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"We've got it covered!"



The student press of Mercer County Community College since 1968

Battle for student government president got ugly

Social media fighting, allegations of misconduct, then a narrow win for Perez

By Mahdavi Steinert
Reporter

This year's election for Student Government president turned into a fierce battle between candidates Christian Perez, former Vice President of the Student Government Association, and Madelaine Benowitz, a former senator of SGA. Perez won by just 3 votes, 26 to 23, but the candidates' platforms were overshadowed by social media fueled tensions and allegations of misconduct on both sides.

The initial area of contention was a letter to the editor that Perez submitted to The VOICE for the September issue.

Although The VOICE accepts all letters to the editor from members of the community with no edits-provided they meet length and decency standards, Benowitz responded on Instagram saying, "It is my understanding when a candidate running for an office is given press time, equal time is offered to all candidates. This did not occur in this instance and should be considered unethical."

She later acknowledged that she knew she had the right to submit a letter to the editor, but maintained her position that The VOICE had erred in not reaching out to her.

"For a political campaign, it's equal time in the press. There-

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"I fully endorse Maddie not just because she is my daughter, but because she has the leadership skills and work ethic needed to represent the students of MCCC."
-Chef Frank Benowitz, MCCC Culinary Instructor - Facebook Sept. 23, 2021

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GOT A NEWS TIP?

Race for NJ Governor leans left
Incumbent Phil Murphy holds lead

By Elijah Parkman-Williams
Senior Reporter

Election day is November 2 in New Jersey and many people are watching the race for governor. The contenders are current Democratic Governor Phillip Murphy and Republican Jack Ciattarelli, a former state lawmaker.

In terms of their campaign platforms Governor Murphy says he wants to continue action plans he already has in motion. These include decriminaliz-

ing the use of cannabis and introducing the industry to New Jersey's economy, implementing the Community College Opportunity Grant Program which offers free tuition to low income students, and updating New Jersey's transit system.

One of Governor Murphy's most ambitious goals is the implementation of clean energy in New Jersey. His plan is to tackle climate change and have New Jersey run off of completely 100% clean energy.

By contrast, Ciattarelli says his goals are to lower prop-

erty taxes, make healthcare more affordable, and promote entrepreneurship to encourage economic growth.

The candidates have faced off in two feisty debates. Hot topics included COVID-19 vaccines and masking, school funding, and white privilege.

Murphy has tried to paint Ciattarelli as a Tump acolyte while Ciattarelli has suggested Murphy is an "anti-woman" fraud even though they have common ground on abortion

Ciattarelli, who headlined

a Trump-supporting "Stop the Steal" rally in 2020, has tried to distance himself from Trump, saying elections are not rigged in NJ. Meantime he has thrown shade at Murphy for being originally from Massachusetts saying he supports the Red Sox instead of the Yankees in baseball.

Voting in NJ runs 5:30 am to 8:30 pm on November 2. If you are registered you can find your polling place through this search: <https://voter.svrs.nj.gov/polling-place-search>

Visit us online!
mcccvoice.org

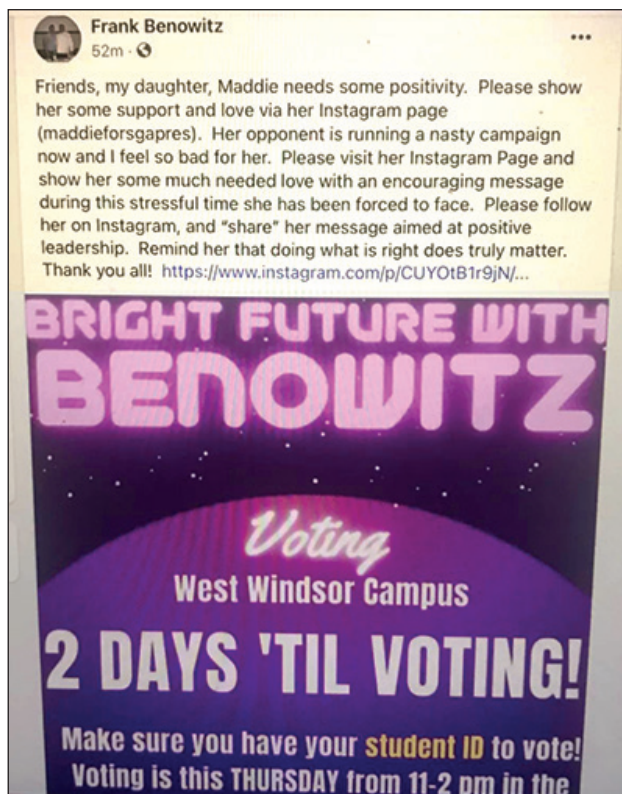
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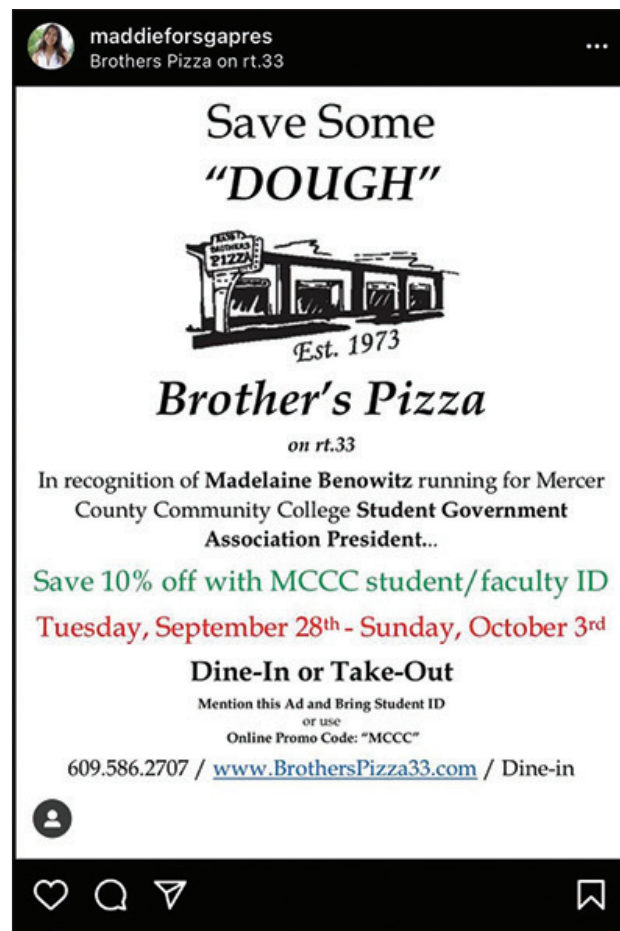
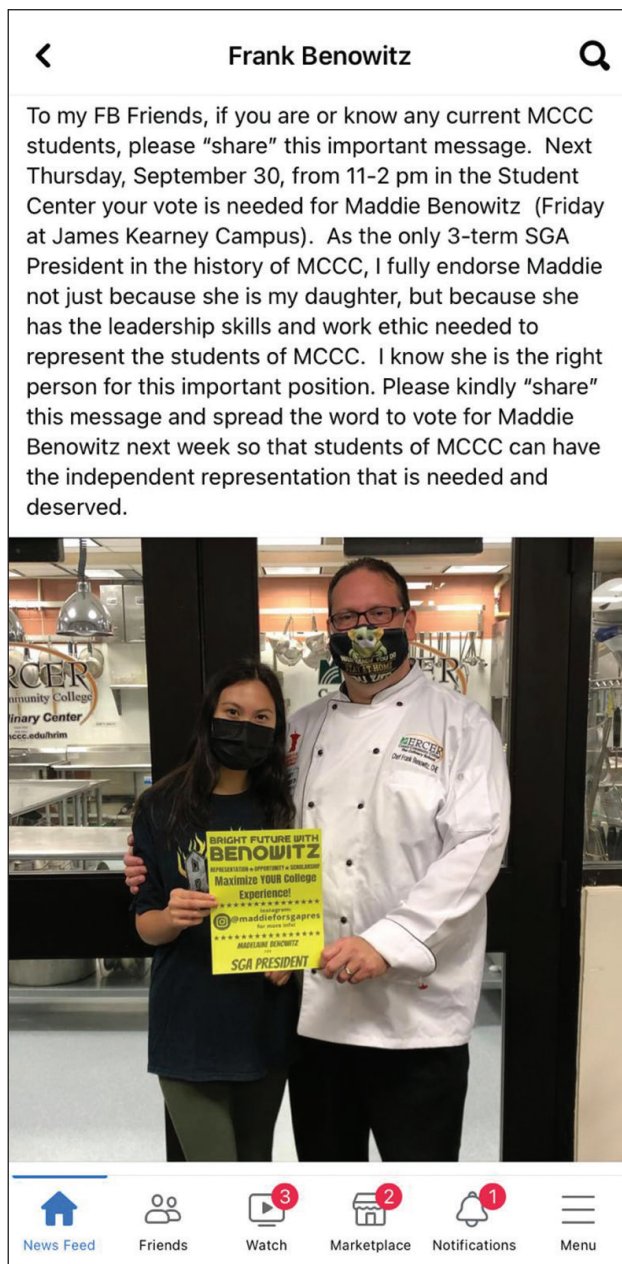
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Although the post was later removed, Chef Frank Benowitz a culinary arts instructor at MCCC, at one point posted online that her opponent was running a “nasty campaign.”



