other goals so I believe I can achieve that one, too.

It's just an extra chromosome!



A lot of people do not know what Down Syndrome is. They may wonder if they can catch it like a cold? Maybe they think it is a magic power? Actually, it's just a way some special people are born with an extra chromosome. According to MedlinePlus "A chromosome is a thread-like structure made up of DNA. Chromosomes are found in the nucleus of each cell." Because people with disabilities have to see the world in a different way, we learn to be flexible and patient, and that really is like a magic power sometimes.

Skaters, sneakers and history:

By Ben Levitt
Senior Reporter

What do two guys who were obsessed with brick-making and hated liquor have in common with professional skateboarding?

James Randolph Sayre and Peter Fisher founded the Sayre & Fisher brick company in the 1850s in what is now Sayreville, New Jersey, and the bricks went on to be used for everything from the base of the Statue of Liberty to some of the most iconic original skateparks in the Northeast.

By 1900 Sayre & Fisher was one of the ten largest employers in New Jersey. They envisioned a company town that would be morally upright, liquor free, and support the industry which relied on the massive clay deposits along the Raritan River.

Now, in homage to the Sayreville and the mighty Sayre & Fisher bricks, Vans, the famous sneaker company, has made a limited release Skateboarding collection in brick red.

The project is a collaboration with NJ Skate Shop which had their first shop in Sayreville, but had to close it down after Hurricane Sandy in 2010 and is now based in New Brunswick



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Vans's new limited edition line of Sayreville brick inspired shoes includes the Half Cap, the Slip On Pro, and the Gilbert Crockett Hi.



An original Sayre & Fisher brick.

Co-owners Steve Lenardo, Troy Jankowski and Chris Nieratko pitched the idea for the brick colored Vans two years ago and the project has now come to fruition.

According to Lenardo, the inspiration hit when he was asked to help redesign the Sayreville skatepark.

"When they were digging [the old park] up, all these bricks came up and it just rung in my head like 'this is crazy.' Then when it came time to do a Vans shoe that brick thing kind of popped up."

So Lenardo and shop co-owner Chris Nieratko went to work researching the bricks at the Sayreville Historical Soci-

ety.

They had done shoe collaborations in the past with brands like eS Skateboarding and Nike SB, so when Vans contacted them about doing a shoe they pitched their idea.

"They didn't understand it at first, but they thought it was super

cool at the same time. I think now they're super hyped," Lenardo says.

The limited edition line includes the Half Cap, The Slip On Pro, and The Gilbert Crockett Hi.

They went on sale at NJ Skateshops in New Brunswick and Jersey City

See **BRICKS** page 5



Skater Jake Hnasko spends weekends at the skatepark at Hamilton Veterans Park.



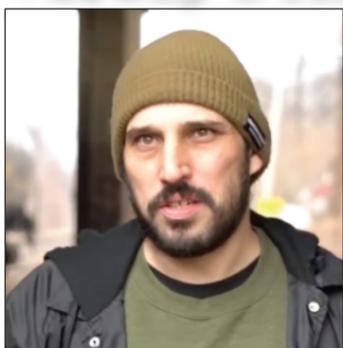
Jake Hnasko skates with a regular stance, with his left foot on the front of the board and right foot used to push.

PHOTO ESSAY | ALESSANDRO RIVERO



Skater Rene Vargas practicing his moves at Hamilton Veterans Park a 9 minute drive from MCCC.

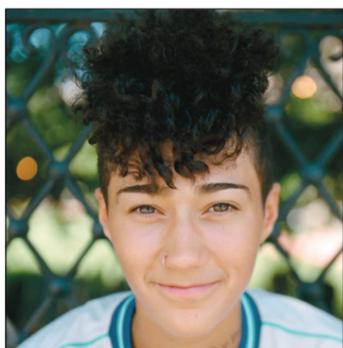
Jersey's finest skaters



Fred Gall
Sewaren, NJ



Bobby Puelo
Clifton, NJ



Jennifer Soto
Jersey City, NJ



Ishod Wair
Bordentown, NJ



Nick Merlino
Atlantic City, NJ

Vans honors Sayreville bricks



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

In addition to the Vans themselves, to promote the event, original Sayre & Fischer bricks are available for sale as well.

blocks away," said Nieratko. "When rolling on the brick it takes on an entirely new life, almost like jazz, a constant high hat of the wheel, a beat to each time a wheel rolls over the mortar in between the bricks."

He added, "Our tiny town has been so instrumental in developing these iconic skate spots on the Eastern Seaboard that just wouldn't be here if not for the S & F Brick Co," he said. "We wanted to honor that and tell that story so skaters in New Jersey know their place in skateboard history."

Anthony Morales is a repeat customer of the New Brunswick location. When asked his thoughts on the brick Vans he said "They're amazing. The history behind them incorporates pretty much a history of early America. It incorporates skate history, it just shows how much comes out of New Jersey that people don't realize."

This story really is about appreciation of your local community, your local skate shops, and your local skateboarders.

As Morales put it "Keep skateboarding a lot. Skate local, shop your local shops."

Continued from page 4

on March 20.

On the day of release there were roughly 500 people lined up outside their New Brunswick location to get the shoes.

Nieratko said that

"When we had the whole release it was kind of cool because everyone that came in, there was a lot of township pride for Sayreville. So everyone had their grandfather worked for the brick factory, or their dad, or their mom,

people live where it used to be."

The first batch of 700 were almost gone when they became available at about 20 pro skate shops nationwide a week later.

Also for sale across the country are 150 Sayer & Fisher Co. bricks even though the company closed down in 1970.

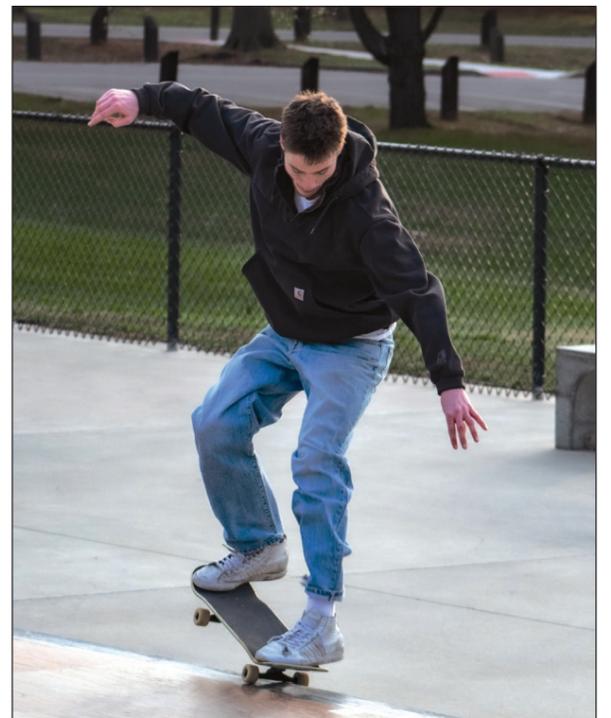
Nieratko told MyCentralJersey.com, "The sound of skateboard wheels rolling on the ground is very distinct... you can hear it coming



Jake Hnasko in midair. The skatepark in Hamilton, NJ was built in 2018 and includes half pipes, vert ramps, and handrails like the one above.



