Faculty: No Confidence In Walter

The Bergen Community College Faculty Association has voted no confidence against BCC President B. Kaye Walter. A vote of no confidence means exactly as it sounds; the faculty of the college does not have confidence in the leadership abilities of President Walter. A paper ballot vote was held at a Bergen Community College Faculty Association meeting Tuesday evening. April 8. Of the 165 members of faculty who voted, 108 were in favor, 46 against, and 10 abstained, according to BCCFA officials.

In an interview with Secretary of the Faculty Association President Tobyn DeMarco and Alan Kaufman, Kaufman said, “A vote of no confidence is a really, really serious action to take. It shouldn’t be taken quickly. It shouldn’t be taken impetuously. Last year, discussions with the president were different. I think people had patience. I think people are always hoping the situation will improve.”

The motion came from the floor unexpectedly, and wasn’t on the agenda. Kaufman said, “The discussion on the floor was vigorous; different people said all sorts of different things… the faculty are upset at the tone of the college. The faculty doesn’t feel the administration is receptive to the concerns of the faculty in general.”

One major issue would be the reorganization of the college and the way it is being done. All past presidents had set up reorganization committees, made up of members of the faculty to assist in the process. “This didn’t happen this time,” Kaufman said. “The faculty has been asked for input, but I don’t think a lot of the people on the faculty are confident that the input will be taken seriously. So people are upset at these kinds of things.”

Another factor is governance. While being a complicated matter, in shared governance, each of the constituents like the board, staff and faculty had their voice. The faculty voice was about curricular and student services. “The faculty isn’t confident that the administration is especially committed to this form of shared governance,” Kaufman said.

On the current environment here at BCC, Kaufman said, “My hope is that things will loosen up and improve. But I think in the short term, the environment is going to be worse. … If I were in the position of a no confidence vote, I would be angry, my feelings would be hurt.” Kaufman continued, “but I would hope over time… we could figure out why this happened and work through it.”

President Walter, in response to an email request for comment, called the vote of no confidence a common practice for faculty union leaders, especially during contract negotiations. Walter said, “Faculty union leaders at Bergen Community College have held such votes for

Continued on pg. 2
Doors Drummer, Breaks on Through BCC

MATT ZDANEK
STAFF WRITER

Bergen Community College was treated to an appearance by legendary drummer for The Doors, John Densmore.

Densmore came to Bergen to promote his new book “The Doors Unhinged,” which covers the six-year legal battle he faced with other members of the band, Ray Manzarek and Robbie Krieger, over commercializing their music. The feud began in 2003 when Cadillac offered the remaining members of the band $15 million to feature their music in a commercial. Densmore, upholding the agreement made when singer Jim Morrison was still alive, never sold out to advertisement, refused the deal.

The event was open to all students and faculty and was held in the Anna Maria Ciccone theater. Densmore spoke about personal events surrounding his experiences with The Doors. Densmore also told funny personal anecdotes about the inner workings of the band’s recording process. He also spoke solemnly about the “elephant in the room.” Morrison’s alcoholism. Several times while recording, Densmore had to walk out because of Morrison’s disruptive behavior. Ironically, while Densmore was speaking, a phone rang out in the silence of the audience to which Densmore paused while Densmore was speaking, a phone rang out in the silence of the audience to which Densmore paused and replied, “Jim?” This harvested a laugh from the audience, followed by applause. At times, it was visible that Densmore got a little choked up when remembering things about his friend and band’s ring leader. It seems Densmore carries with him the spirit that Morrison left behind.

Densmore reflected on a proud moment when he recalled Morrison’s father standing by his side in court. “I was his son’s peer and my dad was gone; he was kind of a 50’s dad; you know, love me but from behind the newspaper. And here we were standing together, it was touching,” Densmore said, explaining the emotional moment to the audience. Up until that moment, he had never met Jim’s father in person.

Morrison’s family became an enigma among the band members as he had originally listed them as being deceased on his background. The night continued with Densmore reading excerpts from his new book, and in a particularly funny moment, describing the reaction his parents had when first hearing The Doors’ music.

After the conversation, Densmore was joined on stage by members of the faculty and performed some classic Doors songs for the crowd. It was a solid conclusion to the night and brought with it an electric energy that filled the room. When the show ended, The Torch approached Densmore for an interview, but he declined stating he did not have the time and had other obligations. He stayed around afterward for a book signing where students got to meet him in person. The presentation had a large turn-

Faculty Votes No Confidence President Walter

Continued from pg. 1

the presidents that preceded me.” Which is true in the case of former BCC President Jerry Ryan. However, extensive research showed that the school’s previous president before Ryan, Judith K. Winn, never had a vote of no confidence in her 12 years in office.

Chairman of the Board of Trustees E. Carter Corriston said in a phone interview, “First of all, the Board of Trustees wholeheartedly support our president and actions she has taken.” He also continued to say, “This vote doesn’t mean anything to the board of Trustees. We recognize this as a tactic by the Faulty Union” It is of note, that since June of 2013, the faculty and all unionized employees have been working without contracts and have been in negotiations with the administration.

“As the Faculty Association continues to engage in the negotiation process with the College Negotiator, I hope that the Faculty Association is able to keep its focus on what should also be its number one priority, the success of all Bergen students.” Walter said.

A Butterfly Emerges at TEDx

Continued from pg. 1

she found a voice, and became a butterfly.

Elif’s extra-curricular activities don’t stop with SGA. She joined Bergen’s cross country team, juggling many responsibilities all the while. She has become an inspiration to the people around her, and she says to have found peace within the other butterflies around her. For the first time in her life, she had found stability.

Her determination is something to admire, as she portrays it through her presentation. She has learned to never give up on anything until she achieves her goal. “To see this success to the other butterflies around me. My professors, my fellow students, my friends, my family. They have nurtured me along my journey of becoming a butterfly,” Elif says.

Elif’s story is something everyone can take something out of, and mold it into their very own. The butterflies around Bergen Community College are very visible, but there may still be a few cocoons roaming the campus just waiting to break open and see the world through different eyes. This can only be achieved with the aid of other butterflies. Once you become a butterfly, your only job should be to help others become one as well.

To hear Elif’s story, visit the TEDx Talks YouTube Page at: youtube.com/users/TEDxTalks

JOIN THE TORCH
Meetings every Tues., 12:30 p.m., SC-111A

Corrections to stories that appeared in the February 2013 edition:
The original headline for this story should be capitalized.
JESSIE CASTELLANOS
SPORTS EDITOR

On Friday, April 18, 2014, from 9 a.m. to 11a.m., S.P.A.R.K and The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) was held its second campus walk at Bergen Community College. By joining this walk, you will walk with thousands of people nationwide in the goal of reducing the loss of lives from suicide. With over 38,000 lives lost in the US and over 1 million worldwide, the importance of this walk is evident.

Cassandra Van De Horn, President of S.P.A.R.K gave us some information regarding, the background of S.P.A.R.K, the importance of this walk, why this event was chosen, and how you can participate.

“S.P.A.R.K. A Change (Students Practicing Acts of Random Kindness) was created in the fall semester of 2010 by Professor Jamie Keller. She came up with this idea after doing a lesson in her communications class, where her classes watched the MTV show “If You Really Knew Me.” The students were assigned to write a reaction paper addressing their feelings on the subjects breached during the show, and after reading the many emotional responses from her students, Professor Keller was inspired to create this anti-bullying organization. “The main thing we focus on is speaking to students throughout NJ. Since April 2011 we have done 20 assemblies in 8 school districts.” Van De Horn said.

Van De Horn also said, “This walk is an opportunity for the community to gather despite all differences, it’s show people can unite for a good cause. It’s more than raising money, making posters, getting prizes, and handing out food. Its a time to bond, make connections and come together to remember those lives lost to suicide.”

“Professor Keller, when she created this group, wanted to host an anti-bullying campus walk. With some research we found that the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention does campus walks. In April 2012 we partnered up with AFSP and hosted our 1st annual Anti-Bullying & Suicide Prevention Campus Walk. We raised over $4000 and had over 100 walkers, April 2013 we raised over $3000 and had 200 walkers,” continued Van De Horn.

“We are hoping other BCC clubs make teams and participate. if you cannot attend but wish to support this cause you can donate.” Van De Horn said.