PHOTOS | FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM SCREENCAP

ABOVE: According to her father, both Madelaine and he reached out to Brother's Pizza to ask them to offer a six day promotional discount in recognition of her run for SGA president. She posted their offer on her Instagram page. CENTER: Chef Frank Benowitz, who is an instructor in MCCC's culinary program, promoted his daughter's campaign for SGA president on his Facebook page and encouraged followers to reach out to current MCCC students and encourage them to vote for her.

Social media took election fight to another level

Continued from page 1

fore if Christian does submit a letter, the same should've been relayed to me, which it was afterwards," she said.

The VOICE editors responded to Benowitz's complaint by encouraging her to submit her own letter which was then published online.

Both candidates utilized their letter to the editors to present their platforms.

Benowitz wrote, "This isn't about me; this is about you. I want to allow you to have a voice to maximize your college experience."

Perez said his priority was, "to continue to give students the opportunity to enjoy what this college can offer, without missing out on the 'college experience' or struggling as hard financially as they would otherwise."

When asked how they planned to accomplish their goals, Benowitz said she wanted to establish open forum SGA meetings, while Perez said he wanted to create a Discord server all Mercer students could engage in. Both candidates' campaign platforms were overshadowed by the social media controversy, however, as tensions mounted over claims of unfair advantage and character attacks.

Benowitz's candidacy became complicated after her father, Chef Frank Benowitz, a Senior Teaching Assistant in Mercer's hospitality program, became in-

involved. He posted a series of status updates on Facebook supporting his daughter's campaign and encouraging anyone who saw his message to share it.

"I fully endorse Maddie not just because she is my daughter, but because she has the leadership skills and work ethic needed to represent the students of MCCC," he posted on September 23.

In a now deleted Facebook post he wrote, "Her opponent is running a nasty campaign now and I feel so bad for her."

Benowitz denied her father's influence on her campaign. Chef Benowitz went on to confirm his daughter's campaign was entirely her own. However, Chef Benowitz did assist Benowitz's campaign by helping her form a partnership with Brother's Pizza in Hamilton to promote her candidacy.

The poster on her Instagram page said, "In recognition of Madelaine Benowitz running for Mercer County Community College Student Government Association President, Save 10% off with MCCC student/faculty ID."

When asked who reached out to establish the Brothers partnership, Chef Benowitz said, "Her and I both did."

Adriana Matt, Coordinator II of Student Life and Leadership said, "I don't think that a faculty member should stump for a student running for student government. I feel like that creates an unfair advantage."

Perez also generated his fair share of social media controversy, taking to Instagram with a now-deleted post showing him holding a wrapper from candy Benowitz handed out as a part of her campaign, with the caption: "I see my opponent's campaigning is now littering our beautiful courtyard! Sad!"

He later edited his post to include, "This isn't an accusation of littering against my opponent, just pointing out the indirect result of her campaign strategy."

Madelaine Benowitz's campaign ultimately filed complaints with SGA saying Perez had violated campaign rules by hanging up posters past the campaigning deadline.

When asked if there were any other violations she said, "yes," but no further comments were shared.

Perez acknowledged the error saying, "I did put flyers up on the Monday after campaigning week. However, when the concern was raised to me that those flyers were considered unfair, I did take them down the next day."

He also acknowledged another campaign violation for having his campaign flyers on the Rainbow Alliance table at Club Day, as he is President of the Rainbow Alliance as well.

As tensions continued to build, former Assistant Dean of Student Life John Simone counted the votes Friday, October 1 as a neutral party. Forty-nine votes were cast with Perez winning by a three vote margin.

The election was held solely in person, ruling out the possibility of a virtual ballot.

"[Virtual voting] is probably a good idea going forward, but I don't know why it was not [used] or what the circumstances were," Simone said.

When asked why there was no virtual election, Matt said, "I don't think that was ever an option."

Danielle Garruba, Director of Student Life and Leadership, refused to comment.

Perez's victory was announced Monday, October 4. However, the official post from Student Life has since been taken down by request of administration due to the ongoing investigations.

In recognizing the contentiousness of this year's election, Chef Benowitz said, "I hope they can work this stuff out."

For her part, Benowitz said she doesn't plan to contest the election results saying, "I haven't fully considered the next step, whether it's if I want to apply for another position on the team or stick to being a senator. This is my last year at Mercer. I was very passionate about student government; I still very much am."

As for his new position, Perez says, "The first thing on my agenda is setting up the online community that I promised. I believe that is something I can do pretty easily, even on my own, which is important because we don't have a full cabinet right now."



Chris Perez amended this Instagram post regarding Benowitz's campaign littering. He was accused of running a "nasty" campaign.



Romy Yoga brings stress relief to a broad community

By Mandy Sidhu
Senior Reporter

Romy Toussaint was born in Haiti, grew up in Princeton and currently resides in Lawrenceville where she established Romy Yoga in 2007.

In 1992 while working out at a gym, Toussaint's trainer shared a yoga video with her of Brian Kest, founder of power yoga, and she was inspired. She soon began her study of alignment-based yoga varieties, Kundalini, Hatha, and Vinyasa yoga as well as meditation. Toussaint went on to become a certified yoga instructor and head coach through the Yoga Alliance.

In a recent interview Toussaint said, "Yoga is so much more than what we see out there where people are wearing [tight] pants trying to get their body in contortions," says Toussaint. "It is not just the asanas, or physical movements."

Instead she describes yoga in different terms saying, "Yoga for me is really a lifestyle. It is a practice that really lets us see things as they really are, that brings in a lot of self-awareness and it has principles and disciplines most people don't know of."

One thing that people may not know is that yoga "has breathwork and meditation." She adds, "Yoga is transformative if you practice all that it has

"[Romy] has a saying, 'have you climbed your mountain today'? and she makes you feel like you can climb any mountain, whether it is physical or mental."

-Briana Pettis, yoga student

to offer. It has brought balance into my life. A strong balanced flexible body gives a strong balanced and flexible mind too."

After becoming a yoga instructor she went on to become a certified conscious leadership life coach, and a professional speaker on the benefits of yoga, mindfulness and wellness.

"I am an expert at customizing and facilitating physical activity breaks and mindfulness sessions at conferences and workshops for all types of groups and organizations," says Toussaint. She also leads yoga and hiking retreats everywhere from New Jersey and New Mexico, all the way to Peru, Costa Rica, and Guatemala. She recently got back from a Women of Color Retreat.

Toussaint, who is Black, says, "I like to do separate events for people of color so that they can really understand the habits of yoga and take advantage of that on their own without having to worry about any microaggressions."



Romy Toussaint conducting a class at her business in Lawrenceville, NJ, Romy Yoga.

PHOTO | MANDY SIDHU

Briana Pettis who has been working with Toussaint for four years says, "It is a deeper practice physically and emotionally when I practice yoga with Romy compared to when I practice it through a fitness app. She helps you understand that yoga is non-judgemental and for everybody."

During COVID Toussaint was able to expand her work.