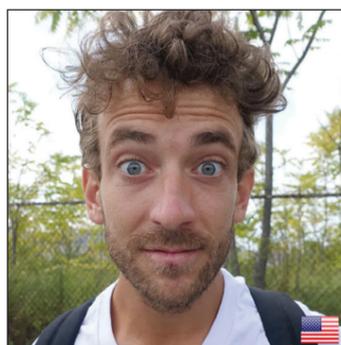
A former MCCC student launching from a wedge ramp at Veterans Park.



Skater Jake Hnasko navigating a flat at Hamilton Park.



Richie Rizzo
Mahwah, NJ



Ron Deily
Union City, NJ



Lauren Mollica
New Brunswick, NJ



Tom O'Connor
Morristown, NJ



Quim Cardona
Pine Brook, NJ

Historic town with shops and natural beauty



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

LEFT: A cannon and memorial in honor of Bordentown's Revolutionary War heritage. ABOVE: Busy Farnsworth Avenue with many attractions and dining.

By Beryl Zonese
Reporter

Bordentown, New Jersey, established in 1682 at a bend in the Delaware River, is a town filled to the brim with history, shops, and great places to eat and it is only a 20-minute drive from the MCCC campus so a perfect spot to visit with friends from school.

On a sunny April afternoon we visited and talked with local fisherman who reminisced about helping to build the passing highway that leads to the Friends Meetinghouse which was built in 1740. The site is now overseen by the Bordentown Historical Society.

Doug Kiovsky, the Vice President for The Bordentown Historical Society says the heart of the town, "is it's the people, it's community. And there are

many events to bring people in so they can enjoy the town."

The most notable street of historic Bordentown is Farnsworth Avenue, named after Thomas Farnsworth, an English Quaker who settled his family in 1682. It wasn't until 35 years later that Joseph Borden, after whom the town is named, helped put it on the map, drawing in boats traveling to and from New York and Philadelphia, according to the Downtown Bordentown Association.

It later became a hotbed of political activism during the Revolutionary War, attracting the likes of philosopher and activist Thomas Paine.

Farnsworth Avenue is an active street full of dog walkers, patrons at outdoor dining, and shoppers visiting the town's many locally-owned businesses.

"[Bordentown is about] the people, the community. And there are many events to bring people in so they can enjoy the town."

-Doug Kiovsky

Vice President Bordentown Historical Society

A fan favorite shop here is Icon Boutique. The shop specializes in high-end women's clothing and jewelry. You can find everything from the latest in fashion handbags to specialty designed masks.

Employee Dina Guereri says, "Some people come in to buy a gift for someone, between jewelry or clothing, sometimes getting some of the candles."

Nina Gydotti, a local of Bordentown says that what she likes most about Bordentown is that it is not just a town but a community. She says she walks by Farnsworth Avenue often, visiting the numerous shops.

To get away from the hustle and bustle of Farnsworth Avenue a good spot to visit is

the Abbott Marshlands. It is a serene area where people come to enjoy nature. Here you will find people gearing up to either hike, kayak, fish, or just hang out.

Three local brothers, Vince, Nando, and Jerry Creo, spoke with us about their years working as contractors and building the overarching highway that crosses above the marshland.

Vince Creo said, " We like everything about Borden-

town, especially its quiet nature."

The three have been fishing together at Abbott Marshlands for more than thirty years.

If you are looking for a good bite after a walk around town there is no shortage of restaurants. A local favorite is Old Town Pub which serves the classics from Poke Nachos to cheeseburgers with steak fries.

With more venues opening up as covid restrictions ease, people looking for fun, safe, and inexpensive activities may want to check out upcoming events such as the Reckless-town Acoustic music performance at Tindall Road Brewery on April 16, and the 43rd annual Bordentown Street Fair on June 19.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Brothers Vince, Nando and Jerry Creo from Bordentown worked building the overarching highway that crosses Bordentown's marshlands along the edge of the Delaware River.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

A kayaker on the Delaware River at Bordentown, NJ.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Bordentown's Abbott Marshlands are a popular fishing spot.

REVIEW: Three perspectives on Mastoris in Bordentown



Mastoris President Roger Prince (left) with executive chef Leny De Luca (right). PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO
The bakery at Mastoris is known for its seasonal treats such as these red sugar crystal covered Easter Bunny cookies.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO
Mastoris is well known for its fancy breads including cheese breads and cinnamon breads baked on site.

After a fire 30 years ago Mastoris restaurant in Bordentown was able to rebuild and has been a family favorite restaurant ever since. It has expanded into a bakery, banquet hall, bar and lounge.

“Everyone has a Mastoris story,” says Roger Price, the current President of Mastoris. He goes on to say, “You could go around here at any given time and people will tell you they have been coming here for their parties, christening, birthdays, anniversaries, and graduations because it’s a family spot.”

We sent three VOICE staffers to Mastoris to provide a three part review.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Mastoris has several different seating options including the traditional diner where club sandwiches and other classics are served.

THE LOUNGE

By Beryl Zonese
Reporter

The Vibe lounge at Mastoris is a sports bar. There are bright and flashy multicolored lights, pop music that sets the tone for a relaxed atmosphere, comfy plush booths, and giant 40 inch televisions lining the walls each showing different sports and after-game interviews.

A simple order of roasted lemon oregano chicken comes with a side of wild rice and spicy roasted vegetables. The chicken is golden and speckled with herbs. There is a strong aroma of oregano as well as garlic and lemon.

The chicken is juicy, with ample fat dripping down its sides. As you bite through you taste a collaboration between the lemon and herbs. Each bite is smooth, satisfying, and flavorful.

The vegetables are beautifully rich with a balanced mixture of peppers, carrots and zucchini. The fat from the chicken seeps into the medley of vegetables--a spectacular combination.

There is also the wild rice, awakened by the chicken and a hit of lemon. You will want to take bite after bite.

THE DINER

By Ashley Jackson
Senior Reporter

The diner room at Mastoris can be found by going straight through the bakery. It has the nostalgic 1950’s mom-and-pop style, the counter-top glistens, the stools are sturdy, and booths are spacious.

If you find yourself hungry for a great appetizer you have to try Nona’s Mozzarella

Sticks. They have a cheese pull that stretches so far you may need another person to test its length. Dense and chewy, but it truly shines at the sound of a single bite. [CRUNCH!!!]

Talk about a perfectly fried crust. Sadly you may find the marina sauce a bit watery which somewhat weakens the dish. Still, you’ll be fighting for the last stick. Nona would be proud.