The AFSP is at the forefront of research, education and prevention initiatives. To give some perspective of the severity of the situation, in 2010 with 38,364, suicide became the 10th leading cause of death in the United States, with someone dying from suicide every 137 minutes. After seeing the suicide rate drop from 12.5 people per 100,000 to 10.4, between 1990 to 2000, the suicide rate has continued to climb up between 2000 to 2010, in 2010 12.1 people dying per 100,000.

With your participation you can help the AFSP put a dent into those numbers, and save lives. If just one person, a human being like you and I, survives when otherwise they would have died, this event will have been a tremendous success.

To register for this event go to http://afsp.donordrive.com and to donate go to http://afsp.donordrive.com/
HAN's On Fire

Dance Marathon, One Billion Rising

DANCE MARATHON

Walking into the Student Center was like walking into a party. A DJ was playing songs and students were dancing. On Thursday, March 27, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., the center was filled. The event was a combination between the One Billion Rising project and the scholarship opportunities through endowments and alumni together to create opportunities for donors.

At the moment, HAN is under development to create

justice. It is a call to survivors to break their silence and tell their stories through art, dance, marches, ritual, song, or anything else that might feel right to them. On February 14, 2013, one billion people in 207 different countries rose up, demanding an end to violence against women. We will all be looking forward to next year’s event, as it was a great resource to have and a great tool to have under your belt when you go out into the real world.

Dancing. On Thursday, March 27th between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., the center was filled. The event was a combination between the One Billion Rising project and the scholarship opportunities through endowments and alumni together to create opportunities for donors.

Alumni Affairs nominated Mr. Chung again for New York University’s Silver Citizenship Award ‘14 for his efforts with the HAN as well.

Two winners will be selected by a committee at Grinnell College in late December and receive $100,000 for the advancement of education and promotion of social justice through philanthropy, business or agricultural initiatives, and other demonstrations of exceptional advancement.

HAN is a global call to women survivors of violence, no matter their age, and to those who love them, to gather safely in dance, the music, and tell their stories through art, dance, marches, ritual, song, or anything else that might feel right to them. On February 14, 2013, one billion people in 207 different countries rose up, demanding an end to violence against women.

The money we hope to raise from the campaign was recently discussed with Ms. Laurie Francis, Executive Director of the BCC Foundation, as well as with Mr. Cavaluzzi. We are striving to obtain this financial award for use for tuition and fees, but also for new reasons that we are looking into such as covering the cost of Phi Theta Kappa membership fee upon invitation, and also providing NJ Transit Bus tickets for students to commute.

Aside from the $10,000 campaign, Mr. Chung has begun developing ideas to soon use videos and other media to track alumni progress and to broadcast their stories of success online via YouTube and other social media platforms. Additionally, consistent updates, photos, and other media content has and continues to be posted on the Facebook page.

Steven has been urging those involved to get things moving. The Facebook page has extensive information regarding the HAN and its involvement, network pool, and continued progress.

For his outstanding work, Mr. Chung was nominated for the Grinnell College Young Innovator for Social Justice Prize from Mr. Joe Cavaluzzi, managing director of the Office of Alumni Affairs. Just recently, towards the end of February, Mr. Cavaluzzi and the Office of Alumni Affairs nominated Mr. Chung again for New York University’s Silver Citizenship Award ‘14 for his efforts with the HAN as well.

Two winners will be selected by a committee at Grinnell College in late December and receive $100,000 for the advancement of education and promotion of social justice through philanthropy, business or agricultural initiatives, and other demonstrations of exceptional advancement.

In that time, HAN would like to promote and increased involvement to show the committee, the college, and all those involved about how much progress has happened in HAN in such a short period of time. Mr. Chung would also like to encourage graduating Honors students to become members of the HAN and the and continue being extraordinary after graduation.

Although Mr. Chung currently operates the HAN alone, it is an organization that is growing and advancing at an outstanding rate.

In the coming months, Mr. Chung will be following up to provide updates and to keep in touch and tell about how to become involved in HAN after you graduate. It’s a great resource to have and a great tool to have under your belt when you go out into the real world.

HAN will continue to press on and do as it grows and develops, as not only a network of alumni, but also as an inspiration to students everywhere about the importance of staying active, and of creating and doing great work.

One Billion Rising

February 14, 2013, one billion people in 207 different countries rose up, demanding an end to violence against women. We will all be looking forward to next year’s event, as it was a great resource to have and a great tool to have under your belt when you go out into the real world.

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One Billion Rising
thrusting the Ottoman Empire into World War I. The grown disdained towards the group for indirectly thrilled of the Young Turk movement presence, had execution of men on the spot. death walks for the elderly and children, and the women being held captive as sex slaves, the mandatory Armenians,” said Winston Churchill in “The World minorities was seen as a hinderance to their expansion. form, except the increasing prevalence of Christian movement rose to the helm of the Turkish government Pasha, Enver Pasha, and Djemel Pasha, The Young Turk group known as the Young Turks sought to reinvigorate began to dwindle, a progressive and radical political coincided with the first World War. As the Ottoman rule of killing in the Armenian Genocide. wastelands and caves were the most widely used form carried the same burden, as death marches into Syrian horrific atrocities that occurred. As depicted in the Golgotha was an accurate word choice to portray the piece of work as the “Armenian Golgotha.” The word and later restored. Balakian chose to title this crucial Balakian, had written a personal memoir that was found and later restored. Balakian chose to title this crucial

Are You S.A.D.?

BLAIRE DELONG NEWS EDITOR

It’s that time of the year; the snow has started to melt and we can finally see grass after what seems like forever. This could only mean one thing: spring is here! Not only will we be experiencing milder weather and a bit of rain, but also the blooming of flowers and the eventual end of the Spring 2014 semester. Students and faculty both will start to experience a change in their moods, and maybe even a bit more of a spring in their step.

Why, you might ask? Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD, can affect a person during any season every year. If you have felt depressed, moody, or just plain out of character every year during the same time, you just might have been experiencing symptoms of SAD. Most people experience SAD during the winter months, because the lack of sunlight and being stuck in idee during the harsh weather can lead to many more scientific reasons as to why we experience SAD. A reduced level of serotonin and being stuck in idee during the winter can disrupt your internal clock; this disruption can lead to depression. The reduced sunlight can also affect se otoxins levels as well, according to MayoChinc.org.

During the winter, SAD can be treated with light therapy, anti-depressant medications, and cognitive behavior therapy. Now during the spring months, since we’re in school, we too can be affected by SAD. The lack of motivation to do homework because you want to be more active, maybe wanting to hit a BBQ, or just take in a game at the park. It can also affect you just as it would during winter, as you’re moody and don’t want to leave the house or go to class and put work in at your job.

The opposite of SAD would be what most call “Spring Fever.” Spring Fever is a term applied to a whole host of psychological symptoms that are associated with the coming of spring. People tend to feel more energized, almost the exact opposite of SAD. But guess who gets hit the hardest by spring fever? People who experience SAD during the winter months. It not only affects them, but hits them harder than everyone else. This increase in energy and just overall well being can lead to a more productive day in most cases. In other cases, such as college students, this can lead to the same loss of motivation to do homework and attend classes because of not wanting to waste the day stuck in a room listening to lectures and studying.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel for these times though, so keep up the grind. Bite your lip and bear through the next coming weeks, before you know it, summer break will be here for all to enjoy.

REMEMBER

1915

ARMENIAN

GENOCIDE

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Remembered

The Armenian Genocide: Remembered

April 24th will be the 98th anniversary of what is considered to be the date of commencement for the Armenian Genocide. “The Forgotten Holocaust,” as some call it. From 1915-1923, historians say that 1.5 million Christian minorities consisting of Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks perished by the hands of the Ottoman Empire, what is known in the modern day as Turkey.

The Armenian Genocide is not as widely known or studied in academic culture, but as new evidence comes to light with the vigilance of people such as Peter Balakian, who spoke at BCC back in 2009, has helped enlighten the world on the tragic events that took place. “Evidence comes in in many forms. It comes in photographs, it comes in texts and telegrams, and it also comes in bones,” says Balakian.