"Virtual classes have been a lifesaver for people. There is so much yoga available virtually," says Toussaint. "There is even more yoga available now."

In the future Toussaint hopes to focus more on teaching her courses in helping peo-

ple be better versions of themselves, including her Conscious Leadership course.

"I do much more than teach yoga," Toussaint says. "I teach the 10 Habits course where I teach people aspects of Ayurveda to learn to sleep better, how to incorporate more plants in your diet."

Toussaint says, "Yoga is good for everybody, everyone can benefit."

Romy Yoga is offering new students a \$39 special which includes unlimited classes for a month. The monthly membership for students also comes at a reduced price. They hold evening and weekend classes too.

Pettis says, "Romy yoga

is so special because Romy practices what she preaches and she is so gifted in what she does. She practices and teaches both the philosophy behind yoga and the postures."

Toussaint says, "Everyone can benefit because when you do yoga, you turn inward and you become more mindful, physically mentally and spiritually, it really helps you physically doing other sports and having the energy to show up in your life. It helps to connect to the divine in you and the divine in all beings."

Pettis says, "[Romy] has a saying, 'have you climbed your mountain today'? and she makes you feel like you can climb any mountain, whether it is physical or mental."

Mercer County named spotted lanternfly "quarantine zone"

By Kyle Johansson
Reporter

Mercer County has become a spotted lanternfly "quarantine zone" by The New Jersey Department of Agriculture which has initiated a campaign called "Stomp it out!" encouraging residents to step on and kill the insects whenever they see them.

Spotted lanternflies (SLF) are invasive planthoppers that can fly and jump. In its adult form the SLF has brown speckled longer wings and inner wings that are red and is about two inches long. The lanternflies, which are indigenous to China, India, Vietnam, and Taiwan, do not have natural predators in the U.S.

The NJDA website explains that "the insect excretes honeydew (a sugary substance) which can attract bees, wasps, and other insects. The honeydew also builds up and promotes the growth for sooty mold (fungi), which can cover the plant, forest understories, patio furniture, cars, and anything else found below SLF feeding."

Professor Amy Ricco, the Program Coordinator for

Horticulture, Plant Science, and Sustainability at Mercer County Community College explains that, "The spotted lanternfly is believed to have entered the US initially in Berks County, PA as egg masses on landscape stone from Asia in 2012. It wasn't until 2014 that they noticed it, and it consequently spread through Pennsylvania. They tracked the Pennsylvania spread between 2014 and 2017. By 2018, it was in NJ with Warren, Hunterdon, and Mercer Counties being the first 3 counties with an infestation."

Jeff Wolfe, the Public Information Officer for the NJDA stated "The spotted lanternfly does have the ability to feed on 70 different types of trees and vegetation. This is why it is important to work to reduce its population now as much as possible."

Professor Ricco said that "maple trees, fruit trees, and grapes," are among some of the SLF's targets.

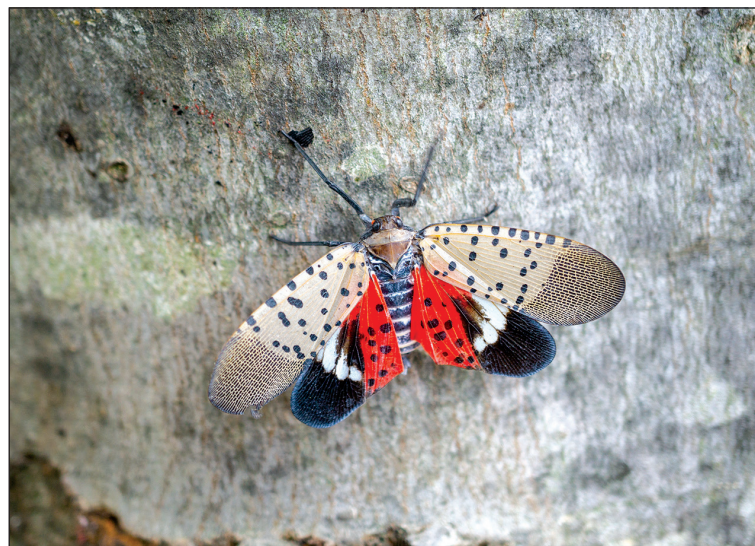
When the lanternflies feed on plants during their development they can kill young trees and put stress on them causing a lack of fruit production and less of the ability to fight off other insects, diseases, and cold conditions.

Meredith Melendez, an agricultural agent, and professor at Rutgers University said a major concern is that, "When a new insect pest is introduced into an environment there is little natural control. Researchers are still learning about the SLF and investigating ways to control it. During this period of investigation, we can only do our best to control the SLF population with the information that we have."

Dr. Jessica Ware, an Invertebrate Zoologist at the American Museum of Natural History says we can expect an increase in the spotted lanternfly population during the next summer and for them to continue spreading in new states as well.

Researchers and the NJDA are still trying to figure out what effects this infestation will have on the Mercer County ecosystem long-term and short-term and what the best ways are to mitigate them other than calling on residents to kill them.

For more information on the SLF lifecycle and how to handle them visit: <https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/divisions/pi/prog/pests-diseases/spotted-lanternfly/>



An adult spotted lantern fly.

COLLEGE VOICE | FILE PHOTO



PHOTO COURTESY OF NJDA WEBSITE

The NJDA website features a link to report SLF sightings and information on their campaign to "stomp" them out.

REVIEW: Netflix's *Love on The Spectrum*

How I see the show as someone on the spectrum

Two perspectives

How I see the show as someone neurotypical



By Ben Levitt
Senior Reporter

I was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), when I was about 13. Life as an autistic young adult is interesting to say the least, mainly when it comes to dating and understanding social cues, which is what the show *Love on the Spectrum*, is about.

Love on the Spectrum, is a special addition to Netflix's reality show line up because all the key cast members are on the autism spectrum. The show follows six young adults from Australia who are navigating the dating scene and trying to figure out what love really means to them.

"I'd like to find someone that would be easy like breathing" shares one of the cast members, Cassandra in a group interview for ABC. "Because maybe that's what love is, and I'd want to spend my life with that person," she adds.

Kassandra was the character I most identified with because of how similar our experiences are. During her first interview she opened up about how she would constantly get comments like "but you don't look autistic," which is something that I get every time I tell someone that I am. I can't put it any better than she did when asked if she was ever told that, "Quite often. You can't see my brain, and it's my brain that's different."

I also resonated with her entire experience. Especially her reaction to being diagnosed as autistic. She goes on to say that she was relieved when she was told that she was autistic because it gave her a sense of belonging because there were more people like her and she wasn't alone. I remember clearly when I was told by the doctor that I was autistic. When I was diagnosed I said "that makes a lot of sense."

As Kassandra said, you know something is off. You know that you aren't like the other kids growing up. You know that you have difficulties with things that they necessarily don't. And just like her, I would count my official diagnosis as one of the best things that's happened to me, because it gave me a sense of what was "off" and how I could work on it. It gave me a starting point.

I was unsure about the show at first. It is very common for autistic people to be the butt of the joke. You tend to see people say "stop being so autistic" or "you're so autistic," when they mean it as an obvious insult.

I was worried that this show would be problematic, but I don't think it is. The only thing about this show that I did not like was that there was an emphasis on putting neurodiverse people with other neurodiverse people. Maybe for season three they'll change that.

Overall the show truly is trying to show neurotypical people that "hey, we also want love." And I think they got that pretty spot on.

I think the show did a good job, but just like with art, it is all in the eye of the beholder. This show could be a complete failure in its mission if you have someone look at it and think "dumb autistic guy can't talk to girls."

The mission for autistic people is no longer awareness, it is acceptance. And this show is a very good first step in that mission, but only if people are kind enough to understand that.

Katie & Ronan



Teo



Michael & Heather



Chloe & Marc

NETFLIX PROMOTIONAL CONTENT

TOP: Katie (left) and Ronan's (right) second date on the pier where they danced to a busker's music. SECOND FROM TOP: Teo on her first date with a woman after finding she's more interested in men as friends. THIRD FROM TOP: Michael (left) and Heather (right) ringing the bell at the Buddhist temple he enjoys visiting. ABOVE: Chloe (left) and Marc (right) walk in a park notable for having both gardens and animatronic dinosaurs, Marc's favorite.