At a recent visit I found the chicken quesadilla was the least impressive of the bunch. Gamey chicken in between a paper-thin, lackluster tortillas. It’s a departure from their previous iteration of the dish that was served jam-packed with fresh chicken and mouth-watering gobs of cheese.

Thankfully the chicken parmesan saved the day. Despite the overwhelming obstacle of watery marinara sauce, Mastoris serves an impressively



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO
Mastoris will create personalized cakes for special events.

juicy, hearty chicken.

The chicken was seasoned with salt, pepper, oregano, garlic and onion powder and they each worked in tandem to create a cohesive, flavorful dish. The pasta was delicious, but when added with the chicken was elevated to another level. There was a desirable ratio between chicken, pasta, sauce, and cheese to get that coveted “bit-of-everything” bite each time.

THE DINING ROOM

By Elijah Parkman-Williams
Senior Reporter

My family loves coming to Mastoris at least once a year and we come with an entire feast worth of hunger.

The dining room fills with laughter. Then comes the scent of fresh cinnamon and cheese bread and that is usually the point where my family’s bickering quiets down.

The first wave of scent is from the cinnamon bread. It’s flaky and still warm from the oven. Take one bite and it is evident why this is always

seems to be sold out at the bakery up front. The cinnamon sugar will fill the palette and if you dare add a little butter, the flavors are only elevated.

The cinnamon is spectacular but the cheese bread is to die for. Let’s be honest, most people aren’t going to choose the milder flavors of cheese bread over cinnamon, but then you eat it and it all makes sense. Grown adults can be seen giddily eating this bread. The cheese sticks to the roof of every diner’s mouth and that’s only made clear when the sound of smacking bites bounces from table to table.

Another perfect dish is the chicken pot pie. The crust lacks that crunchy top you long for, but the magic is just under the hood, chicken so succulent you’ll drool for the next bite, vegetables so vibrant their color attracts the eye of the diner. It is a delightful dish.

At my last visit I thought my food was good, but then I tasted some of my mother’s dish, penne pasta with vodka sauce and bacon. Talk about an overwhelming dish, this is what I hope everyone experiences when they come here, perfection. Al dente noodles dressed in the best homemade vodka sauce I have had in a long time. Do yourself a favor and add the bacon, because if bacon was made for a dish, it was for this one. After tasting the salty bacon and creamy noodles, remember that you are still eating off your mothers plate and she will eventually want her food back.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Women's soccer players Paula Camus (left) and Carolina Farias (right) during practice.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Madalyn Wood pitching for the women's softball team.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

The Vikings softball team has a 5-4 record on the season with 22 games left to play.



MCCC men's lacrosse player, goal keeper Sam Hensler (#33).

MCCC sports on

The Vikings are on the field despite

By Alessandro Rivero
Senior Reporter and Photographer

With the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic going global, parts of the country have been shut down or limited in their ability to work for over a year now. Sports, from collegiate, to national, to local, have either closed or returned with safety precautions to ensure the protection of all those involved.

Mercer was no exception with the entire college going virtual since the end of March 2020. Activities such as sports, art galleries, and school events have been completely shut down.

However, during the spring semester of 2021 the country has started to re-open, and with precautions in place, MCCC has rebooted its athletics program. Softball, lacrosse, baseball, soccer and tennis have all returned to practice and competition.

According to Athletics Director John Simone, the sports program's covid protection protocols are the same as those adopted by most institutions. Students wear masks and socially distance when possible. There are temperature checks and a symptom tracker specifically for the athletics department. Regular covid tests are not being administered, however.

But the most important new procedure is game cancellation. Any Mercer team, or their competitors, can cancel a game at any given point, even hours before it is supposed to be played if there is any health concern.

This happened to the Softball team on Thursday, March 25 when Harford Community College canceled their game for safety concerns.

MCCC is also taking a proactive approach to athlete safety, canceling the baseball team's practice for 10 days after a student was exposed to the coronavirus.

Athletics Director Simone says, "We didn't have to cancel practice since the student hadn't actually been in contact with the team at the time of contracting the virus, but we decided it's better to be safe than sorry."

The efforts to remain safe go beyond the new procedures set by the school and are largely placed on the students. Students say they are being proactive and careful about who they hang out with, where they go, and what

they do in order to keep themselves and safe.

Another thing students are worrying about is losing their season of play. Jordyn Varone says she's been a year at Mercer, but technically she's a freshman because, again, of covid.

Brandon Guios, a student from Chile who's participating in the lacrosse program now and is captain of the team, says "Tomorrow's not promised, but we really want to take advantage of what we have right now, we're grateful to be out here right now."

Another challenge the team faces is that many of its athletes are out of state and even out of the country.

The lacrosse team solved this issue independently by recruiting out-of-state students from Lawrenceville, so their experience is mostly with other teammates. The women's soccer team has a few athletes who couldn't travel from their countries during the pandemic.

Elyse Diamond, a student from Chile who's coaching for the women's lacrosse team, says "It was hard on our national team when we weren't able to get everyone back into the country because of the borders. I think a couple of our athletes were afraid to participate in college sports so we had a couple that were staying here. But besides that, we have a great team right now we are good."

This doesn't mean students are staying away from other countries, just that they're being cautious. Coach Diamond refers to a player, Emanuely Dos Santos, who is a friend and new teammate of her friend and new teammate, Carolina Farias, who is also from Chile.

All three athletes decided to come here during the pandemic because of the opportunities presented, both in education and sports. According to them it was worth the risk, citing that they feel safer here and that they do in their countries.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

). The team is currently 2-0 on the season.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Men's lacrosse players #24 Merrik Moser (left) and Maurice Butler (right) during a team scrimmage in early April.

on the rebound

Despite a year of covid restrictions

keep their team playing

ing some students are
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ays "this is my second
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s, a sophomore player
their first real season
he lacrosse team says.
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demic is concerned.

Camus says that "regardless if the U.S's numbers are worse, I believe here I have a better access to healthcare and resources than in my country because it's simply a more developed country. When the borders opened, I decided I'd come back and I think I was right, I haven't been worse off. One has access to more things here than in their own country."

Farias says coming to the US was never in question. She was born in the U.S before her family moved to Chile when she was little. It had always been her plan to come back, and covid was not going to stop her.

"Ever since I was a kid, my family had given me the idea to come back, to make my life here," Farias says.

Dos Santos never planned to leave New Jersey after the fall semester, but she returned to Brazil for a family matter and wasn't allowed back in the US.

Brazil, as of this semester, is suffering a complete collapse in its healthcare system and is the country hardest hit by the pandemic in South America. With the second highest death count in the world, according to statista.com and the BBC, the US quickly closed travel between the two countries.

Dos Santos wasn't allowed to enter the U.S from Brazil and didn't know this until she was at the airport.

