P.O.P. Marches Through Hackensack For Kashad Ashford

GABE WANISSIAN AND JOSEPH CIRILO
Sports Editor & Co-editor

HACKENSACK — Protestors lead by Chairman and founder of the People’s Organization for Progress (P.O.P) Larry Hamm marched through Hackensack Dec. 6 in a demonstration for the death of Kashad Ashford who was killed this September by police officers at the end of a deadly car chase through South Bergen County.

Ashford was fatally wounded after a car chase ensued, triggering an alert in North Arlington about two men attempting to steal a car. Police, consisting of two local officers and one state trooper, surrounded Ashford as he attempted to flee through Lyndhurst into Rutherford in an SUV, according to NJ.com.

The march, which follows the P.O.P’s recent protest in Newark for the death of Eric Garner, commenced outside the Varick Memorial AME Zion Church, consisting of local supporters, as well as Essex County residents that arrived by shuttle bus at around 3:30 p.m.

An estimated 60-75 demonstrators marched through the cold and moderate rainfall from Atlantic down to State Street, converging onto Main to rally outside the Bergen County Courthouse.

Hamm urged protestors to remain in an organized, single-file column as they trudged down the road chanting refrains such as: “No justice, no peace.” and “They say get back, we say fight back.”

The former of the two has become a mantra across the entire country, resounding from Ferguson, where the death of Michael Brown sparked a national outcry against police brutality and the perceived wrongful deaths of black citizens across the US in the eyes of the demonstrators.

When traffic began to build up, a county police officer leading the column from his vehicle asked the protestors to move to the shoulder and onto the sidewalk of State Street so that the congestion could be relieved, and demonstrators could continue without incident.

Protestors that expressed dissenting opinions of the authority’s response to mediate police brutality were not shy in sharing their insights as to how reform can take place.

“We’ve been trying to get Civilian Oversight on the Police Department,” protestor Clifton Aarington told The Torch. “I believe the Newark Mayor has been working on that, along with state legislature.”

Outside the Bergen County Courthouse, Hamm lead protestors in a unified circle to warrant family and close friends of Kashad the opportunity to speak publicly.

“We need to demand answers, and first and foremost we’re here today to say we want a face to face meeting with the county prosecutor, Mr. Molinelli.”

The Ashford family claims to have received no word from the Attorney General’s office, the Bergen County Prosecutor.
Soon after late singer Harry Chapin and current Executive Director Bill Ayers originally started World Hunger Year in 1973, its name changed to Center for Food Action (CFA) and became a nonprofit registered organization with the motivation of “preventing hunger and homelessness and improving the lives of individuals and families living in poverty,” Bergen Community College is the newest of the seven sites in Bergen County for the CFA. They collaborate to offer the proper aid for students of BCC in need. The CFA provides emergency food, homelessness prevention, rental and utility assistance. The Center assists families with back rent up to a certain point, and then reaches out to other local organizations to pitch in and attempt to solve the problem. The CFA tries their hardest to fund families who cannot afford their homes and refer persons for all kinds of services around the county. Most of the CFA’s donations come from private donors, but they also receive funding from the government and other organizations as well.

Students of BCC in need of aid can find The Center for Food Action in the Pitkin Educational Center in room B-105. Lisa Pitz, Program Director of Advocacy and Outreach, will be there to take appointments and assist students. Students will have to go through an intake process before the program registration, meaning a student’s information will be gathered in order to address their needs and to ensure the student is financially eligible. A person is allowed to come once per month for food. However, if that person in great need, then they can certainly walk in again. The CFA pre-packages student packages initially and they contain a lot of items that can be eaten on campus. Also, the CFA pre-packages family packages which are designed for students that are head of household with dependent children. The pantry is open on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and on Thursdays from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., and students who have an immediate need can walk in at time or just give Pitz a call and she will meet with them at their earliest convenience. BCC students who need the CFA’s services should not hesitate to visit the office. To contact Pitz, please call 201-569-1804, swx: extension 21.

The unequivocal assent between everyone involved was that the fight, like so many that have emerged in the wake of the Brown-Wilson shooting in Ferguson, was far from over; a fact that both the family and the P.O.P. acknowledges, and has pledged their support in finding a peaceful, though meaningful, end to.

“The biggest inequality in this country is the economic inequality. and because of the centuries racism, the black people get that the worst,” he told The Torch. “It’s always been beyond race, but the racism is there too, and there’s unwillingness to acknowledge it.”