By Madhavi Steinert
Reporter

Love on the Spectrum, a Netflix reality series, is not your average dating show. Unlike most shows in this genre which seem to focus on the failures of the participants, in this show the cast—six autistic individuals in Australia—are supported on their journeys to find love and companionship.

The second season of *Love on the Spectrum*, was released on September 21, and like the first, it features six-episodes in which producer Cian O'Clery follows the cast members as they work up to and then go on dates with other people on the spectrum.

What's so special about this show is the tone of faith, optimism, hope, and even bravery. These individuals are stepping out of their comfort zones and venturing into the world of dating, daunting for most people and harder still for those who have difficulty grasping social cues.

At the beginning of the second season, Michael, who was also on season 1, tries speed dating, and goes on a few follow up dates with Heather who is also on the spectrum. He likes things formal and she seems willing to go along with his preferences.

Meanwhile, Kassandra, who loves cosplay and saves her baby teeth, goes on one date but has a panic attack. You can't help but root for her to push through and it's a relief when she doesn't let it discourage her and goes on another date with someone different and has a better experience.

My favorite member of the show is Ronan, who receives advice from Jodi Rodgers, a counselor who has her own private practice, Birds and Bees, and helps make learning about human sexuality more relevant and accessible especially to people on the spectrum. On the show, she helped Ronan become familiar with the formalities of first dates by going through potential conversations and scenarios.

Ronan nails his first date, a picnic by the water with Katie, who has Down syndrome. As the show reveals in its last episode, their relationship is still going strong.

The show does a fantastic job of highlighting the autistic experience, destigmatizing the differences between neurotypical and neurodivergent individuals while also uniting the two different groups under one human interest.

When asked about being diagnosed with autism, Kassandra said, "I was happy, having someone tell me that, 'No, this is what it is, and there are thousands of other people like you.' It made me feel human again. I didn't feel completely outcast anymore."

What's most important to take away from *Love on the Spectrum* is that autistic people experience humanity differently than those not on the spectrum, but everyone, neurodivergent or not, brings and takes different things to and from romantic experiences.

For neurotypical audiences, this show offers incredible insight into the autistic experience. Showrunner O'Clery said in a podcast with Caris Bizzaca of Screen Australia on July 2, 2021, "The initial kernel of the idea was about raising awareness that people on the spectrum do want to date and want to have relationships just like everybody else does, but as we make the show and as we've made the second series, it becomes about showing the true diversity of the spectrum."

The Gingered Peach is the best local pastry shop there is

By Elijah Parkman-Williams
Senior Reporter

The Gingered Peach in Lawrence, New Jersey is undoubtedly among the best pastry shops in the entire tri-state area. Starting back in 2011 Joanne Canady-Brown started the Let Them Eat Cake Bake Shop before revitalizing the business and introducing The Gingered Peach to the world, offering unique and outstanding baked goods that will put any at home bakers to shame.

Take one step into the bakery and experience the old farm-like interior and a wafting of the heavy scent of cinnamon rolls and freshly baked cookies. Be sure to be careful around the faithful patrons stampeding through the shop at any given moment to get their sugar fix. Just one glance at those delicious pasties and you know you will experience a fantastical land that is filled with flavors yet tasted, seductive chocolate wailing at you to buy, and savory pastries that offset the entire sweet menu perfectly.

It all starts with the cinnamon rolls. Unwrapping its layers is a sensual experience, getting sweeter and sweeter, until you find its glorious, gooey center. The center, sweet and sticky. By the time you inhale this delight you realize that you're already in too deep, never able to pull back from the clutches of the Gingered Peach.

After recovering from the cinnamon roll one must venture towards the giant cupcake case filled with a diverse array of flavors and colors. Starting with the basics, there is the vanilla cupcake. The mellow flavor and luxurious sweet taste is perfectly presented by a perfectly whipped white icing top.

Ruth Anderson, a fifth semester Computer Information Systems major at MCCC says, "It reminds me of vanilla cookies. It's just so delicious."

The vanilla cupcake is



PHOTOS | ELIJAH PARKMAN-WILLIAMS

ABOVE: Many options to choose from at The Gingered Peach. No choice can go wrong. RIGHT: Soft ginger and chocolate chip cookies.

not overly sweet, but it is just enough to keep your mouth watering for the next surprise, the chocolate.

The chocolate cupcakes are a highlight for anyone willing to try this dangerous desert. The chocolate here is deep and rich in flavor, but the defining trait of this scrumptious cupcake is the velvety smooth icing and moist cake. It is deceitfully decadent and up to this point has to be the best pastry so far. It's absolutely to die for.

First semester Computer Science student Eesa Toheed takes his time on the chocolate cupcake, intaking the rich desert with his eyes rolled back and with a deep exhale.

Toheed says, "I feel cozy, like a lump has filled me up on the inside."

Some classics to also check out would have to be the chocolate chip cookies and molasses cookies. The chocolate chip cookie is basic, great if you want it but nothing special.

On the other hand

there are their amazing molasses cookies. It's sweet with the perfect chewy texture. If you're lucky you will get a fresh baked molasses cookie so soft you will swear it's the best treat there.

Of course, The Gingered Peach also uses many seasonal flavors in their menu. During the fall their pumpkin scones become an instant favorite.

"I can definitely taste the pumpkin," says MCCC Communication major Ben Levitt, also a VOICE reporter, adding "I like the icing on it; it really compliments it. This is really good."

The pumpkin scone is the peace before the storm that is the flavor of this bakery. It has subtle flavors of pumpkin, cinnamon, and other warm spices baked into its succulent, soft core. The exterior is covered in a shell of pumpkin glaze, that when bitten releases the instant aroma of the traditional fall flavors. Bliss.

What came next was my favorite dessert, the olive

oil cake. To describe it simply, this cake is the most elegant of all the pastries. The scent of the cake is spectacular, rich olive oil and lemon overtake the body, causing an euphoria like experience to stop any diner from not eating this slowly. The lemon glaze dances upon the tongue in perfect rhythm of the smooth olive oil, creating a cohesive flavor that tickles the senses ever so slightly.

Gingered Peach has concocted what may be the perfect contrast to many of their sweet desserts, the Trenton Volcano. Pork roll, spinach, and cheese packed inside brioche and topped with everything bagel seasoning, what more can a person ask for? The salty pork takes immediate jurisdiction over the palette, bombarding the tongue with overwhelming flavor, the spinach rivals the pork, fighting for dominance in your mouth, and the cheese forces its way into your tastebuds. All of these flavors fight for attention,

yet their collision only enhances the flavor. It truly is worth the name of a Trenton Volcano, because it's the single best thing to ever burst in my mouth!

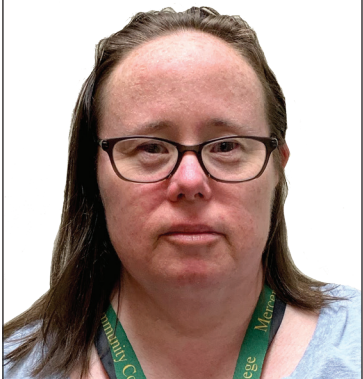
At this point only one dessert remains worthy of topping all the others, the Caramel Crack! There is a reason that this dessert is called crack, because this toffee coated brioche melts on the tongue, tantalizing the brain to stop time. Calories be damned, this dessert is dangerously addictive.

Now at the end of this exploration to The Gingered Peach my knees buckle under the weight of their culinary masterpieces. Leaving this divine experience I realize only one thing, I cannot wait until my next fix to wane my sugar withdrawal.



Down syndrome isn't shown much in movies and TV but when it is represented, it's usually done well

LAURIE'S CORNER



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

According to the CDC "Down syndrome continues to be the most common chromosomal disorder. Each year, about 6,000 babies are born with Down syndrome, which is about 1 in every 700 babies born." But you do not see very many people with Down syndrome in movies or on TV. Because I have Down syndrome I am always glad to see people like me represented.

There is one movie called "The Other Sister" that was made in 1999 and that stars Juliette Lewis. Her character has a developmental disability,

even though she doesn't. Her character wants to do things like live independently, have a job, and go to college. I know from my own life that these things are possible, because I do them all. I have a lot of support from my family and friends and they have always had my back, but I am an independent person. I think the movie portrays this aspect of life with a developmental disability well.