"How could I not get in? I had my whole life here in the U.S, my job, rent, school payments, my world was there. Immigration told me I had to go to another country, wait 14 days, then enter the U.S. That's money. My family told me it wasn't safe to return, it's not time. But if I stay, who knows when the borders will open up? I lose my whole life. I'll lose everything. How could I not return? So I got the money, went to Mexico, quarantined for two weeks, and got back in the country."

Women's soccer will have its first game on April 9. They will play 9 games. One was cancelled for 4/12.. At this point lacrosse has played two games and won both with five games to go. Softball has played 9 games with a record of 5-4 with 22 games left according to Coach Zegarski.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Women's soccer player Oriana Seitz practicing ball handling during training.



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Strong batting has been a key part of the softball team's success so far this season. Compared to other athletics teams softball has had fewest games canceled this year.



COLLEGE VOICE | NETFLIX PROMOTIONAL CONTENT

A scene from "Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile" starring teen heart-throb Zac Efron playing the infamous serial killer Ted Bundy.

Why do we crave scary shows right now?

A creepy hotel, a killer in the night, it can be comforting

By Kayla Jannetti
Reporter

Storytelling has captivated civilizations for thousands of years: histories, bed-time stories, and the tellings of things that go bump in the night, so it may be little surprise that a dark, growing trend in the media has been keeping many entertained over quarantine: true crime investigation and serial killer shows.

The ratings are sky high. So what is the allure? And why are these shows so popular right now?

Ashley Jackson, a first year Liberal Arts student and Managing Editor of The VOICE says "There's something cathartic about keeping the chaos on the screen. I'm a true crime junkie, and watching all the pieces of the case come together can be incredibly satisfying. But there's also a distinct emotional connection to the show because they're talking about another human being. And those pieces came from their life as it fell apart. It's gut-wrenching."

The current trend goes back more than five years. Somewhat similar to now, it was a time of change in power in our country, a time of anxiety and struggle for many of us.

First, HBO released a six part series called *The Jinx*, about a super-wealthy business man named Robert Durst who was accused of killing at least three people but managed to get away with it. In the final episode, the filmmakers confronted Durst with damning evidence they had found, and he basically confessed to the crimes by accident.

Netflix had its first major true crime hit just a few months after *The Jinx*, in 2015, with *Making a Murderer*, which followed the story of Steven



COLLEGE VOICE | NETFLIX PROMOTIONAL CONTENT

A young woman traveling alone goes missing at the infamous Cecil Hotel in Los Angeles and turns up dead. The story is examined in Netflix's "Crime Scene: The Vanishing at the Cecil Hotel."

"Experts say watching true crime can be oddly comforting—a way of reassuring yourself that such a terrible fate could never befall you."

-Pattie Greco, Health.com

Avrey, a man from Wisconsin who served 18 years in prison and was later found to be wrongfully convicted.

Now Netflix is churning out horrific retellings and killer television shows at a terrific rate. These include *American Murder: The Family Next Door*, *Murder Among the Mormons*, *Crime Scene: The Vanishing at the Cecil Hotel*, and *Night Stalker: The Hunt for a Serial Killer*.

The first movie to really stir the current conversation was *Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile*, starring teen heart-throb Zac Efron, playing the infamous Ted Bundy.

Director Joe Berlinger received major pushback when critics heard of his intent to romanticize Bundy.

Berlinger told Bryan Alexander at *USA Today* that his

intention was to make the audience "root" for Bundy, "and then to have the experience by the film's end, of being conflicted and disgusted by the idea that they actually liked the guy. It's the experience of everyone who is gas-lit by Ted Bundy."

The real question is why are serial killer shows so popular? What does that say about the viewers?

Much like the twist and turns of these shows, loving suspenseful, documentary based killer shows is completely normal.

Patti Greco, a reporter for Health.com says, "Experts say watching true crime can be oddly comforting—a way of reassuring yourself that such a terrible fate could never befall you."

She interviewed sev-

eral experts who supported this theory. These included Dr. Margot Levin, a clinical psychologist based in New York City and Dr. Amanda Vicary, an associate professor in psychology at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Vicary and Levin said that there were several key psychological elements that draw us to true crime shows including:

- Rehearsing for a crime as if to protect yourself
- Distancing yourself from a crime to feel reassured it isn't happening to you
- Feeling like you cheated death yourself, and
- Exploring the dark side of humanity or yourself

The fact that we have been suffering through a global pandemic and everything seems to have been at crisis point indefinitely, suggests that seeing even more awful things happen on screen and knowing they aren't happening to you might be particularly attractive.

One group, in particular, has been particularly drawn to these shows. Research by Dr. Vicary found that women are more likely to watch true crime shows.

She says her research showed that a "desire to understand how one becomes a victim and to know how violent crimes are perpetrated, and to learn techniques to avoid and survive violent crime were identified as the main reasons women are drawn to true crime."

The odd reassurance of these shows has provided people--especially women--a way to unwind after a long day's work.

In a way, murder shows are the upside down version of baking shows - a methodical, process oriented serial that brings familiar ingredients together and creates something sharable for all.

The Celebrity Scoop

MILLIE BOBBY BROWN

Millie Bobby Brown who became famous at age 10 for her role as "Eleven" in Netflix's hit series *Stranger Things*, is



now 17 and has been telling reporters from multiple news outlets that fans won't accept that she is growing up and she faces constant criticism for dressing and acting "too old."

GIANNELLI OUT OF THE PEN



After five months in federal prison for his participation in the college admission bribery scandal, Massimo Giannulli, husband of actress Lori Loughlin (of *Full House* fame) and rich business man is now out. A new movie about the scandal, *Operation Varsity Blues* is now airing on Netflix.

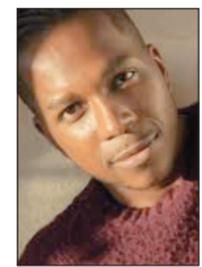
SHE DIDN'T BEACH THE BOAT

Egypt's first woman sea captain Marwa Elselehdar was falsely accused in a phony media article as being the



one to wedge the container ship Ever Given in the Suez Canal for five days, blocking international shipping, even through she was hundreds of miles away on a different ship. She says the source has target her for being a woman, but she's used to constant sexism.

A SON FOR LESLIE



Actress Nicolette Kloe Robinson and husband Leslie Odom Jr., who originated the role of Aaron Burr in *Hamilton* on Broadway, had a son, Able

Phinneas on March 25. Able has a four year old sister Lucille Ruby.

PARIS IS 23

Paris Jackson model and daughter of the late controversial pop icon Michael Jackson turned 23.



Her brother, Prince, with whom she is close, posted throw back pics of her and a warm tribute on his social media.

THE QUEEN ISN'T MUM



Following her grandson Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle's explosive interview with Oprah in which they revealed the

racism they have endured from the royals, Queen Elizabeth II has spoken out to express regret at their treatment.