P.O.P. Marches Through Hackensack

nor any of the law enforcement officials offering condolences or assurance that an investigation is underway.

“I have a grandson 23-years-old that I buried, and today I know nothing,” Cecille Hepburn, Ashfords grandmother, told the crowd.

“I know it’s not gonna be no indictment, just give me some answers,” another member of the Ashford family pleaded. “All we want is answers.”

Hamm’s long time attorney, Bennett D. Zurofsky was also present to support the P.O.P. lead march. Citing reasons for attending the demonstration ranging from the usefulness of being on hand for any potential arrests, and being dissatisfied with the progress of eradicating social inequalities that has seemingly stalled since the ’60s Civil Rights era, Zurofsky’s perspective envisages issues beyond race. “The most obvious inequality in this country is the economic inequality. and because of the centuries racism, the black people get that the worst,” he told The Torch. “It’s always been beyond race, but the racism is there too, and there’s unwillingness to acknowledge it.”

Hamm later went on to discuss the P.O.P.’s plans to march on Trenton and Lyndhurst possibly in January for Ashford following other protests already scheduled for this month in an interview with Torch reporters before departing with the protesters he’d traveled there with.

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“This is gonna be a long fight, but we’re prepared for it,” Hamm told Torch reporters. “We’re gonna stay with the family and try to get some justice before this is all over.”
Answering The Call: Veterans Day BCC

On November 11, Bergen Community College and people all across the United States paid their respects and honored U.S. Veterans for their courage, and dedication to our country. A ceremony was held at BCC in the Student Center by the schools Veterans Initiative to commemorate the event, an organization that serves veterans coming home from service that want to earn a college education and come here to do it.

Before the ceremony, a pianist played songs like “The Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy” by The Andrews Sisters from the World War II era, and anti-Vietnam protest songs like “I Feel Like I’m Fixin to Die Rag” by Country Joe and the Fish while students talked and paid their respects to veterans who were being honored at the ceremony.

Violet Surdyka from the Veterans Initiative started the event off with a short speech. She spoke about the founding of the Veterans Initiative over a decade ago, as well as the overall sacrifice servicemen and women make to protect us.

Zach McDevitt, a member of the Bards and Scribes Club here at BCC shared his poem honoring veterans and their experiences.

Professor Mike Echols spoke with a lot of emotion and patriotism. He talked about how each Veterans Day had a theme summed up in one word. One year he focused on service; another it was Education; but this year, he talked about respect. Echols spoke about personal experiences relating to veterans and how he tries to do his part to protect people from harm, but his speech mainly concentrated on respecting veterans.

“Veterans not only deserve your respect, but they’ve earned it,” Professor Echols said at the ceremony.

Kevin Quigley is a Marine Corps. veteran of four years, having served in Afghanistan, said, “Once I was done with high school, I didn’t have any direction and I didn’t feel like applying for college... I like being apart of a warrior culture and doing something that less than one percent of the country ever does, and that’s serve.”

Cenia Nunez and Ihsaan Smith, both students and veterans spoke to the crowd. Nunez spent seven and a half years as an IT Specialist in the U.S. Army. Her family immigrated to the U.S., and she spoke about how her parents instilled in her how lucky they were to be in this country. She wanted to follow in her family’s footsteps, who also served in U.S. Army.

Ihsaan Smith served in the U.S. Coast Guard for 14 years. At 21, he had a hard time finding a job, and at one time was a firefighter, but eventually joined the Coast Guard. “Serving your country is more than a job - it’s a sacrifice. New friends, new cities, and new jobs every four years,” said Smith. “Serving has given me a strong sense of honor and I’m making a difference for my country. Veterans may join the service for opportunity at first but they stay for the honor and respect and the fact that you’re making a difference.”

At the end of the ceremony, veterans, students and staff walked to the flagpoles outside the school to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. The walk was led by an honor guard of two servicemen and a member of BCC’s Public Safety, holding three flags. The first holding the BCC Flag, the second holding the U.S. Flag and the third held the New Jersey State Flag. Behind the honor guard, a bagpiper played patriotic songs like “America the Beautiful” and “Yankee Doodle Dandy,” as the crowd made their way to the poles.

The events were summed up by a short speech by U.S. Army veteran and Senior Public Safety Officer, Raymond “Bo” Drakeford, who said this would be his last year leading the Pledge of Allegiance due to his upcoming retirement.
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Have Questions? Visit Almida Hernandez, FDU’s on-site advisor, Monday-Friday at Pitkin Education Center in Room A126
Almida_hernandez@fdu.edu, 201-493-4088

LEARN MORE
fdu.edu/bcc-fdu
November is Diabetes Awareness Month. Diabetes affects 30 million kids and adults in the U.S. and is expected to grow. It costs the US government hundreds of billions of dollars to treat people with diabetes, and if not, maintained could be deadly. The disease can be inherited through your parents, or can develop within an individual later in life.