Another place where you can see developmental disability is in a TV show called "Life Goes On." It ended in the

1990s after 4 seasons, but you can find the reruns online. In the show a family called the Thatchers have three children and one of them, Corky, has Down syndrome. Corky is played by an actor named Chris Burke who has Down syndrome in real life. This was the first show to feature a central character with Down syndrome and it did a great job showing how a family can pull together and how much better they all are with Corky in their life.

Both "Life Goes On"

and "The Other Sister" are kind hearted and warm. The actors do a good job getting into the characters' minds and showing experiences in a realistic way.

Having a developmental disability brings a lot of challenges in life, and there aren't enough people in TV and movies with Down syndrome when you consider how many of us there are in the world. But it is good to see that the examples we do have do a great job of showing the struggles and what is possible, which is more than people may think.



PHOTO | COURTESY OF JKC GALLERY

Artists: (From left top to bottom) Nathan Maybee, Christopher Michael Veltri, Erica M. Duncan, (right) Brianna Robinson Pieces: *Going Back* 2018, *Inner daemons* 2018, *Slipping Beneath the Surface* 2018, *Untitled* 2018

By Ashley Peng and Bruna Camara
Reporters

Trenton, NJ has had a vibrant artistic world for many years, but has seldom had spaces in which to showcase the paintings, photographs, and multi-media artwork of locals, including MCCC students and faculty.

But in the past four years, the college’s Trenton JKC Gallery has become a venue supporting new and established voices.

The most recent exhibit was called *The Mark and the Memory*. According to curator of the exhibition, Ryann Casey, the theme of the exhibit was “How photography responds to trauma.”

When putting together the exhibit she said she was looking for “how artists used a variety of techniques to either process trauma or to reflect on it.”

Visitor Bonnie Randolph says of her visit to the Gallery, “There were several installations at that exhibit that I really liked. The one that struck home for me was the one of the woman coming to terms with the relationship with her mother (who was never there for me). She is now caring for her mother. I plan to attend more things at the gallery. When I went, I wasn’t expecting to be overly impressed with

anything. I was surprised by the depth and emotion of each installation.”

One of the featured artists, Tim Dill is a retired investigator and a former MCCC student. He got a bachelor’s degree in Baltimore, then he started studying photography at Mercer.

When asked about his interest in photography he said, “I love photography. For me it’s a way to express myself. I enjoy what I’m doing right now, and I don’t see any reason of doing something else as long as I’m having fun doing it.”

Dill says he took a break from photography for a while. He struggled with alcoholism but got back into photography about 10 years ago when began his recovery.

Dill’s pieces for the exhibition were self-portraits about his story. He used a glass-head to represent the memories of what he went through in his life.

The glass head was put in situations and places that are meaningful to him or represent a part of his life.

In fitting his pieces with the theme, *The Mark and the Memory*, Dill said, “There are good and bad memories. Everybody has that mark. My job in law enforcement, my struggles with alcohol, these are all marks in my life, they were all memories in my life.”



PHOTO | ASHLEY PENG

Artist: Renée Beyer. Piece: *From Living On A Dollar a Day: The Lives and Faces of the World’s Poor* 2009-Present



Artist: Heidi Kirkpatrick. Piece: *From Specimens* 2011
part that in a way represents her physical pain.

JKC Campus C

“The Mark and the Memory”

Healing from trauma

Dill grew up Catholic and criticizes how religion affects people saying, “I grew up in an environment where I went to Catholic school, and they were really strict. There were some things they taught us which I know today, aren’t true or accurate. But they have a lasting impression on somebody.”

Dill says that one of the people that helped his recovery was a retired priest who taught him about letting go. During one of their talks, he says the priest asked him if he still wore the same pants he wore when he was 12 years old. When he said “no,” the priest responded, “Well, that’s right; you can’t fit into those pants you wore when you were 12 years old. What makes you think your conception of God or religion should be the same when you are 55 years old?”

He also cites Professor Michael Dalton as one of the people that has influenced him in his career because it was possible to have consistent feedback and to feel more confident in his work.

Professor Michael Dalton teaches photography at Mercer and is the Director of the Gallery. He has been a photographer for over 30 years.

His interest in photography began when he was recommended to take a photography class.

“I was hooked on photography from that student that hung around the gallery so much that the teacher had to ask other students,” he said.

When asked about his work, Dill says, “I am currently working on a project about the Passaic River but my current work right now is editing and creating a photography to try to make a statement about work.”

Professor Dalton’s work is called, *Real Photo Show*.

“I started the project because I loved podcasts and wanted to see more photographers, curators, and other members of the community provide spaces to help people talk about building community in our world”

He also has done a residency in an exchange program with the School of Visual Arts.

While there he met many men who were involved in the project.



Artist: (left to right) Chrystofer Davis, Emily Fuhrman
from *Addiction* Installation 2021



PHOTO | COURTESY OF JKC GALLERY
2011-2015, each tin holds a film that shows a body

Gallery Exhibit "The Mark and the Memory" through photography

began in high school
ed by his cousin to take
immediately. I became
around the photo lab so
would let me run it for
.
about his current proj-
currently photographing
most of what I am doing
d scanning 30 years of
make sense of all of my
on also hosts a podcast
odcast, *Real Photo Show*,
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photo community who
promote others. It's all
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e met some Palestinian
ed in the first Intifada.

They let him know when demonstrations were happening and photographed those demonstrations.
He then began to be more interested in family life there which then became a primary interest in future photo projects after he returned from being there for 7 months.
Professor Dalton volunteered to be director and began running the Gallery in February of 2017.
He says, "The gallery was built so that the college could add to the existing and growing art community in Trenton."
When asked about how he comes up with the themes and deciding which artists to showcase, he said, "About half of the shows at the gallery come to me through requests by others or people who walk into the gallery. The other half are through contacts I have made over the years of just being in the art world."
Casey describes her approach to each exhibit saying, "I see curation as a form of activism for myself. I look at it as a way to expand our mission of not only things like trauma but also giving spaces for voices that are often marginalized. Curation is an extension of political activism that I have but also an extension of



PHOTO | COURTESY OF JKC GALLERY
mann. Pieces: *Capturing Resistance* 2019, Tapestry



PHOTO | COURTESY OF JKC GALLERY

Artists: (From left to right) Tamara Torres, Bridget Laudien, Camilla Martineli. Pieces: (From left to right) *Mi mamá me dijo en un sueño (My Mother Told Me in a Dream)* 2019, , *Phillip from the Right to Exist* 2019

what I think photography can be ethically."
The Mark and the Memory exhibition ran from June 21 to September 17. Although it may be closed now, viewers can still see the artist's work on the JKC Gallery website. There is also a catalog available digitally as a flip book.

For the new exhibition, Ryann Casey will be curating again. However, this show will be virtual, but in March the show will be physically in the gallery.

The title of the exhibit is *The Road Home*. The theme according to Professor Dalton is, "It's a show by artists who have been displaced from their homelands or have experienced other forms of displacement, either physically or socially."

There will be prints for sale and the money raised will be donated to organizations that help the homeless or displaced peoples.

When asked about what his hopes are for this exhibition, Professor Dalton said, "I am expecting more, I am hopeful that things have more normalcy or returning to something like that. We are all planning for things to get better but we are still figuring things out as we go."

For Ryann Casey she said, "I'm optimistic because people have been coming to the events and the shows...But I have also no idea in a month how things it's going to look [in terms of COVID]. Unfortunately we have to be quick in our feet."



TIM DILL

Tim Dill, a former MCCC student (class of 1980) and police investigator, is now a photographer. His work appeared in the MCCC JKC Campus Gallery Exhibit *The Mark and The Memory*. He is based in Bordentown, NJ and his work can be seen at tdill.art/



PHOTO | ASHLEY PENG

Photography Professor Michael Dalton, who runs the JKC Gallery, viewing a piece by Tamara Torres.