Balakian’s uncle and Armenian Bishop, Giorgis Balakian, had written a personal memoir that was found and later restored. Balakian chose to title this crucial piece of work as the “Armenian Golgotha.” The word Golgotha was an accurate word choice to portray the piece of work as the “Armenian Golgotha.” The word and later restored. Balakian chose to title this crucial

GABE WANISSIAN

ARMS HMAN GENOCIDE:
REMEMBERED

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Andy Metzinger

News
Within the span of a week, Turkey has shut down both access to Twitter and Youtube. The bans occurred after a revealing set of audiotapes leaked to the respective social media sites, which appeared to show Turkish government officials discussing plans to stage a terror attack on itself in which Syria - specifically Al-Qaeda - would be pinned as the assailants. In the tape, the head of Turkish intelligence Agency M.I.T., is heard saying “I’ll send four men from Syria, if that’s what it takes. I’ll make up a cause of war by ordering a missile attack on Turkey.” Later in the tape he was heard saying “We can also prepare an attack on Suleyman Shah’s Tomb if necessary.”

The proposed plan in the audio discussed by the top government officials would be to stage an Al Qaeda bombing of the tomb of the grandfather of the Ottoman Empire, Suleyman Shah. While the location of the tomb is in Aleppo, Syria, the burial site is sovereign territory for Turkey. Turkey has stated in the past that any attack on the grounds would be considered an attack on Turkish land. “That is our territory under the guarantee of international agreements. Any attack on this territory means an attack on Turkey,” stresses Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan.

PM Erdoğan also insisted that the recordings that were leaked through Twitter and Youtube were fakes, claiming that they were leaked out by a U.S. based Islamic cleric that has inside ties to the police. Erdoğan and his administration suspect that due to Turkish elections on March 30, his opposing political party has both the motives and the connections to create false evidence of corruption.

Critics have since countered his accusations, as on March 23rd, Erdoğan ordered that a Syrian warplane be shot down on the reason that it had breached Turkish airspace. Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, leader of the main opposition party, accused Erdoğan of attempting to distract the public from the recent controversy that has affected his reputation in the public eye.

Since Twitter was shutdown on March 20th, the social network site has since responded by taking legal action, suing authorities in multiple Turkish courts. “The millions of people in Turkey who turn to Twitter to make their voices heard are being kept from doing just that,” states Twitter’s General Counsel, Vijaya Gadde. Separately, local courts in Ankara, Turkey, have pressed charges and successfully removed the court ban on Twitter, yet the social media site still remains inaccessible to the public.

That does not mean that the Turkish people haven't found ways around the shut down to still tweet about current events, as internet proxies have been known to be used throughout middle eastern countries whenever social media bans are in place. Since the ban, tweets in the turkish language dropped down 50 percent; a small portion of what remains may still be residents of Turkey. Purdue University student Yaman Terzoglu, who was born and raised in Turkey, says that “My friends in Turkey, my family and most of the people I know use social media frequently, but we already knew how to get past the block ... as we previously suffered from similar situations and already know the necessary techniques.”

International responses have been largely opposed to the banning of the social media sites, with the United States Head Department likening it to “21st- Century Book Burning.” OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-Operation In Europe) representative Dunja Mijatovic commented by saying “A regulator exercising censorship by blocking is unacceptable in democracies, and it breaches numerous OSCE and other international standards that Turkey has committed to.” The European Union has also been unfavorable to the censorship by the Turkish government, which would seemingly hinder their chances to get added to the EU.

Along with the turmoil in Syria, the Turkish government’s controversial scandal has only poured more gasoline into the fire that is the middle eastern conflict.
La Verdad Acerca del Conflicto Venezolano

RICARDO MONTERO-HERNANDEZ

La opinión pública acerca del conflicto en Venezuela se ha polarizado. Por una parte están los medios que apoyan al Presidente Maduro, y por el otro lado está el gobierno y de la oposición, entendiendo ambos argumentos y utilizando los resultados de un verdadero diálogo entre opciones y visiones para mejorar las condiciones del país.

En las discusiones por un lado el Presidente Nicolás Maduro, en cabeza de un gobierno elegido popularmente en el 2013 después de la muerte del ex-Presidente Hugo Chávez, quien había adoptado el Socialismo del Siglo 21 como visión política, económica y social para Venezuela. Este gobierno aboga por el Socialismo Democrático, para implementar lo positivo del socialismo otorgándole voz al pueblo. Pero a su lado están los opositores, un grupo que pide el cambio del Presidente Maduro y apoya el Capitalismo, la libre empresa, la autodeterminación, y la injusta discriminación contra Venezuela, y viceversa, porque los medios venezolanos parciales. Esto causa que los ciudadanos de ambos países tengan falsa información e infalible que el gobierno y los opositores lleguen a un pronto acuerdo por medio de la propaganda de los medios y pocos han identificado este conflicto como uno que se puede arreglar con compromiso, escuchando y analizando los puntos de vista del gobierno y de la oposición, entendiendo ambos argumentos y utilizando los resultados de un verdadero diálogo entre opciones y visiones para mejorar las condiciones del país.

Políticamente, en conflictos como este, está en las manos del pueblo decidir cuál es la mejor solución. Es cierto que es más fácil aceptar una opinión y defender esa opinión al lado de millones de personas; pero es más noble y más efectivo pensar en la mejor forma para resolver el conflicto y luchar para que esta idea se vuelva realidad.

Así como ciudadano Colombiano y residente Americano, las únicas noticias que he visto sobre Venezuela han sido contra el Presidente Maduro y contra la institución a la que él representa, sobre la brutalidad policíaca y la supuesta dictadura de Maduro. Dados a los conflictos entre países capitalistas como Colombia y Estados Unidos contra Venezuela Socialista, los medios de mis dos países han sido demasiado parciales. Esto causa que los ciudadanos de ambos países tengan falsa información e injusta discriminación contra Venezuela y viceversa, porque los medios venezolanos no danan de divulgar programación anticapitalista.

La paz en Venezuela es una posibilidad, y más que todo, es una necesidad. Es infalible que el gobierno y los opositores lleguen a un pronto acuerdo por medio de la comunicación, no de la violencia. Esta discordia civil lo único que está ocasionando en Venezuela es derramar sangre de hermanos, sangre venezolana, que en vez de correr por las venas de un pueblo pacífico, corre por las calles de un país en conflicto.

It’s not where you start. It’s where you end up.

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Persecution of the LGBT Community is as constant and fierce as it has been any group. Countries all over the world are taking political action against the beliefs of this community, sometimes even using lethal force against them.

It is almost unbelievable that in 2014, an era regarded as a “Liberal era,” countries such as Russia, Angola, Jamaica, Pakistan, India and Syria, just to mention a few, are signing bills and laws against the LGBT Community.

Something has occurred that has sparked homophobia and violence in the governments of African, Middle Eastern and Eastern European countries. Some blame religions such as Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism amongst others, for utilizing propaganda to carry out personal agendas.

Others blame the recent liberalism of the western countries, who are regarded as champions of care-free and hedonistic lifestyles by eastern countries, and these conservative countries feel responsible for rebelling against the contagious ideologies of the West, by completely contradicting these ideologies and blindingfold their own to keep their country “united,” which really means “under control.”

This new-found international homophobia recently caught significant media coverage because of Russia. President Putin’s ban on “gay propaganda” got a lot of publicity during the Olympics Winter Games held in Sochi, along with opposition from athletes and activists alike. I have to respect Putin’s turn around; appreciating the ban when the world’s eyes were on his country was impeccable and genius, giving that the media has only focused on the Caribbean, which is a shocking fact.

After the Olympics, things started going downhill in 2014. If you happened to visit the southeast coast of Africa to India (apart from Iraq), there is not a single country where homosexuality is legal. In Nigeria, it is illegal to display same-sex affection; in Uganda, citizens are forced to report homosexuals to the authorities; in Cameroon, an activist by the name of Roger Mbede was sentenced to three years in prison for sending another man a text message expressing Mbede’s love for the man. Mbede died of a “hernia” while in jail this year, according to Cameroonians authorities.

Uganda, Nigeria, Yemen, Angola, Somalia, Egypt, Morocco, Iran, Pakistan, Syria, and United Arab Emirates are amongst the 82 countries all over the world where homosexuality is illegal. These countries spread amongst Africa, Asia, the Middle East, South America, Oceania and the Caribbean, which is a shocking fact given that the media has only focused on Africa and Asia, ignoring countries such as Guyana, Barbados, Jamaica amongst others, right here on the western hemisphere.