JELLY BEAN TASTE TEST

We tried 4 varieties: here are the results

By Staff of The College VOICE

You don't have to celebrate Easter to enjoy the seasonal treat jelly beans. On the other hand, all jelly beans are not the same.

Over spring break, 10 VOICE staffers met via Zoom to blind taste test four popular brands of beans: Jelly Belly, Brach's, Starburst, and Jolly Rancher.

NOTES:

- First, the beans were about the same size for all brands, but each brand counted a "serving size" as a different number of beans. So we are listing their numbers and our recalculation for calories per bean.
- Second, the ingredients for all of them are basically the same: sugar, cornsyrup, cornstarch, wax, and slightly different artificial colorings and flavoring.
- Third, from what we could tell, all brands were made in facilities where milk, eggs, tree nuts, and wheat were used in other products. However, some did

not indicate that on their labeling.

- Finally, all the versions are vegetarian and vegan.

HERE ARE OUR RESULTS

4 JOLLY RANCHER

Serving Size: 30 pieces
Calories per serving = 140
Calories per bean = 4.6

Our reaction:

This wasn't a matter of outright hate, the team just just found them boring. They smelled of "faint perfume" or like "cherry lolly pops. With the exception of one staffer, there was just a notable lack of enthusiasm.

The one person who did vote for these, Art Editor Kristina Hontz, said eating them was like being "stabbed with goodness" and that she could "eat her way through the whole bag."

3 BRACH'S

Serving Size: 20 pieces
Calories per serving = 110
Calories per bean = 5.5

Our reaction:

Two people voted for Brach's which is the oldest brand in the bunch, the standard, tried and true ones you've seen in every jar of beans you've ever been exposed to as a child.

Junior reporter Kyle Goldware said they "look like the rocks at the bottom of a fish tank," Managing Editor Ashley Jackson described them as a "plump bean," and Kelly Orlando, another junior reporter said they looked like "an exotic fruit dangling from a tree."

Jackson, who was not a fan, said said they smelled like a "discount Hallmark candle," but media adviser, Professor Matt Kochis said the orange ones tasted like victory after a soccer game when you have the fresh orange slices to keep up your energy.

2 JELLY BELLY

Serving Size: 27 pieces
Calories per serving = 110
Calories per bean = 4

Our reaction:

Jelly Belly technically tied with Brach's for second place with

two votes, but we're awarding them the number 2 spot just because. These beans are known for their highly specialized flavors including popcorn and toasted marshmallow. Because each bean is so different in flavor they are hard to eat by the handful.

Senior reporter Alex Gonzalez described one as tasting like "a scoop of Nesquick powder in your mouth." Another student described a pink one as smelling and tasting like Bubble Gum tape (the kind that comes in rolls at the check out counter).

AND THE WINNER IS.....

1 STARBURST

Serving Size: 20 pieces
Calories per serving = 110
Calories per bean = 5.5

Our reaction:

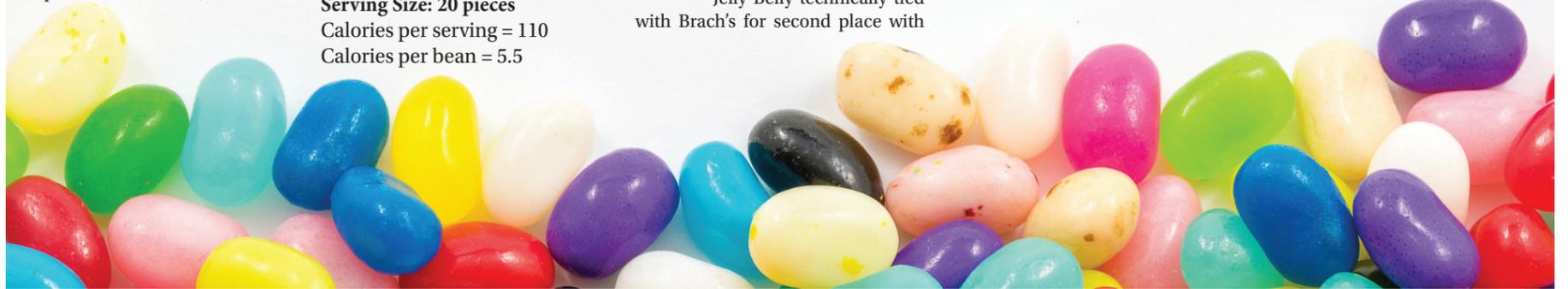
The hardest thing to fathom is how this brand won considering some of the negative things that were said about it, but it got a decisive five votes.

Here's what the haters had to say, Photography Editor Alessandro Rivero said they tasted like "diswashing soap." He added, "It makes me think about cleaning the bathroom on cleaning day." Hontz (who you will remember was a Jolly Rancher supporter) said eaching the Starburst beans was like "squirting Fabreez in your mouth." Editor in Chief Elijah Parkman-Williams said these beans tasted like "the candy the bad kids get on Christmas," and Gonzalez said they tasted like "cold medicine."

However, the love was deep. Reporter Beryl Zonese said these had a stronger taste than the rest, and Gonzalez, who wasn't a fan overall, conceded that the yellows tasted like a real lemon. Jackson said the beans tasted "like a correct answer on a math quiz."

Even staffers who didn't like the taste gave Starburst credit for appearance. Hontz described them as "bright, vibrant and eye catching." Rivero, said the were like "the smooth pebbles at the beginning of the water, that touch your feet."

Overall, all you can say is that the staffers found jelly beans to be a mixed bag.



PUZZLES EXTRA

FEAR KNIGHT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ... OR DARE!

LEL
WARELY
DEUGN
♥ RBGA
♥ GWOBLE
♥ YEB
♥ REOG
♥ LEBGA
♥ GBO
BULIEN
BRYDE
♥ ALDE

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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 Wordsworth work
5 Spasm
8 Billie — King
12 Against
13 Granada gold
14 Sea eagle
15 500 sheets
16 Chess piece
17 Right on the map?
18 On an angle
20 Dines
22 Donald Duck's outfit
26 Birth-related
29 "Exodus" hero
30 Vitamin stat
31 Prior nights
32 Pvt.'s superior
33 Grant basis, at times
34 Seminary subj.
35 Take to court
36 Smartens (up)
37 Produce aisle display
40 Pan handler?
41 Rookie
45 Boyfriend
47 Business mag
49 Press
50 Formerly, once
51 French vineyard

DOWN

1 Law firm aide, for short
2 Till bills
3 List-ending abbr.
4 Brunch cocktails
5 "Only Love" actress
6 Lyricist
7 Monarch's spouse
8 Army vehicles
9 Test-paper smudges
10 Reply (Abbr.)
11 Court divider
19 Chum
21 Swiss canton
23 Beer type
24 Nantes notion
25 Tiny amounts
26 Soft ball?
27 Say it's so
28 Put on the air
32 Be enough
33 Blockheads
35 That lady
36 Golfer
38 Closes
39 Full-length
42 Party cheese
43 Greek vowel
44 Seth's son
45 Wager
46 Historic period
48 Big D.C. lobby

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the college
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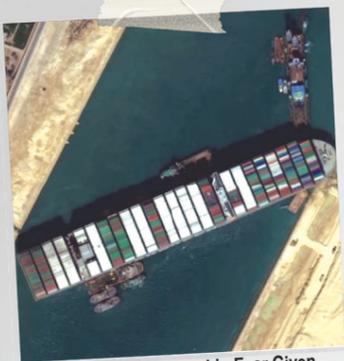


Join The College VOICE today!