Women's soccer wraps up after shortened season

By Kelsi Williams
Reporter

The Vikings women's soccer team rounded up their Fall 2021 season, wrapping up earlier than usual but in circumstances far less disruptive than last year when the fall schedule was cancelled completely due to the COVID pandemic and players returned to participate in a very limited alternate season in the spring. For a time, to stay in shape they even held practices over Zoom doing exercises with their coach.

John Simone, Mercer's Director of Athletics, says "[This year] the typical 16 game season [was] shortened to 12 games, with limited travel and playing nearly without fans due to health and safety precautions. But overall, the team had a good season considering COVID and limited practices which makes it hard for the team to get their rhythm and consistency."

The Vikings have been practicing since the beginning of August, with both players and coaches taking critical safety measures.

Briana Engle, a first-year defender majoring in Health Science said, "Precautionary measures to keep everyone safe include having normal practices and games with vaccinated team members, and wearing masks before and after each practice and game."

Players say they were well aware that they could not ignore the Student Code of Conduct policies surround-



PHOTO | ALESSANDRO RIVERO

Emanuel "Manu" Dos Santo stealing the ball in a game vs. Harcum in April of 2021. The team met again this fall.

ing masking and distancing on and off the field and that if they violated them they would have faced progressive penalties potentially leading up to suspension and loss of athletic scholarships. They took every measure seriously and no player committed any infraction.

Joy Koch who is an international student from Switzerland and a first-year winger who is studying business administration said, "I feel it's good to be back on the field," but added, "The games aren't

back to normal. There are no locker rooms for changing and no handshaking during the game."

At the October 5 home game against Harcum Community College, Bruce Angle, a local spectator who normally attends home games said, "There has been a noticeable decrease in fan base attendance," but added, "I have no concerns for myself about COVID and would not have stopped attending games even if I weren't vaccinated."

While COVID has complicated much of the fall 2021 season, the availability of vaccines did help get some spectators back.

First-time spectator Kym McKithen says "Vaccinations are providing hope and more people like me are getting out to enjoy public events... Since getting vaccinated, I have been attending more outdoor events. I definitely enjoyed my first MCCC womens' soccer game and I'm looking forward to returning for the next home

game."

McKithen's interest in the Vikings home game was spontaneous she said. "I played soccer as a kid, live close by, and noticed the field lights were on so I decided to drop over."

The campus community also came out to support the women's team.

"The men's soccer team's fans supported us," said player Koch adding, "Mostly their parents and other players, sometimes even the baseball team came and watched."

Athletic facility rentals provide financial support for college

By Liam Simonelli
Reporter

Throughout each year MCCC rents athletic space to outside groups. While this has always been financially beneficial for the college, it was particularly helpful during the COVID lockdown when the campus was empty and student enrollment was down which strained the college budget.

Athletic Director John Simone says, "Typically, the facility use revenue is about \$400,000 plus per year," but adds that "In comparison to the [college's overall] \$50 million dollar budget it is a small addition."

While in proportion to the college overall operating budget rental revenue may be small, it can indirectly benefit students by helping reduce the need for tuition increases.

Erin Cahill-Wetzel, MCCC Coordinator of the Fitness Center and Swimming Pool says "Athletic rentals in-

cluding the turf field and pool last year were two areas on campus that were able to bring in a great deal of money at a time the college was in need of funds due to the pandemic so I believe it helped significantly."

In terms of where the money goes exactly Simone explains that "As a non-profit, any income for facility use goes back in to maintain the facility, such as lights, purchase of chlorine, field repairs, field lining and some new equipment." He added "This does take pressure off the general college operating budget so that money saved can assist the college and help students."

Simone says that rental customers consist of "Mostly local club and youth organizations who don't have access to any facilities," stressing that student athletics take priority in facility usage.

Men's lacrosse Coach Robert Siris says, "As for the field rentals, we get priority with our practices and games and never have a [conflict] with field rentals."

The Fitness Center is



PHOTO | JASON NORTON

MCCC's fitness center, named in honor of long time faculty member Professor Robert Pugh.

the only campus facility that is not rented out to outside interests. It remains available only to students and the college's sports teams. Although students can use the Fitness Cen-

ter for free, the majority of the college's almost 7,000 students do not do so.

"It is very beneficial that we've been able to host many club practices and la-

crosse tournaments." Coach Siris says adding "It exposes many young people, as well as their families, to our beautiful campus."

Some MCCC athletes keep on going

MCCC has a long history of turning out pro baseball players: who will be next?



Dave Gallagher

MCCC class of 1980

AFTER MCCC

Originally drafted by the Oakland A's this journeyman outfielder played for seven teams during his nine-year big league career including the Chicago White Sox and the New York Mets.

AT MCCC:

In 1980 he played in the JUCO World Series with the Vikings and took the team back to the Junior College World Series in 2000 when he returned as a coach.



Heath Fillmyer

MCCC class of 2014

AFTER MCCC

Fillmyer was selected in the fifth round of the Major League Baseball draft by the Oakland A's. He later moved to the Kansas City Royals and in 2021 moved on to the Cleveland Indians where he is currently assigned to the Triple-A Columbus Clippers.

AT MCCC:

Led the MCCC Vikings team to the Junior College World Series in 2014, posting a 9-0 record and a 0.68 ERA.



Greg Delgado

MCCC class of 2021

AFTER MCCC

Will he be the next to go up? Delgado transferred to Nova Southeastern University in FL where he is playing on their team the "Sharks."

AT MCCC:

At the end of the 2021 season he was First Team All American, Garden State Athletic Conference Player of the Year, and Region 19 Player of the year.



Denny Brady

MCCC class of 2017

AFTER MCCC

Brady was drafted in 2017 to the Los Angeles Angels in round 7 and currently he's a double-A affiliate for the Rocket City Trash Pandas.

AT MCCC:

"At Mercer I really learned how to, I guess, stick up for myself and take my career into my own hands...It was all about the people, like the teammates and the coaches...You know you could feed off of them they could feed off of you."

By Kyle Goldware
Senior Reporter

There are some good examples of players in professional sports who started out at community colleges, but many people do not know that MCCC has had a few. Two MCCC alumni who went into Major League Baseball are Heath Fillmyer who played for the Kansas City Royals and Dave Gallagher who played for the Oakland A's and other teams.

There are also more recent graduates who are on a Major League trajectory. Denny Brady and Greg Delgado both used to be a part of the Mercer Vikings baseball team and are moving forward in baseball at different levels.

Dennis "Denny" Brady graduated from Mercer in 2017. He was drafted in 2017 to the Los Angeles Angel's in round 7 and currently he's a double-A affiliate for the Rocket City Trash Pandas. The double-A league is the second highest league in baseball.

In a recent interview Brady was asked how playing on a minor league sports team was compared to Mercer's baseball team. He said, "Pretty similar actually. Obviously Mercer doesn't have a lot of funds so the players have to do a lot on their own. It's very similar to minor leagues except the funds are there. They are very minimalistic of what they give us so there's a lot of money that comes out of the minor leagues pockets to help

"Denny's performance in 2017 was phenomenal. He was a 1st Team All-American and the Division 2 Junior College Pitcher of the Year. Every time he took the mound, we felt like we would win the game."

-MCCC Head Coach Fred Carella

sustain our life I guess you could say..."

Reflecting back on his time as a Viking Brady said, "At Mercer I really learned how to, I guess, stick up for myself and take my career into my own hands since there wasn't no D1 schools...It was all about the people, like the teammates and the coaches. They didn't have much to give you but you know you could feed off of them they could feed off of you."

Current baseball head coach Fred Carella, who was an assistant coach in 2017, remembers Brady well.

"Denny's performance in 2017 was phenomenal. He was a 1st Team All-American and the Division 2 Junior College Pitcher of the Year. Every time he took the mound, we felt like we would win the game," Carella said.

Denny has fond memories of particular games from his time as a Viking.

"Yeah so I pitched in two games in the [NJCAA] World Series. It was the second game

that's the most memorable for me. Yeah that was just the team we played, like we were going punch for punch with them...I knew it was my last time playing with that team because I mean [if] we won that game, we were gonna play one more game, [but] if we lost, we were done..." he said.

Coach Carella remembers the Series, too saying, "Denny had an outstanding performance in the World Series. I think the game he pitched in the District tournament, against CCBC Catonsville, was even better. He threw a complete game shutout in that game and was in complete control from start to finish."