This is not a call to President Obama or Congress to take action. Uncle Sam is too worried about trade connections at the moment. Although President Obama has already made statements condemning these policies, including a threat to cut off Uganda’s $400 million aid package, as well as an angry speech against Gambian President, Yaiha Jammeh. Jammeh was quoted stating the following during a national holiday: “We will fight these vermins called homosexuals or gays the same way we are fighting malaria-causing mosquitoes, if not more aggressively.” Simply reading these statements is disgusting, not to mention the actual violence that statements like these are encouraging or causing.

I do not think that the American government should take more action; a simple boycott of trade and cut of aid should suffice to make a statement. There is no need to take more aggressive actions against these injustices. The United States needs to withhold its unofficial “World Police” title on this one and let these countries figure things out by themselves, there is no need for more unnecessary conflict involving the U.S. at the moment.

As a minuscule citizen of the world, a college student, and a journalist, I feel dumbfounded at the thought that in the 21st Century, a time that was supposed to be of progress and understanding, humans still find the need to persecute a demographic. Besides, I could have sworn that mankind was already tired of the persecution and discrimination, given our very colorful history.

There is simply no excuse; not religion, not politics, not anything that could possibly justify violence against a designated demographic. Religion is supposed to help believers find inner peace and spread love, while politics are supposed to help a nation find inner and outer peace, yet the human race always seems to find an excuse to use these things as means for violence and turmoil.

It has become evident to me that personal gain and private agendas of people in power always seems to overshadow the actual purpose of their office, and makes people forget why these offices exist. Perhaps humans are just simply too egotistical and self-centered to really try to reach the idea of peace, so we should at least attempt to try at peace, instead of having our bloody and discriminatory history rewrite itself.
Uncle Blair: Time to Choose

Ever wake up in a three foot deep hole covered in orange dust with nothing but two layers of quilted nylon encasing a polyester loft filling with a rifle at your side? Most of you probably haven’t, and there is nothing wrong with that. It’s an experience only a few of us have shared. This leads me to my next question: have you ever woken up in a 6 by 8 foot concrete cell, windows barred and sleeping below or above a possible murderer? While some can say they have had the dubious honor of doing so, they probably wouldn’t want to admit it, and I don’t blame them.

With convicted dog fighter and NFL quarterback Michael Vick being signed by the New York Jets, I find myself thinking not about what he had done to end up in prison, but as to the conditions in which prisoners in the American Penal System live. Why as a country, do we take better care of convicted child molesters, murderers, or even a mixture of the two than our own military? Why is a person convicted of heinous crimes against their fellow man get to eat three hot meals a day? Why are they allowed to live with dignity even after being found guilty by a jury of their peers?

As a veteran, it makes me absolutely sick. I’ve had to sleep in the aforementioned three foot hole we called a “ranger grave.” I’ve had to go days without a proper meal, while being expected to conduct operations as per my unit’s orders. Now I’m not saying prison life isn’t without its dangers; things such as assaults, rape, murder, and racial tensions run rampant in our prisons. But do these things compare to having to fight with aging gear, or the fear of driving over or near an IED while conducting mounted patrols and convoys?

Convicted felons like Vick can commit crimes, be sent to prison, and be afforded the amenities because it would be cruel and unusual punishment if they went without afternoon chow? Well, ladies and gentleman, it’s wrong, simple as that.

What makes the matter even worse is that this piece of trash can continue to play a childrens game and get paid millions of dollars to do so. Kids will have posters of him in their rooms and wear an over-priced jersey with his name on it. It’s a disservice to me and my brothers and sisters in arms that we have to live in squalor at times because we’ve been ordered to. Yes, no one told us we had to join, but it can’t always be someone else’s son or daughter. Did anyone tell Vick he had to train dogs to fight and die for his entertainment? He chose his path in life just as I had, but if he wins a Super Bowl, fans will consider him a hero.

Right now as a country, our priorities are jacked up. Praise the villains, condemn the guardians. Time to wake up America, time to start getting things straight. TJ Oshie of the Mens American Olympic Hockey Team was asked after a game in which he scored the game winning shootout goal to beat Russia, how it felt to be an American hero in which he replied, “No. The real heroes wear camo, I’m not one of them.” It would be great if more of this country thought in the way of Oshie. Instead of paying attention to the bleeding heart liberal or hard-edge, right-wing, talking-head jackass on TV, maybe you should be taking stock in what really matters and who should be taken care of better… Frag out.

From the ABCs to PTK

It all started five and a half years ago, when I moved here from Israel. I remember knowing just a few broken sentences of English that could get me through my first day of 8th grade. My very first assignment in English class was to read twenty pages of the “Diary of Anne Frank.” I remember realizing that very first day that being able to succeed would not come easily, especially not in a foreign language. Having faith in myself, I went home and translated each and every word of those twenty pages, knowing that would be the fastest and most efficient way to become a better speaker. Not many teachers had faith in me, but I strongly remember the support I received from my English and ESL teacher.

ESL is where I met Angie Goldszmidt, the current president of our chapter of Phi Theta Kappa here on campus. She was a sophomore in high school learning English with me. Even back then, she was the hardest working and most productive person I knew. I remember she told me that the only way to do well in school is to work hard and not complain. Ever since then, we were friends and always bumped into each other at some point or another.

Jump to the very first day at Bergen during the Fall 2013 semester. I was scared, confused, and extremely discouraged. There was this one question I hated the most during my last few days of high school which was the main reason to feeling discouraged: “Where are you going to school next year?” That awkward and uncomfortable feeling of saying Bergen and getting a nod back with no other response. Many don’t realize how beautiful of a place Bergen Community College is. It has given me more opportunities and chances than any other place I have attended or heard of before.

Walking through the halls those first few days was difficult. I felt lost and had no idea how I was going to make friends if people came to class and left right away. But as history often repeats itself, I bumped into Angie having no idea she was a student here as well. She hugged me looked at me and said, “Listen to me, I have no time to talk, but all you have to know is: if you want to
The Story Behind Women's History Month

Randy Ruisech
Staff Writer

For Women's History Month, Bergen Community College welcomed Evelyn McDonnell to campus on March 6. Professor McDonnell is the Assistant Professor of Journalism and New Media at Loyola Marymount University. During her visit, she was discussing one particular band, the Queens of Noise; her task was to be a historian, and to find out what really happened. McDonnell was trying to document fair and balanced history, of which the main theme was change.

Before 1970, women's history was rarely a subject of serious study. Since then, however, the field has undergone a substantial transformation. Almost every college offers women's history courses and most major graduate programs offer doctoral degrees in the field. Two significant factors contributed to the emergence of women's history. The women's movement of the 1960s caused women to question their invisibility in traditional American history texts. The movement also raised the aspirations as well as the opportunities of women, and produced a growing number of female historians. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, one of the early women's historians, has remarked that "without question, our first inspiration was political. Aroused by feminist charges of economic and political discrimination...we turned to our history to trace the origins of women's second-class status."

Women's history was also part of a larger movement that transformed the study of history in the United States. "History" had traditionally meant political history—a chronicle of the key political events and of the leaders, primarily men, who influenced them. But by the 1970s "the new social history" began replacing the older style. Emphasis shifted to a broader spectrum of American life, including such topics as the history of urban life, public health, ethnicity, the media, and poverty.

Since women rarely held leadership positions and until recently had only a marginal influence on politics, the new history, with its emphasis on the sociological and the ordinary, was an ideal vehicle for presenting women's history. It has covered such subjects as the history of women's education, birth control, housework, marriage, sexuality, and child rearing. As the field has grown, women's historians realized that their definition of history needed to expand as well—it focused primarily on white middle-class experience and neglected the full racial and socioeconomic spectrum of women.

The public celebration of women's history in this country began in 1978 as "Women's History Week" in Sonoma County, California. The week including March 8, International Women's Day, was selected. In 1981, a joint Congressional resolution was proposed, proclaiming a national Women's History Week. In 1987, Congress expanded the celebration to a month, and March was declared Women's History Month.

From the ABCs to PTK:
To the Class, One Letter at a Time

Continued from pg. 9

nothing ever stopped me from accomplishing what I believed in. Everybody can do it; it just comes down to hard work, determination, and belief in yourself. Congratulations to all new members, and I wish us a successful rest of the year.