News of the Nation

Ever Given Unstuck



The mega-giant container ship Ever Given got wedged across the Suez Canal, stopping international shipping traffic for 5 days before engineers dislodged it.

New Deal in Iran



Although President Biden is moving quickly to try to restore the Iran Nuclear treaty of 2015, things have not been going well. President Hassan Rouhani has shown no sign of warming to the deal.

MLB Leaves Georgia



Following Georgia's governor signing into law one of the most restrictive voters' rights laws since Jim Crow, the MLB decided to move its all star game for this season in protest.

Bye Regé-Jean Page



Breakout star of Netflix's hit series "Bridgerton" announced he won't be back for season 2. The question now: will anyone actually watch Season 2?

Justice for George?



The trial of Derek Chauvin, the police officer who knelt on the neck of George Floyd for 9 minutes and 29 seconds until Floyd was dead is underway in Minneapolis.

Sugar Daddy Congressman?



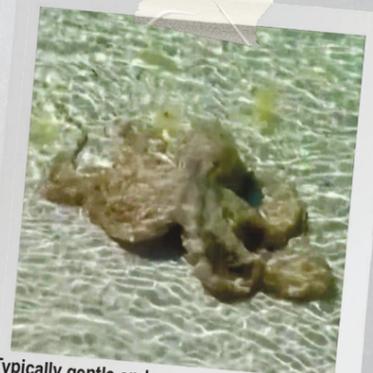
Congressman Matt Gaetz of Florida, a major Trump supporter and man with really weird hair, has been accused of sex trafficking of a 17 year old girl. He has denied the charges.

Covid Cases Up



Despite the US keeping up a breakneck speed with covid vaccinations, the varriants combined with states opening up schools and dining are driving case numbers and deaths back up for a potential fourth wave.

Annoyed Octopus



Typically gentle and unaggressive, an irritable octopus smacked a man in Australia who was filmed him put the video on Instagram. Not everyone likes being on Instagram, buddy.



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Increasing rates of domestic violence cannot be ignored

VIEWPOINT



Ashley Jackson

Home is where you're supposed to be safe, but victims of domestic violence don't have that security.

A 2010 study from the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control shows that an average of 24 people per minute are victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States. That's more than 12 million people a year.

But due to complications from the COVID-19 pandemic, there's an increasing fear among IPV (intimate partner violence) advocates that the current number is much worse. Because of the stay-at-home orders and worldwide quarantine, many victims of IPV became trapped with their abusers.

The National Domestic Violence Hotline, which typically receives up to 2,000 calls per day,

had only 951 callers in March of 2020 as reported to Sarah Fielding of The Guardian.

The abuse isn't stopping, but victims' perpetual proximity to their abusers makes it unsafe to reach out for help. Keeping victims in isolation with their abusers raises the risk of physical, sexual, verbal and emotional abuse.

Katerina Madias, a first year nursing major and survivor of domestic violence says of her own experience, "The verbal was the worst. The verbal abuse is the one that hurt me the most. Because bruises can go. The pain, you know, after a while is gone, but the verbal abuse was unimaginable. It is something that stings."

Madias is not alone. Verbal and emotional abuse compound into a complex form of PTSD that can cause depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and suicidal thoughts or actions. But these acts of violence are often culturally ignored.

The intersection of class, racial, gender, and sexual identities often complicate and deepen the stigma surrounding assault survivors. Combating this social stigma against domestic violence starts with recognizing the warning signs.

Break the Cycle, a national nonprofit dealing with domestic violence, has a list of red flags to watch out for. Even one or

"Love starts not from loving somebody else, but from loving yourself. You're worth it. Love yourself, and there's so many people out there who will appreciate you for who you are and don't want to change you."

- Katerina Madias

two of these behaviors may be an indicator that abuse is present in the relationship. But getting out is no easy task. Financial control and constant monitoring by their abuser makes it difficult for victims to get the help they need. Victims may also not feel comfortable going to local police stations because of officers' unfortunate connection to IPV.

The National Center for Women and Policing noted that domestic violence is two to four times more common among police families than American families in general. The authority commanded by an officer can be an appealing career track for abusers, who constantly need to exhibit power and control to maintain a fragile self-image.

Madias, whose abuser was a police officer, knows that pain all too well. "He had a gun. He pointed the gun towards me multiple times while we were together. One of the times I was pregnant. He was threatening me that if I ever leave him he's going to find me, to come to my island and find me and my mom, that he would kill my mom and me,

and he would end up in jail and our kids would end up in foster families."

Because IPV is such a difficult, delicate situation with plenty of complicated factors, professional help should be utilized when trying to leave a domestic violence situation. This is why advocacy groups like the National Domestic Violence Hotline, and local nonprofits and shelters, should be given more attention when trying to reach victims.

Advocates can assist victims with reporting their crime, and ensure fair treatment while pursuing all legal options. Advocates can also connect victims with counselors to provide emotional support through the difficulties of verbal and emotional abuse.

Promoting advocates starts with increased marketing of resources. Contact info should be displayed prominently in community spaces like restaurants, shopping malls, and parks.

Erasing the social stigma starts with understanding the challenges victims face. Schools

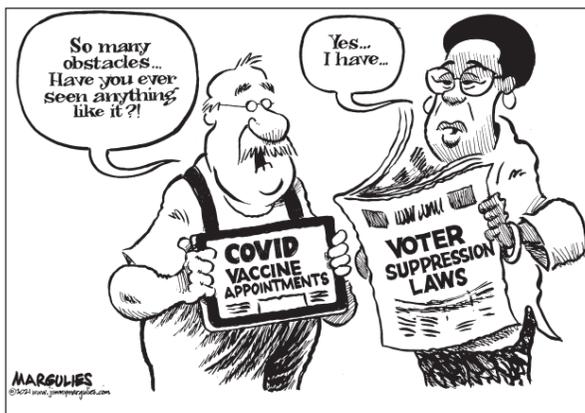
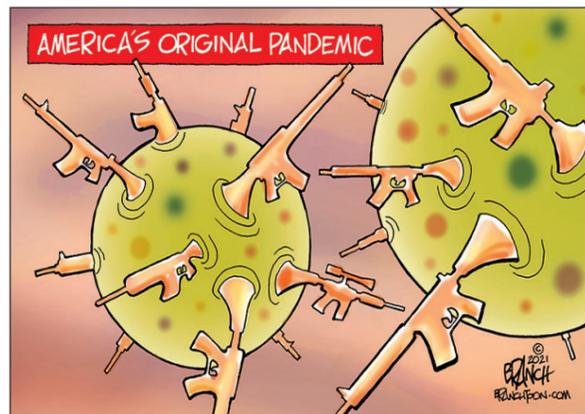
and volunteer centers should incentivize that young people earn their required volunteer hours through hotline training and emotional de-escalation training, to provide safe and thought provoking insight into this public health crisis.