Asked if he had thought Brady was the kind of person to make it to the minor leagues, Carella said, "Yes, I believed Denny would get drafted and play professional baseball. I still believe he has a chance to make it to the Major Leagues."

He added, "It felt great knowing that I played a small part in helping Denny achieve

his dream of playing professional baseball. As coaches, it is our goal to help all of our players advance to the next level of baseball. That could be a four-year school or a professional opportunity."

Another student who isn't on a minor league team but has been rewarded for his excellent baseball ability, his willingness to play and good attitude is Greg Delgado.

Delgado was a former MCCC Viking for the baseball team who graduated last spring and is currently attending Nova Southeastern in Florida and continuing to play baseball.

At the end of his season last spring, Delgado was given 3 titles by the NJCAA. He was the "First Team All-American," "Garden State Athletic Conference Player of the Year" and "Region 19 Player of the Year."

Coach Carella says Delgado was, like Brady, a first team All-American player.

"He hit in the middle of our lineup and was a team captain. He is attending Nova

Southeastern on an athletic scholarship and I expect him to have a big impact for their baseball team in the spring."

Delgado says of his goals, "I hope to win a national championship this year."

Asked to recall any games that were the most impactful, Delgado said, "Due to COVID I was only able to compete for one playoff berth my freshman year, but if I were to recall one game that was very impactful it had to be an away game late in the season at Morris County College. This game was to clinch first place in our region and we did just that. I had a day with 2 home runs with 5 RBIs and as a team we played really well."

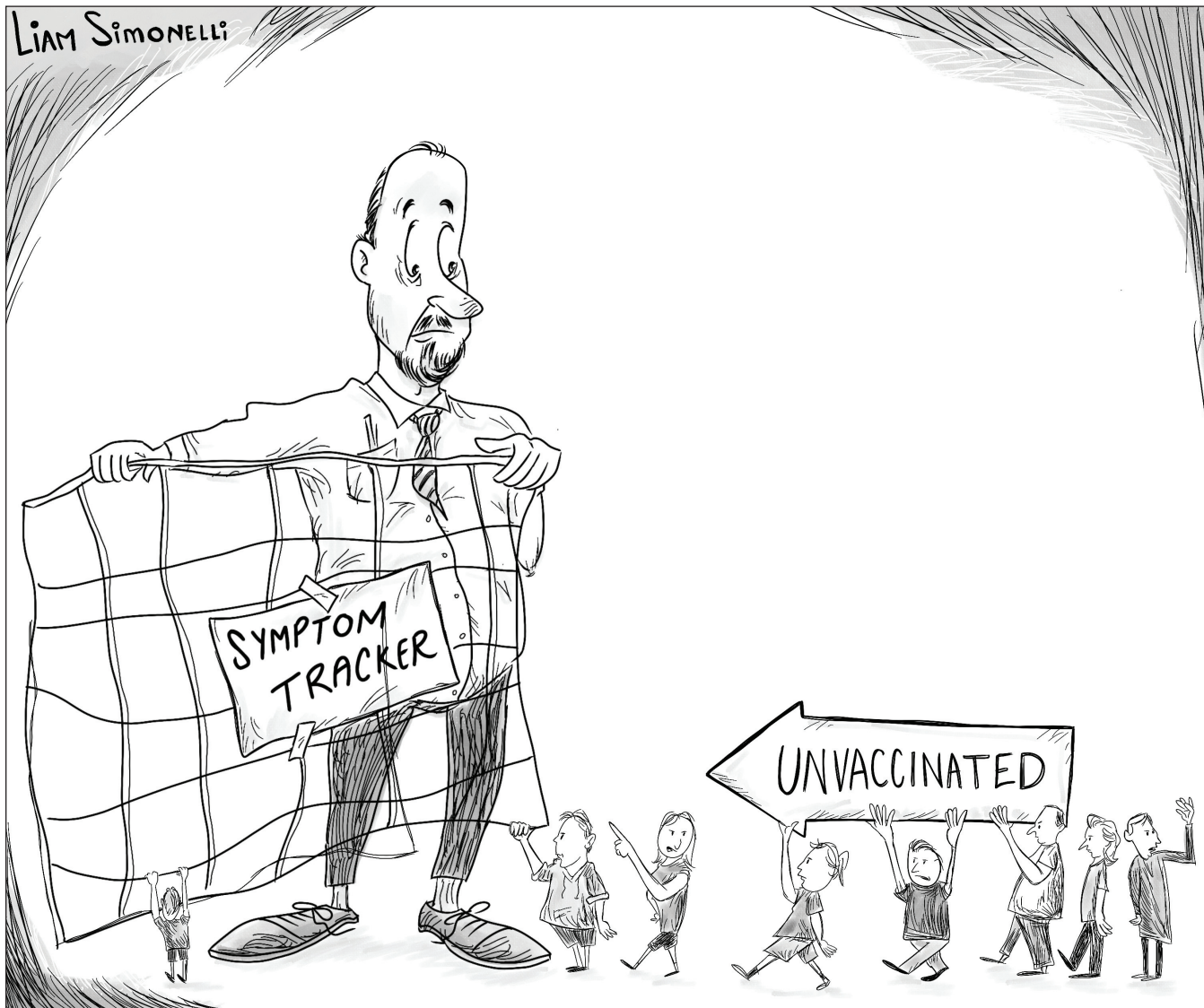
Asked about his pre-game strategies Delgado said, "During my time at Mercer before games I would stick to a mindset where I was visualizing success in many different situations before the game, and then when it came game time I would just stick to my approach and play with a passion."

giving students a voice

New toons each
month from the
VOICE's editorial
cartoonist:



LIAM SIMONELLI



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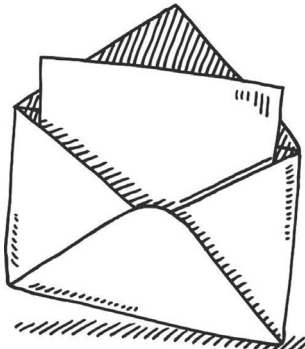
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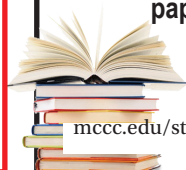
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THOUGHTS



ASHLEY JACKSON

It's a bird, it's a plane, it's a new queer love story for the man of steel. The LGBTQIA+ community scored a massive representation win with the inclusion of bisexual badass Jonathan Kent.

Kent, son of the original Superman Clark Kent and Lois Lane, takes up his father's mantle in the fifth issue of the comic's latest series "Superman: Son of Kal-El". Though the full story line won't be released until November, the promo shot includes Kent, in the iconic costume, kissing boyfriend Jay Nakamura (a journalist!).

The announcement,

We were overdue for a super queer superhero

made on National Coming Out Day (Oct. 11), encapsulates a series of shifts in the DC universe to become more inclusive of under-represented communities. Good. It's the least they can do.

For too long poor Clark Kent was kept under the thumb of fragile white masculinity. Allowing his son to explore his own sexuality helps make up for the fact that Clark Kent always seemed to live within the world of gay male stereotypes, for better or worse.

Clark Kent is a fitness buff who's obsessed with hair curls. He flies around wearing splashy, skin-tight spandex in bold, bright colors. He's the patron saint of bears and twink alike. But most importantly, Clark Kent has always been a little different from the rest of his superhero counterparts.

All superheroes operate their secret identities on a need to know basis. Their duality is that of an average per-

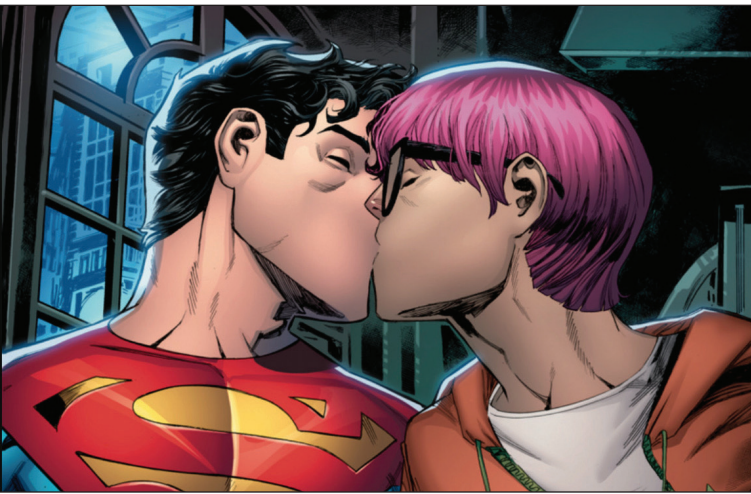
son effectively cosplaying as a hero. But Superman was born a hero, and instead has to blend in with the average folk. Superman is an asylum seeking alien who's been code switching this entire time.