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Phi Theta Kappa, or PTK, is an international honor society that recognizes and encourages scholarship opportunities among two year community college students. Our school’s chapter, Alpha Epsilon Phi, is one of the most active societies on campus.
JOE CIRILO
Staff Writer

• In 2004 Viktor Yanukovych, a pro-Russian candidate for presidency in Ukraine was voted into office. Following accusations of vote rigging, Viktor Yushchenko, the opposition leader, lead a massive protest known now as “The Orange Revolution” in the capital of Ukraine, Kiev. He was severely disfigured and almost died as a result of a poisoning after he came out and lay their arms down. When they refused, they stood post and refused to leave.

• Following a ceasefire, Yanukovych ordered Ukrainian army to move troops to occupy military assets in Crimea and mainland Ukraine.

• In 2010, Viktor Yanukovych was once again (and this time, fairly) voted into office. Following his removal, Russia invalidated the treaty because the treaty was signed by Yanukovych, which is invalidated as is his entire administration.

• Russia conducts war games near Ukraine border as per schedule. Moscow claims the world must not criminalize their country for the complicated situation in Crimea.

• Crimea was ceded to Ukraine in 1954 from Russia, both because the acting leader of Russia, following Stalin’s reign, had ties to Ukraine, and more importantly, because Crimea is geographically attached to mainland Ukraine, making supply of water and electricity easier than through Russia.

• Masked gunmen stormed and captured a Ukrainian military base. One soldier was killed, one wounded, and one captured. Ukraine's Defense Ministry gave the order for all military units to come out and lay their arms down. When they refused, they stood post and refused to leave.

• After only a few days in service as Chief of the Ukrainian Navy, Rear Adm. Denys Berezovsky was discovered the security was indeed Russian troops to Crimea to secure two airports. When it was discovered the security was indeed Russian troops, Parliament (Russia) unanimously voted to move troops to occupy military assets in the peninsula and secure the Black Sea fleet stationed there, citing the uprising in Kiev as a reason to believe that violence would spread to pro-Russian supporters and Russian citizens living there.

• Moscow (capital of Russia) has stated that by treaty, Russia is allowed to have up to 25,000 troops in Crimea at one time, of which, Ukraine has cited at least 16,000 are present. However, in rebuttal, some believe that because the treaty was signed by Yushchenko, it is invalidated as is his entire administration. Regardless of the legality of the troops’ present, the attempted takeover of three Ukrainian military bases was not. Armed soldiers demanded Ukrainians inside those military installations to come out and lay their arms down. When they refused, they stood post and refused to leave.

• Ousted president Yanukovych warned of a possible civil war, citing that the government in Kiev is incompetent, firing officers who want to preserve peace, and sending patrols of armed gunmen into the city streets, going so far as to call the new government “fascists.” As well, he condemns Western support of the interim government, citing that it is illegal to aid unconstitutional governments (speaking of the $1 billion aid package proposed by Kerry).
Meet Your SGA Candidates

Ahmad Mahmoud: Hi, my name is Ahmad Mahmoud and I am running for President of the Student Government Association here at Bergen Community College. Right now, I serve as a senator for the Student Government Association which means that I listen to the concerns and opinions of the students. I am also a member of the Public Relations committee in which my team and I try to help our fellow students communicate with one another by taking pictures, joining clubs, and participating in college events. Finally, I am also a member of the Auxiliary Committee where the overall well-being and appearance of the college is maintained.

As President of the Student Government Association, I want to propose resolutions to any issues or conflicts that occur within the college. I wish to be the voice of the students and communicate with our college administration to provide the best learning experience for current and future students. I want to motivate them to make the best of their opportunities and to better themselves. Though I already have many responsibilities, I am still ready to take on the challenge of presidency to make a difference!

Jonathan Silva: My name is Jonathan Silva and I am running to be your next Bergen Community College Student Government Association Vice President. Let me offer some brief information to how I currently work towards student success on campus. I serve the student body through the Student Government Association as Senator and Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, as Vice President of Service of Phi Theta Kappa, as a Nursing tutor at the Tutoring Center, and as a student researcher in STEM. Also, I work as a nursing assistant at a local nursing home.

Bergen Community College has been an important home for me this past year. The professors challenge me, the staff encourage me, and the students inspire me. There are many advantages to being a Bergen student and I want to make sure each and every student has access to those opportunities. Students are a critical part of the Bergen family, so I will do everything in my power to advance the student voice in administrative decisions.

As a nursing student, I have been taught to care for the whole being; this means making sure students are succeeding academically, receive financial and emotional support, and have fun while at Bergen. Let's work together to make Bergen our home and bring the changes that uplift all of the Bergen family!

Laura Hoyos: My name is Laura Hoyos and I look forward to being elected as the Student Government President 2014-2015. I am currently in my second semester at Bergen Community College and I am the Executive Assistant of SGA. When I arrived at BCC last fall, I made the decision to become part of the SGA because I was driven by my passion to be involved. Not only was I part of a team composed of hard-working and motivated students, but I was also a representative of the voice of the students.

Being an active member of SGA helped me gain the skills and qualities necessary in order to fulfill the position of SGA President. As the executive assistant, I have had the great opportunity to work within the Executive Board of SGA and gain experience from each of its members. I have also learned to follow the necessary procedures in order to meet the needs of the students and better the service that we provide to each of them. As president, I aspire to be the voice of the students and practice constant communication in order to better understand their needs.

I believe that passion has the force to connect people without any barriers or limitations, and as SGA president I look forward to spreading that passion across our three campuses and to represent our diverse student body with motivation and enthusiasm!

Please vote and make your voices be heard!
Meet Your SGA Candidates

Chief of Staff
Randy Ruisech:

I would like to run for the Chief of Staff position for many reasons, but the main reason is to be the change for Bergen Community College. My qualifications for the position are that I am a senator for the Student Government Association for two terms. I put in over 100 hours of service during my first semester. I was the Chairperson for Public Safety for the Student Government Association. I volunteered for relief initiatives after Hurricane Sandy. I am in the Auxiliary Services, NJ transit, Athletics, and Lyndhurst committees. For extracurricular activities I volunteered for STEM, and SAB. I am also a Staff Writer for The Torch. I was the assistant treasurer for NAACP and currently am the Treasurer. I am the coordinator for Violence Intervention Prevention center which sets up an office for victims to come into a professional setting for assistance; it is set up in Paramus and it helps victims if they chose to accept our aid. Outside of school I volunteered as an EMT and volunteered for homeless relief. I believe the student body should elect me because I have proven and will continue to prove to this student body that I am worthy for this position.

I will bring forth the same enthusiasm which has led me to participate and contribute to so many activities to oversee general excellence in all that SGA concerns itself with next semester.

Hi, my name is Elisabet Saharig and I would like to be the next treasurer of the Student Government Association here at Bergen Community College. I think that being the treasurer demands a lot of responsibility and dedication to fulfill the students’ needs; therefore, I believe that I can be helpful since I am willing to take the responsibility and improve the budgeting process as it currently stands.

If elected, I would like to help club members here at BCC by listening to their concerns, assisting them to increase their funds towards their clubs, and motivating them to run several projects that will benefit them. Since I have been studying here at Bergen Community College for almost three years, I believe that I can address the issues by representing the student body and being the voice of the alumni. Throughout my college experience, I have noticed that it is very important for the students to get involved in clubs because it enables them to work as a team, interact, and socialize with others. Therefore, if I become the treasurer, I would like to work with club members so that we can encourage more students to join clubs.

Moreover, I would also like to raise money to help international and ALP students who are in financial need. Most of them spend a great deal of time learning a new language before they are able to take college classes.

If elected, I will make sure that things are going to be done responsibly and diligently. I will work hard in order to improve the student body, and ensure that more students will benefit from all the opportunities that they will have during my term.