There are undoubtedly serious roadblocks that may deter a victim from seeking the help they need, but the payoff of escaping an abusive situation is worth it. If you or a loved one are in a domestic violence situation, know that there is a world outside of the hurt and pain caused by your abuser. You deserve a life free from violence and cruelty, and to love yourself fully.

"Love starts not from loving somebody else," says Madias, "but from loving yourself. You're worth it. Love yourself, and there's so many people out there who will appreciate you for who you are and don't want to change you. With love, and understanding, and conversation it is so important. You don't have to torture yourself. There's only one time that we're here, and we're supposed to enjoy our life and be happy. This world is beautiful, enjoy it."

If you or a loved one are victims of IPV, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or visit their website at <https://www.thehotline.org>. Help is available 24/7.

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 on Zoom!

NOTICE

MCC LIBRARY

Need help with research papers? Check out

Reference Chat

online M-F 9-5.

mccc.edu/student_library.shtml





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HIGH GPA? JOIN PTK!

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

Members have access to lots of benefits including potential scholarships!
Find out more by stopping by the PTK Student Club office in SC.
Or contact Professor Huang at huangj@mccc.edu

CORRECTIONS

The article "Student mom balance it all" from the March 2021 issue of The VOICE incorrectly indicated that Mandy Sidhu is taking Honors classes this spring. She is in the Honors program but not currently taking any Honors classes. This error was fixed in the online edition of The VOICE on March 21.

We value accuracy. If you see a factual error in The VOICE let us know so we can fix it and uphold our standards of excellence.

Keep Community in community college

Others can rebrand but MCCC will fight the stigma

VIEWPOINT



Mandy Sidhu

Our neighboring community college Middlesex has recently decided to remove the word "Community" from its name in a rebranding effort. It is now Middlesex College and their teams will now be the Middlesex Colts instead of the Blue Colts.

What inspired the change?

According to an InsiderNJ interview with Middlesex President Mark McCormick—who was a Dean and then the Vice President at MCCC from 2005 to 2007—"With our new name and rebranding, we aim to spread the word about all that Middlesex College stands for and to help dispel the stigma around attending a two-year institution."

When I first read about Middlesex's decision, I thought maybe they were on to something. After all, the community college brand does face a stigma.

We've all heard the derogatory remarks, "Oh, but she's only going to a community college" with a dismissive eye roll or snicker. It's 13th grade. It's for people who couldn't get in anywhere else.

Moreover, according to Middlesex's excellent student newspaper, Quo Vadis, "He said the 13 member marketing team along with Top Right held five workshops and interviewed members of key stakeholder groups" before deciding to move ahead with the change. They didn't make the decision lightly.

I thought maybe we too have just outgrown the word "community" which was originally attached to two-year



colleges like ours back in the 1960s when the vocational college movement gained traction and individual counties were putting up a lot of the funding. Besides, we aren't really just a county college anyway. We have international students and athletes, we have a University Center drawing from around the state.

Even MCCC President Dr. Jianping Wang acknowledged in an interview, "For some reason, a lot of people equate community colleges to places where people don't have other alternatives."

But then she pushed back against this stereotype saying, "In Mercer, we always pride ourselves to be a community college because a community is in our mission. Our mission is to serve the community and those colleges that have taken the road Middlesex is taking now have experienced a one-time enrollment boost."

My view started to shift. I thought back to my mom who went to a community college in Morris County when I was growing up. She studied nursing and it led to a career as an RN at a local hospital.

I remember seeing her workload and practice tests. It was rigorous. I asked her about it recently and she laughed and said, "It was tough, but I had

some excellent professors and I learned a hell of a lot." Plus, she added, "It was great because it wasn't far from home and it was affordable."

I'm a mom myself now, and I don't feel ashamed of where I'm getting my college education. And I'm not alone. I conducted a survey of my peers and found 80% of MCCC do not see a negative connotation with the word "community" in colleges.

Dr. Wang pointed out to me that there are far fewer community colleges in the US than four-year colleges, and yet community colleges serve many more students.

It's true. According to the US Department of Education, there are about 4,000 (4,298 to be exact) degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the US, and only about 1 in 4 of them are public community colleges. However, community colleges educate 47% of college students in the US and are the fastest-growing segment of higher education.

Of course, the COVID-19 lockdown has significantly affected MCCC's enrollment, but that's not because we have the word "Community" in our name.

Dr. Wang stated, "I don't think a name change is going to change the perception. It's

more like let people know what kind of students we produce, and the more we can talk about that, the more we can change."

Moreover, the value of community colleges is being acknowledged at the highest levels and that will also help reduce the stigma.

First Lady Jill Biden is a community college professor, and the new American Rescue Plan which was passed through Congress and the Senate promises "\$35 billion in funding will be directed to public institutions, including community colleges."

MCCC is on the rise and it's rising with "Community" right in the center of its mission and its name. We don't need to take the word "community" out, we need to embrace it. If it wasn't for this local and affordable option, we would likely not be enrolled anywhere. We should be grateful for community colleges giving thousands an equal opportunity for education.

Having said that, there is one way we might want to follow Middlesex's lead and that is rebranding our mascot. In my survey, I found people really wanted to move on from the venerable Viking.

With 62% of students at MCCC being racial and ethnic minorities, and the fact that the very white Vikings never set foot on what is now New Jersey, retiring the mascot seems legit.

A third of students surveyed preferred the Mercer Leopards, a third went for the Mercer Mustangs, and the other third suggested anything would be better than the Vikings. Their ideas included squirrels, foxes, or even deer.

Our neighbors at Haverford College outside of Philly are the Black Squirrels. UC Santa Cruz has the Banana Slugs. The University of Nebraska has the Cornhuskers. Those names, silly as they may sound, reflect something relevant to the schools.

My vote is with the Mercer Foxes since my fellow students and I are sly enough to get a great education without going into debt to do it.

FAST J LAW FACT

If you want to get access to government records and documents you often can due to "transparency" laws. There are state and federal versions.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

These days the hallmark of good journalism is accuracy and objectivity, but that standard didn't really become the norm until the late 1880s.

JOURNO LINGO

The regular topic that a reporter is assigned to cover is known as the "beat," as in "I have been assigned to the education beat."