Whether he was hiding in the closet or a telephone booth, Clark Kent was never able to fully actualize a queer identity. And now his son has a chance to change course.

Jon Kent living his truth will capture the hearts of fans everywhere who know what it's like to struggle with not being seen and accepted for who they really are.

Unfortunately, the usual suspects are pretty wound up about this DC development. They want their superheroes as straight as a speeding bullet. But they don't get to decide where Jon Kent hangs his cape, nor do they get to erase an entire group of people.

Jon Kent deserves to be seen for all that he is. He's



DC COMICS PROMOTIONAL CONTENT

DC's queer Kent teaser was released on Oct. 11, just in time for national Coming Out Day. The ground breaking issue of "Superman: Son of Kal-El" will be out in November.

not just Gay Superman, he's the first Earth-born Superman who also happen to be bisexual. Jon's heat-ray vision, baby blue eyes, and a fondness for driving the family tractor are the proverbial icing on the cake.

The best way to stick it to the haters is to let Jon Kent

have the bisexual romance of a lifetime without killing Nakamura off as a cheap plot device (Yes, DC, we're on to your tricks). It's 2021, queer people deserve to kick some supervillain ass and have their happily ever after, too.

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ADVICE - ASK THE VOICE

HELP IS HERE!



Dear VOICE,
Can I go to class dressed up for Halloween?
-David Pumpkins

Dear David Pumpkins,
Absolutely. Finally a time to put mandatory masking to your advantage!
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
My advisor is impossible to find. Is she merely mythological?
-Lucy Pevensie

Dear Lucy,
Yup. Climb right through that wardrobe and head into Narnia because there's no

chance you'll be finding your adviser in this world.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
I park my car in the same spot every Monday. Someone recently snaked my spot, I think out of spite. What should I do?
-Tesla Driver

Dear Tesla,
It's not your spot! No one gets a spot. It's survival of the fittest at MCCC. so get here earlier than that bastard and take it back.
-The VOICE.

Dear VOICE,
Every day is miserable. What do I do?
-Sad Editor

Dear Sad,
I'd love to provide hope, but there isn't any.
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,

My cat keeps eating my newspaper articles. What should I do?
-Journo Student

Dear Journo,
Cats. What are you gonna do? Am I right?
-The VOICE

Dear VOICE,
My public speaking teacher listens to music that no one would ever listen to without muting her mic on Zoom. Help!
-Ears Dying

Dear Ears,
Start playing your own music and make sure to gradually increase the volume. If successful you can have a battle of the bands.
- The VOICE

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

HOROSCOPES



Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 19

Twice in recent weeks something has happened that you thought was the result of putting a jinx on yourself. You didn't. It was just coincidence.



Aquarius
Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Tired of the same old same old? No problem, my friend. Get up early and go do something unplanned and uninhibited. Just do it.



Pisces
Feb. 19 - Mar. 20

You may be a fish as your star sign but you don't like it when things seem fishy. When someone tells you something that seems not quite right, trust your gut.



Aries
Mar. 21 - Apr. 19

You know how to be stubborn when it suits you but lately you have been a pushover, saying yes to things even when you don't have time or energy. Enough is enough!



Taurus
Apr. 20 - May 20

Sometimes you think something's wrong when it isn't. It could be a mystery ailment or injury or just an answer on a test. Double check things because you may find the mistake was your own.



Gemini
May 21 - Jun. 20

You usually have a lot of fun in the fall, but this year has been a little different. You may be feeling shagged out from so much work. Try to take more mini-breaks. It will help.



Cancer
Jun. 21 - Jul. 22

The most important thing right now is to find a way to laugh. It doesn't matter how you do it. Hang out with a funny friend, watch a funny clip on YouTube or a funny show. But you need a burst of joy!



Leo
Jul. 23 - Aug. 22

You have been patient with some challenging situations lately, but your patience may be wearing thin. Hard as it is, try to give it just a little bit longer. Relief is around the corner.



Virgo
Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

Someone has been trying to manipulate you and you know it. You don't want to hurt their feelings, but now is the time for tough love. If you don't shut it down, they'll keep doing it.



Libra
Sept. 23 - Oct. 22

Be careful about highways, walkways and roads in general. Something may come hurtling toward you unexpectedly and you need to be ready to get out of the way.



Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

What a wonderful, kind, generous person you are. You are always so good to your family, but right now you need to make some changes and not be afraid of the consequences even though you are ever so practical by nature.



Sagittarius
Nov. 22 - Dec. 21

A long time ago someone gave you some good advice that could help you right now, but you have since forgotten it. Instead of racking your brains to remember, it's time to find a new mentor.

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



SUDOKU

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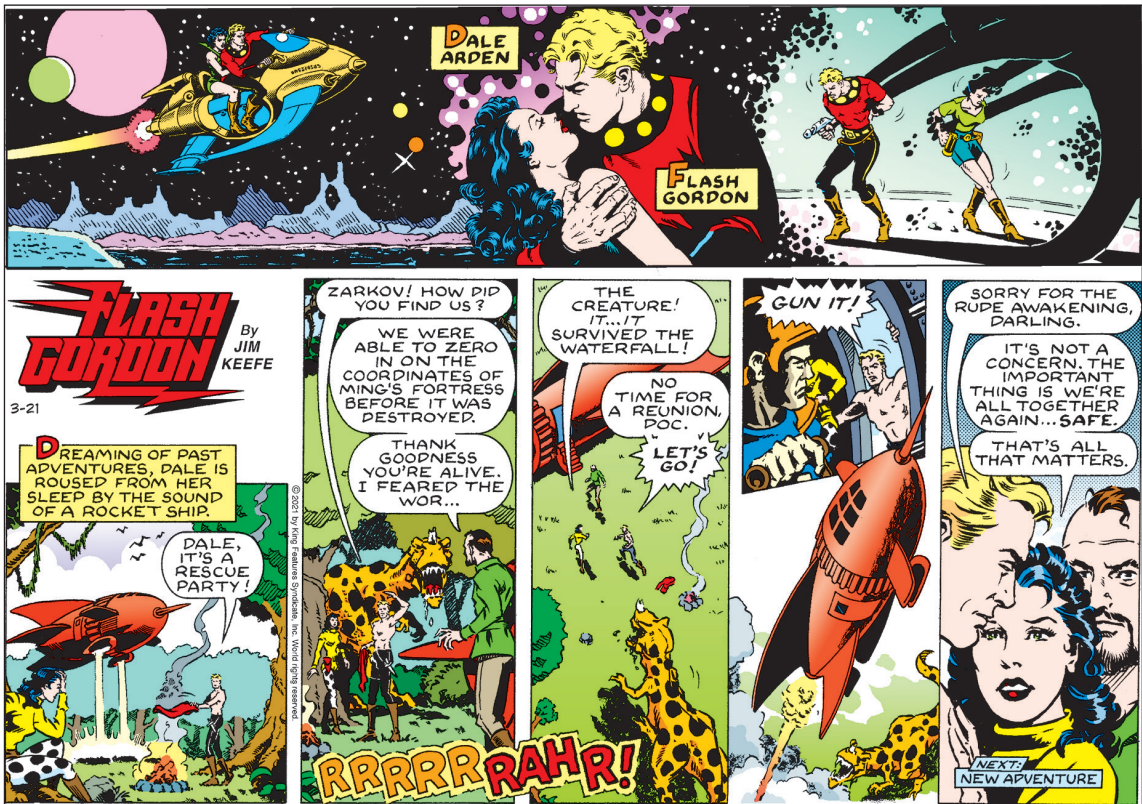
DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Answer

FLASH GORDON



GET FUZZY