Alumni Trustee
Victoria Tahhan:

It seems like only yesterday that I was asking you for your support for my candidacy to become the Vice President of the Student Government Association. Thanks to your vote, I was elected and given the opportunity to make Bergen a better school for you and I. During the past year, we were able to continue providing scholarships for all students, distributed money saving student discount cards, and hosted Bergen’s very first Thrift Shop. In addition, we prevented the administration’s attempt to turn your beloved student center into administrative space and offices. During my tenure, I have on numerous occasions presented student issues to the Board of Trustees with positive results, such as the lack of safe walkways for students and fought against attempts to cut funding for student programs. I am not afraid to stand for what is right and you can rest assured that with your help and support we can continue to make Bergen a better place. If elected as your alumni trustee, I will continue advocating for more inclusive scholarships, bring awareness of the everyday struggles of our peers to the attention of the other boards members, and advocate for an increase in student activities and programs. Once again, I am asking you for your vote and support during the election.

This Spring you will be choosing your Fall 2014 - Spring 2015 Student Government Representatives! Don’t forget to vote; they are the representatives of the students, and will advocate for educational justice and the wants and needs of you, the students.

PLEASE VOTE AND MAKE YOUR VOICES BE HEARD!

Chief of Staff
Randy Ruisech:

Alumni Trustee
Victoria Tahhan:

Treasurer
Elisabet Saharig:

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If elected, I will make sure that things are going to be done responsibly and diligently. I will work hard in order to improve the student body, and ensure that more students will benefit from all the opportunities that they will have during my term.
The Future of a Religious Hate Group

EMANUELE CALIANNO
STAFF WRITER

The death of Fred Phelps, founder and leader of the Westboro Baptist Church, infuriated many for fiercely protesting the LGBT and other communities, may have brought relief to many Americans who, it seems, the organization and their hate mongering are far from finished.

Among the members of the small congregation of about 40 people, Phelps’ death has caused little significance, and the church has in fact already looking to the future for quite some time.

Aside from a brief and vague public announcement from the church’s spokesperson about the change in leadership, the Westboro has not provided any other information about Phelps’ children, two of Fred’s estranged children who turned LGBT advocate, says his father has actually lost any significant power within the church for almost two years prior to his death.

The organization had seen a takeover by an eagle-faced board who established a stricter rule, and began to push out Phelps’ direct family members out of power. Eventually, this led to the excommunication of Phelps himself, who gave his last sermon in September of 2013.

Kate Phelps, now 35, has been estranged from his family since he was 18, but has kept informed through distant relatives who have also broken away from the church. According to the effective command has been taken by members of the board, one of the few within the WBC, but it still belongs to Fred Phelps. Having once been under the close mentorship of Phelps himself, it is a shock to many when Phelps was excommunicated. Many of the Phelps’ congregation were shocked, and some have even been banned in 2007 for questioning the doctrines of the church, depriving their families of movement and control. Lauren Dran published a book on her experiences titled “Harsh Reality Years in the Westboro Baptist Church.” She writes that the family joined the congregation in 2001, after Dran had moved to Topeka, Kansas, to film a documentary about the church. Looking to expose the hate group, he quickly became one of its most avid members, and moved his entire family from Florida to have them join in with him.

Both the accounts of Kate Phelps and Lauren Dran suggest that under his control, the church might take an even more hateful and fervent direction. In the last few years preceding Phelps’ death, in which Dran and his collaborators were rising to power, the church began to emphasize Biblical passages indicating male supremacy, and to reserve strict treatment towards WBC congregants. It was when Phelps suggested for more tolerance to church members, that he was effectively pushed out of the way, and excommunicated a few months later.

Westboro’s spokeswoman has said little regarding the death of its founder and long-time leader, but they have announced since their foundation in 1959, they have picked up more than 50,000 public events, including military funerals, and their website shows plans to attend many more throughout the nation.

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The Mystery of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370

ADRIAN YLLATOPA
STAFF WRITER

On March 8th, a Boeing 777 carrying 227 passengers and 12 flight crew members vanished, and nobody has the slightest clue as to where it could be or what exactly happened to it.

Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 took off from the Kuala Lumpur International Airport, located in Sepang, Malaysia at approximately at 12:41 a.m. Malaysian Standard Time.

One hour and 35,000 feet in the air later, all communication had been cut off and the transponder signal was lost. The last vocal contact within the cockpit was the co-pilot Fariq Abdul Hamid saying, “All right, good night”. Upon failing to arrive to its destination, the Beijing Capital International Airport six hours later, the plane was officially declared as missing.

In one of the most tragic and yet also perplexing aviation catastrophes in a post-9/11 world, the entire planet has their eyes set on the daily international media coverage in hopes of recovering any kind of evidence in hopes of finding out what went wrong. The international search mission has included a handful of nations.

In the days following the disappearance, there would be several reports of floating debris found in the southern part of the Indian Ocean. The debris was debunked to have any kind of relation to the missing plane.

Two weeks after Flight 370 was reported missing, without any evidence or aid to the search, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak had told the world that the plane lost contact at sea and assumed that all of those on board have died. “Using a type of analysis never before used in an investigation of this sort. Immarsat and the AAIB have concluded that MH370 flew along the southern corridor, and that its last position was in the middle of the Indian Ocean, west of Perth. This is a remote location, far from any possible landing sites. It is therefore with deep sadness and regret that I must inform you that, according to this new data, flight MH370 ended in the southern Indian Ocean,” said Prime Minister Razak.

As the search continues, families of the assumed lost ones have shown an overwhelming amount of hope as the search continues. About a half hour before the official announcement was made, the families were notified through text message that their loved ones onboard are presumed dead. Their extreme grief and sadness has been publicized to an international audience.

The possibilities that tell the eventual fate of MH370 are endless. Theories as to what or how the plane went down range from technical failure, to a suicide pact from the pilots, to a hijacking planned out by someone on the plane. Without any physical evidence available to officials, any of these theories are a possibility.

Two-thirds of the 227 passengers onboard were Chinese citizens. A total of three Americans were on Flight 370 with approximately 50 Malaysian citizens also on the plane.

The Boeing 777 is considered as one of the safest commercial aircrafts by aviation experts due to its nearly clean safety record. Since its first commercial flight in 1995, there have only been three serious accidents. The British Airways Flight 38 in 2008 in which the hull was lost, a cockpit fire in a parked EgyptAir 777-200 in 2011, and Asiana Airlines Flight 214 in 2013 which cost three lives.

As more time goes by without any physical evidence found by search parties, the less likely the passengers will be found alive. The wind of hope of the relatives in search for answers is closing ever so slowly. No matter in what condition the plane and its passengers are found, the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 is still one of the most staggering mysteries ever recorded.
The focal point of many pop-culture induced theories about how the world will end, in one way or another, encompasses the dawn of the dead rising from their graves and striking down humanity in a gruesome mass genocide of anything conscious enough to run in the other direction. But exactly how scientifically accurate are zombies, and are we really doing all we can to prepare for the dawn of the dead? Through fact and data, you may find yourself surprised.

For starters, it depends on what type of zombie we’re talking about. In a theological sense, the dead rising from the grave is a supernatural happenstance, and isn’t really supported by any hard fact. On the other hand, leucochloridium paradoxum is a parasitic worm that predominantly infects snails. The worm attaches itself to the central nervous system, forces the snail to expose itself against its will, and makes its eye stalks grow large and glow brightly. This attracts birds who in turn ingest the parasite unknowingly. The result is thousands of parasitic eggs which are distributed through the bird’s excrement and in turn, ingested by more snails.

This particular case has become the subject matter of how we interpret the scientifically accurate zombie. Leucochloridium paradoxum is the perfect example of a parasite infecting a host’s brain and forcing it do things against its will. So rather than thinking about zombies as the decaying flesh of the “undead,” we can instead think of them as infected humans with a hive mind and tunnel vision: feed and reproduce (more parasitic eggs into other hosts).

But even weirder, Ophiocordyceps unilateralis is a fungus that infects ants, forcing them to climb up tree stalks and bite into leaves before forcing a protruding stalk through the back of its head so that it may spread spores on the colony below. This type of zombie parasite inspired Naughty Dog’s “The Last of Us.”

Is it more likely? Should we be concerned? Well, fungi that infect animals often evolve to take on bigger hosts, but Professor David Hughes of entomology and biology at Penn State University believes it’s far more likely that if such a disease were coming, it’s more likely to be widespread by virus than by fungus.

The success rate of such a virus is highly dependent on the human population’s ability to fight viral infections. Assuming this is some kind of super-villain of infections that bypasses all natural defenses, you needn’t worry about being eaten alive, because you’ll be dead!