GREAT NEWS

Former VOICE reporter Jackson Thompson, who graduate from MCCC in 2018 is now working as a reporter for Sports Illustrated. Congrats, Jackson!

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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ADVICE - ASK THE VOICE



Dear VOICE,
I just got my first shot of the Covid vaccine? How long till I get my second?
-Impatient Larry

Dear Larry,
You should get it in 3 weeks, otherwise known as how long it takes to sit through a 100 person Zoom meeting.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
I hear there are going to be bigger shuttle busses when we get back to campus. Will the seats be big enough for my extra quarantine weight gain?
-Snacked Out

Dear Snacked,
They better be or we're all in trouble.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
I'm trying to stay in shape while in quarantine, what should I do?
-Workout Wanda

Dear Wanda,
You should do lunges to stay in shape. They are always a big step forward.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
I'm learning about the cuneiform writing system in class, and they have almost 1,000 characters! How many letters does the English alphabet have?
-Cuneiform Carrie

Dear Carrie,
I only know 25 letters of the English alphabet. I don't know y.
-The VOICE.

Dear VOICE,
I keep getting carded everytime I go out. How do I stop bartenders from constantly asking me?
-Baby Face

Dear Baby Face,
Show them your Blockbuster card instead. They'll stop asking questions.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
I am so over my math class. I can't even pick up my textbook, it looks so sad. How will I get through this book?
-Calculating Losses

Dear Calculating,
Probably because of all it's problems. Try solving those first, you might feel better!
-The VOICE

NOTE: THIS FEATURE IS FOR ENTERTAINMENT ONLY. ANY RESEMBLANCE TO ACTUAL ADVICE IS ACCIDENTAL.

HOROSCOPES



Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 19

Sometimes things are just gray: the sky, the computer screen, your mood. All you can do is wait it out. Spring is coming and color is coming with it.



Aquarius
Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Are you feeling left out? Chances are good that you are and that a small but meaningful opportunity passed you by recently. Don't worry. You'll get a second chance!



Pisces
Feb. 19 - Mar. 20

Once you were carefree and others took care of you. Now you do the caretaking most of the time. It's a lot to manage but it will pay off in the end.



Aries
Mar. 21 - Apr. 19

Birthday time! Okay, so maybe this year's celebration will be a little muted, and maybe it was last year, too (thanks, covid) but put your party hat on because fun is coming your way!



Taurus
Apr. 20 - May 20

When was the last time someone gave you a good long hug? Not one of those little bro taps or quick squeezes but a real hug? Chances are you could use one and the stars say with vaccinations increasing you'll get one soon!



Gemini
May 21 - Jun. 20

You need more art in your life even if it's just a hand painted picture from a friend, niece, nephew, cousin or your own kiddo. Put something bright in your line of sight and it will cheer you up whenever you see it.



Cancer
Jun. 21 - Jul. 22

Time to do battle with that old deamon, procrastination. The only solution is to tough it out. Clench your jaw and get on with it. Once you start it'll be easier than you think.



Leo
Jul. 23 - Aug. 22

Time to find some good threads for summer and you are always careful about the budget. Good news is that thrift stores are overflowing with goodies from people cleaning out their houses for months! Poppin' tags!



Virgo
Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

You misplaced something and either you haven't noticed yet or your annoyed about it. The bad news is, it's not going to turn up. The good news is, it wasn't that important anyway.



Libra
Sept. 23 - Oct. 22

You are known for your ability to balance everything but even you are having to write a lot of notes to yourself and tripple check your calendar to keep going. Good news: this problem is temporary.



Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

You are good looking. You are smart. People gravitate toward you. A lot of times you aren't even aware of how magnetic you can be. You think you're average or you are shy. No way. You are all that. Enjoy it.



Sagittarius
Nov. 22 - Dec. 21

It's time to get your hair cut. It's okay if it's just a trim but you need to freshen up and feel frisky and tidy for spring. It's okay if a family member does it. Seriously. They may offer. It's in the stars.

Just Like Cats & Dogs by Dave T. Phipps



SUDOKU

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8			3		2			
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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.

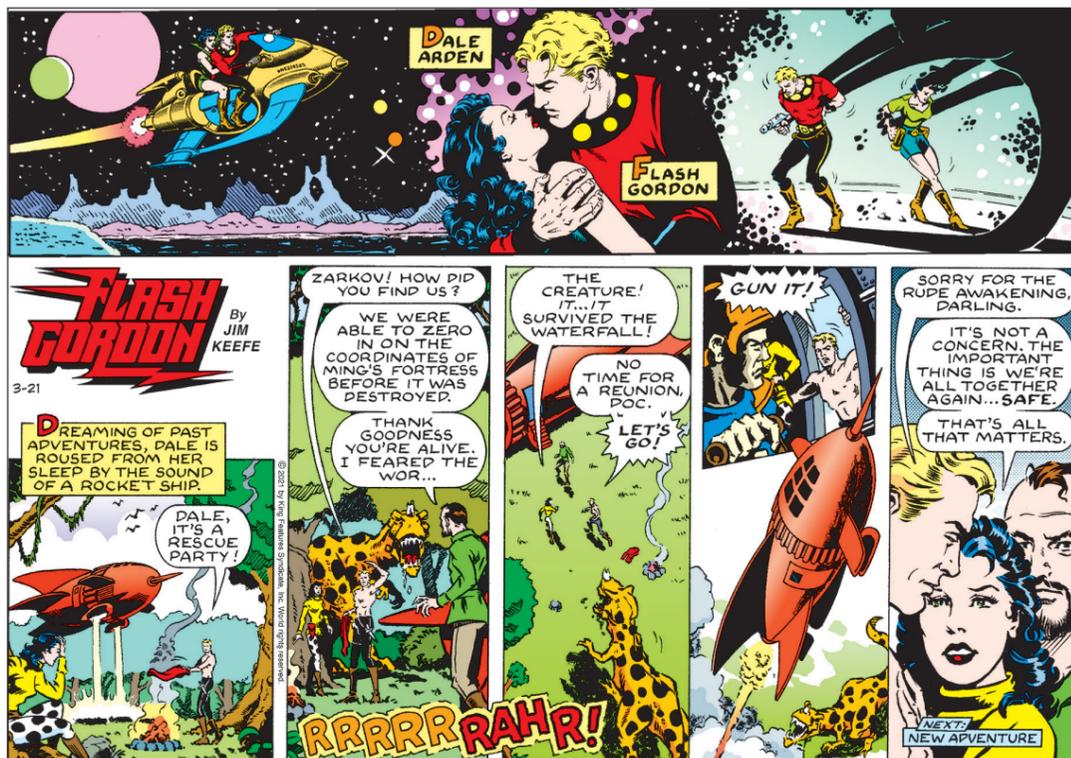
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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

Answer

FLASH GORDON



GET FUZZY