Not to mention with a force of roughly 205,000 reserve soldiers in the army alone, not counting the active-duty soldiers not currently on deployment, chances are, you won’t be charging your shotguns and rifles before you’re picked up and brought to a CDC containment facility, and the hordes of infected dead “contained.” This excluding the fact that natural barriers, wild animals, extreme heat and cold, and the inability to consciously take actions to battle these elements would probably wipe out a population of “zombies” long before soldiers got the chance to be trigger happy. The government would probably be keen on securing the infected more than just “putting them down,” so the CDC could get a grip on what’s causing this, and find a way to help these poor people.

To conclude, being prepared for an apocalypse on the scale of zombies is a little ridiculous of a notion. You’ll either be infected, or the infection contained before you had the chance to execute your famous five-point plan, and even then, most of these plans include executing the infected. They’re still people, you know.

But, until we see some hard facts following a real human-based parasitic infection that breeds hordes of cannibalistic “zombies,” all the hypotheticals add up to just another theory. Science is nothing if not adaptable, but in this case, it looks like the odds are against the walking dead coming to a neighborhood near you.
THE POETRY SLAM

Was a Great Success!

NOMI EIJKENAAR  STAFF WRITER

Bards and Scribes, Bergen Community College’s poetry club, held their first poetry slam of 2014 on Thursday, March 13th. The gathering of young poets and interested students was held in the Student Center at the Bergen Community College's Paramus campus. Any interested student could have participated in the Poetry Slam event which consisted of about fifteen hopeful poets. The club advisors, Robin Gadsden and Mary Crosby, were right by the participants sides, helping them sign up, timing their performances, and calculating their final scores at the end of the competition. Professor Crosby started the program in 2011, and is now attempting to put together a Slam Team so our school can compete against others at poetry competitions.

Each participant of the event had a three minute limit to present their best poem. One of the participants began by reading a poem called Twin Moons, setting the tone for the poets performing after her.

The second student to come on stage was Cheyton Villaluz. Villaluz recited his poem, which was about how some people have a lot for themselves while others have nothing. He believes those who have a lot, should do more with what they have to help those who have nothing. Villaluz said, “A poem is a song without a tune,” which is the reason why he writes poetry.

Another participant of the Poetry Slam was Shari Fridman, who recited her poem very passionately. Fridman spoke about her experience getting bullied in school based on her Jewish religion. Fridman said, “I have been writing poetry since I was six years old, it’s my life and it means everything to me. I want to publish books of my poems and make sure others get to share them with me.” After discussing the performance, with emotions filling her after she had finished, she said, “I am still feeling the rush from standing up there. I didn’t think I did so great but the score by the judges was really high so I’m excited.”

The event consisted of many different participants. Some were male and some female, some older and some younger, and some recited happy poems while some recited sad ones. The atmosphere in the Student Center was very positive and supportive of all participants. Of particular mention is a student named Kevin Ramos, who spoke about the current generation, stating, “Babies having babies, it’s like a generation is getting lazy... What happened to the dreamers, the 24/7 believers?”

Some poets questioned really serious every day issues and some made the listener question themselves. Ramos, a participant in the competition, said “If you died this moment, what would be your biggest regret?”

Many members of the crowd were deeply moved by this line.

Dannelle Ciminnisi received the highest score, ten out of ten, from all five judges in the first round of the competition. Her poem was about her “struggle in high school because of being labeled based on different things, such as learning disabilities.” At the very end of the competition, after making it to the final round, Dannelle placed in second with a final score of 29.1 out of 30 while Kyran Guerra came in first place with a final score of 29.2. The Poetry Slam was a great success and gave these young writers a stage to showcase their work.

Bards and Scribes club meets Thursdays between 12:30 and 1:30 in room B208 at the Paramus campus.

From Jersey Basement Band to National Sensation

EMANUELE CALIANNO  STAFF WRITER

For central Jersey alternative duo Brick + Mortar, the long winding journey across the underground music scene has finally reached a destination. Having put an end to the days of desperate animosity once shared with countless wannabes, they set out from their hometown Asbury Park to gather a following across the nation. They are now giving fans back home the chance to witness the rare chance of one of their own local bands transition into the spotlight.

The band, made up of lead singer and guitarist/bassist Brandon Asraf and drummer John Tacon, formed in 2010 as yet another project from two childhood friends. Quickly gathering a following with an EP titled “7 Years in the Mystic Room,” released the same year, the band has launched itself as a growing musical force with their 2013 release, “Bangs.”

Brewing melodies and beats in a rather unique fashion, they experiment furiously with musical elements to cut records produced in hip hop fashion, filled with driving keyboard hooks, and blending the tone of the most unconventional indie music with mammouth anthems like “Old Boy” and “Heatstroke” for fans to thrash about to at concerts and scream every word back at the stage.

The duo has been touring the country for the past two years, making important stops along the way such as SXSW and Lollapalooza 2013, during which they have been featured on playlists from magazines and radios nationwide, and even had their songs featured on an episode of NBC’s new series “About a Boy.”

On the increasingly rare visits back home, every indie fan in New Jersey should get themselves to one of their shows, to be left in awe by the power of their sound and their charisma. Brandon Asraf’s lyrics are introspectively private, his delivery dreamy and distant; yet it all strikes a chord of humanity, which when laid out with John Tacon’s powerhouse drums, sends fans into hysteria and leaves new listeners in awe. The band will be releasing a full length EP later this year, and can be followed online through various social media outlets.
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Roving Reporter

What’s one thing you will always be glad you did?

Aaron Melton
Business Major, 19
“One thing that I am glad I did is attend college, because if I wasn’t studying I believe I would probably be working and running the streets, doing things that I should probably not be doing.”

Leonida Isufaj
Nursing Major
“The best thing that I ever did was having two beautiful kids, two boys because they are my motivation, and that is why I am here pursuing a nursing career in school.”

Emanuele Calianno
Psychology Major, 20
“The thing I am always glad I did was having faith in my mom and coming to America with her, instead of staying with my dad in Italy.”

Haroon Qurbanzada
Chemistry Major, 22
“Going to college, because I was the first member of my family to do so.”

Ana Polanco
Liberal Arts, 24
“I decided to be happy, because before I wasn’t really happy but when I got sick with an illness I decided that it is better for me to always just be happy.”

Rj Ochoa
Studies in Science, 22
“I would never regret promising my friend to give her my semen for her to have a baby with her new wife.”
Gaming communities around the world always argue on which gaming device is better. Whether it is the PC or the console, the factors that have to be taken into consideration are the quality, the price range, and the maneuverability of the games that are being played. In the opinion of PC users, the console is most effective with multiplayer gaming using only one device in a single room.

Although gaming communities have raised the argument over PC and console, the main issue this year is whether the Steam Machine is better or whether the console is better. Steam Machines, created by hardware specialists, have excited gamers as it is a device that utilizes concepts of both consoles and personal computers. The various features that Steam Machines provides will include the ability to customize the hardware, and install new programming. It can even allow the local networks within the monitors of one household to share one Steam account and allow multi-access.

So far, no gaming companies have released a real Steam Box, and companies like Alienware and CyberPowerPC have only sold prototypes. The Steam Box has many expectations within the opinion of the public, and many promises must be kept. With the competition of new consoles like Xbox One or the Playstation 4, the Steam Box may have a tough road ahead. Computer gamers have made it clear, however, that they will stay loyal to PC gaming and the Steam franchise. The arguments on this issue are important, but the opinion of the player behind the keyboard or controller is what really matters to the gaming industry.
It seems as though the long and harsh winter we’ve just endured has finally come to a halt, and that means new trends are making room for the spring season. You can feel it in the March and April afternoon air. Fashion week was definitely a heart stopper globally; from Paris, to Milan, New York, and London these spring trends are unlike others we’ve encountered thus far. So if you want a wardrobe catered to your everyday style and comfort keep on reading!

J.Crew, Costello Tagliapietra and BLK DNM designers say; the athletic stripe down the leg isn't the same this time around with its new classic tailored trouser silhouette. Switch it up with a stripe that goes down the inseam like Costello's style. Opt for more modern, streamlined silhouettes such as boxy tees and sheer slim-fitting blouses if you’re feeling dressy. Mix them with cool tones and pastels, as they are easier to match. Feeling bold? Choose garments with white and silky fabrics because black is simply too traditional.

Keep the hair back in a sleek ponytail or leave it straight with teased roots to add some edge to a simpler hairstyle. Since we all know you live for comfort, don’t go too bold on your makeup. Go bare-skinned with a light moisturizer or a light foundation routine mixed in with a face highlighter to keep the it bright and natural. Add in some mascara and metallic silver eyeliner to the inner waterline to open up the eye. To top it all off, give yourself a treat with a red/orange lip that adds interest to a natural face.

For the past few seasons, we've been introduced to many different hem length trends; the maxi skirt, the midi skirt and now introducing: the tea-length skirt. It's a new hybrid that's between midi and maxi length. Many designers such as; Christian Siriano, Alice + Olivia and Proenza Schouler have had their models flaunt the new length down the runway in mostly A-Line shapes. For this style skirt, choose soft colors and neutrals for a traditional spring look or turn it up a notch with metallic and chiffon fabric combinations.

Have you been digging the Ophelia Pre-Raphaelite look? Well Anna Sui has and she's topped the looks off effortlessly with these color and print-friendly looks. Try a butterfly-winged silhouette to really feel the light spring breeze pass right through you or a flowy maxi with a long slit up the leg. Neutralize the bright colors with leather accessories like crossover bags and sandals. Not feeling the dresses? Instead go for a similar silhouette on a blouse and tuck it into rugged and ripped jeans.

There are plenty floral headscarves and chained headgear that gives off Grecian vibes. Since these can probably go for above the college student budget try making some of your own using “LaurDIY’s easy step-by-step DIY” on making head chains via Youtube. To compliment the hairpiece tease hair with a sea-salt spray to achieve a beach wave look.

This look already has a lot going on so opt for neutrals and gold tones to bring out natural features. Contouring the face and using a more subtle mascara and some gold pencil eyeliners for the waterline.

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JUST A DEGREE AWAY

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NEW JERSEY
Earlier this month Major League Baseball kicked off its 2014 season amid a myriad of stories. Some on the field, others off, and still others affecting both on and off the field. Here are The Torch’s top five stories to follow this season in the MLB:

1. Changes for The New York Yankees/Derek Jeter’s retirement: After missing the playoffs for the second time since 1995 the Yankees completely revamped their roster, with only 1 starter returning to the opening lineup and expensive Japanese import Masahiro Tanaka joining the fold in the starting rotation. However, there are even bigger stories in New York as Robinson Cano took his talents to Seattle for a 10-year, $240 million contract. The biggest story though is, the face of the organization, Derek Jeter, announced his retirement following the 2014 season.

2. A new Joint Drug Agreement between the League and Player’s Association: If you’ve been following baseball for any extended period of time, you’ll know if there is one thing the league takes seriously it’s performance enhancing drugs (PED). Though they already had the stiffest PED prevention programs in American sports, the league and the union decided to strengthen them even further. What used to be 50 games for a first offense, 100 for a second, and a lifetime ban for a third failed test is now 82 games for a first failed test, a full season for a second, and still a lifetime ban for the third. The biggest changes are the 25 game suspension for an “accidental positive” and suspension from postseason play if you get suspended for PED use during the regular season.

3. Commissioner Allan “Bud” Selig’s retirement: Whether you like him for it or not, Selig is considered one of the most progressive commissioners in the sport’s history. Selig oversaw the introduction of the Wild Card, the second Wild Card, the realignment of the American and National Leagues to 3 division leagues, enhanced (and re-enhanced) penalties for PEDs, and the abolition of the AL and NL league offices. On the field changes seen under Selig include the All-Star Game counting towards home field advantage in the World Series, dedicating April 15 to Jackie Robinson Day, moving the Astros to the AL, and expanded Instant Replay.

4. Expanded Instant Replay: Before 2008 instant replay was nonexistent in baseball. In 2008 instant replay was instituted strictly for disputed home run calls. Now as 2014 rolls in the MLB has seen a real advance in the use of instant replay, a tool already used in both the NBA and NFL. A manager will be issued 1 challenge per game, which they can use any time in the first 6 innings to challenge just about anything but balls and strikes. If they choose to challenge a play, it is looked at by an off-site replay official. If they are successful, the manager retains the challenge to use again later in the game. After the 7th inning a manager is permitted to ask the crew chief for a replay but all replays are at the umpires’ discretion.

5. Mike Trout vs Miguel Cabrera: Since this writer started following baseball there has always seemed to be a divide: “Old school” vs “New School.” Old school fans rely on what their eyes tell them and stats that have remained in the league since the sports conception. The biggest three of these are batting average, home runs, and runs batted in. For a player to lead his league in all of these is especially rare and has only happened 14 times since 1900. One of those players is Miguel Cabrera, regularly regarded as the best hitter on the planet. On the other side of the argument is Mike Trout. Considered by many the best baseball player on the planet right now, he is the definition of the “five-tool player.” He is universally loved by “new school” fans because of his success in his young career according to a statistic known as Wins Above Replacement, or WAR. WAR is a statistic that baseball statisticians use to their best ability to take into account every facet of the game; like hitting, hitting for power, fielding, and running. If it’s done on a baseball field there is a lesser statistic used in each formula to get the end result, or the player’s WAR. Mike Trout has the highest WAR in baseball since he came into the league in 2012. Both players also signed monster extensions during spring training. The 31-year-old Cabrera’s extension could be worth up to $352 million over the next 12 years. Meanwhile the 22-year-old Trout’s extension is a much more team friendly affair. It covers 6 years starting after this season, buying out Trout’s arbitration years and three free agent years and will pay $144 million.

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The event, Cesaro and Big Show faced off. In a similar Shield defeat The Authority; consisting of The new factor in his advancement to the main event. patented “Knee+” finisher. The post match attack on very night. In a very intense battle between David vs up of corporate associates of Triple H, have done with no clear conclusion in sight. The Authority, built Championship. This match was months in the making. threat main event match for the World Heavyweight was that the winner would be included to the triple  

The Rock made a surprising appearance and the ring was  

After a rather uneventful match that saw The  

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When Jessica Scaparzo first met students from Iona, she was impressed with their enthusiasm about their experiences. “I wanted so badly to have that same excitement.” As a transfer student, Jessica obtained a rewarding internship at March of Dimes, completed a service trip to Zambia, and served as a student campus minister.

She is now staying at Iona to complete her master’s degree in industrial organizational psychology. With over 45 undergraduate majors and 35 minors in leading areas of study, led by working professionals and leaders in academics, we are confident that transferring to Iona will be one of the best decisions you’ve ever made.

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SPORTS

Wrapping up Wrestling

The Bulldogs started off the season on a five-game winning streak. The season began strong when the Bergen wrestling team went to Sullivan County Community College for a tri match vs. Muhlenberg University and SCCC and won both matches. Bergen won 21-16 against SCCC and 31-5 against Muhlenberg.

The guys made it to Stony Brook University on January 18 for their 5th win and left with accomplishment when they won 42-12. They were then off to the Mt. Saint Vincent Wrestling tournament. Some of the top NCAA division III teams attended but Bergen finished with three placers. Michael Amaro from the 197 lbs weight class claimed 3rd place, Jonathan Melendez from the 125 lbs weight class claimed 5th place, and Steve Orlic from the 149 lbs weight class placed 6th in his weight class.

The wrestlers then went on to another match against Gloucester CC and Middlesex Community College. Unfortunately, the Bulldogs suffered a loss against Gloucester 31-9, but redeemed themselves when they won the match against Middlesex 28-18.

On February 1st, the team traveled to the University of Scranton where they earned a victory against SUNY Sullivan 30-16, but suffered another loss against Scranton 40-12.

The team finally landed at their final victory against Yeshiva University 42-9, and they were on their way to the Nationals. On February 14, they traveled to Atlanta, Georgia for the NJCAA National Qualifiers.

Bergen Community College’s very own Amaro came back with a huge surprise. This season worked in Amaro’s favor. He earned his record of 11-2 in the 197 lbs weight class which got him to nationals. With a record of 5-2, he placed 7th overall out of the 32 wrestlers and squeezed himself in 7th place for the NJCAA All-American Honors and 7th place Medal. He definitely earned the title of athlete of the month for February!

Track and Field Coach Spotlight

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