There are two types of diabetes diseases; Type 1 and Type 2. Type 1 diabetes mainly affects children and young adults. The disease occurs when the body stops making insulin. Insulin is the hormone that turns sugar and food into energy for your body. Type 1 diabetes can be treated with insulin-based therapy. Type 2 diabetes occurs when you develop insulin resistance, or when your body has a hard time producing insulin. The pancreas, which is the organ responsible for producing insulin, makes extra insulin to try to keep up with demand, but eventually can’t keep up with your body. This is why it’s so important for people to eat healthy and exercise regularly; if they don’t, their pancreas won’t be able to keep up with their insulin demand and will eventually barely produce it at all. That’s why diabetes have to take artificial insulin from a needle.

Diabetes is a very debilitating disease where you have to change your lifestyle drastically... my friend was recently diagnosed with a minor case of diabetes but not to the point where he has to take insulin...people need to be more upfront and honest on how someone gets diabetes and their needs to be more education early on with the disease.” said Art Professor Schneebarger.

“My grandfather had diabetes and was actually a chemist in Romania working on a cure for the disease. He had a lot of patents relating to treatments,” said Julian Stancescu, BCC student.

A Small Victory Can Lead To The End of A War

Why can’t we all get what we want?

Nurse Dania Huie
Pasigan Breaks
Down Ebola Threat

FELIX LYU
ONLINE EDITOR

As more people fear that Ebola will spread, many must wonder whether the Ebola virus is as dangerous as the media portrays it to be. Dania Huie Pasigan, Bergen Community’s own registered nurse explained that there are minimal chances of Ebola ever hitting New Jersey at a presentation at Lyndhurst campus on Nov. 13.

Despite the uproar in many of the media outlets explaining how dangerous Ebola can be, Ms. Pasigan explains that it would be less likely for Ebony to ever be transferred to the U.S. Since the virus started in West Africa and was contained in that area, Pasigan explains that there are many precautions that are processed. Pasigan said, “There are three reported airports in New Jersey that travel to West Africa, and even then, the CDC asks questions to the passengers who have gone there.”

If a student or a person is exposed, or is suspected of carrying the virus, the CDC contacts the Board of Health and many procedures are drawn. Bergen Community College has also taken precaution and have taken webinar conferences, just in case. The presentation also talked about the recent events of blood transfusions from treated patients.

“The blood is giving their immunity and that’s why they use the transfusions,” Pasigan explained to this reporter. “If caught early, then [Ebola patients] are curable. If somebody came into the hospitals, we ask ‘Have you been to West Africa’ or ‘Have been in contact with anyone from West Africa’, and if they say they have, then that’s when we get it to the State Department.”

According to the CDC: Two imported cases, including one death, and two locally acquired cases in healthcare workers have been reported in the United States. CDC and partners are taking precautions to prevent the further spread of Ebola within the United States.

So far, there have only been four cases of infection in the U.S. with only one to succumb to the virus; Thomas Eric Duncan. While this seems to be a gesture of good faith on behalf of BCC’s negotiation team to the BCCFA, there are still many unknowns at this time to say exactly what is going to happen for our esteemed faculty. Representatives of the union and the college declined to comment on the agreement or the ongoing negotiations without giving a reason.

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NY Doctor Declared Free Of Ebola

SARAH BRADING CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After sending New York into a state of panic and undergoing 19 days of treatment for the deadly virus, Dr. Craig Spencer was discharged from Bellevue Hospital on Tuesday, Nov. 11, free of the virus. His fiance, Morgan Dixon, whom he lives with in Harlem, had also been released from mandatory isolation on this same date but was declared virus free as well.

Dr. Spencer, 33, came in contact with the Ebola virus while in Guinea working with patients who had contracted the virus. Spencer was the first Ebola patient in New York City, causing a wave of paranoia and uncertainty amongst the New York residents over the potential spread.

Disease investigators had retraced Spencer’s steps from the days before he was isolated on Thursday, Oct. 23, to find anyone he had come in contact with, which led them to isolating three other people as well.

Upon his release, Spencer was greeted with joyful high-fives from Bellevue nurses and a hug from the Mayor of New York, Bill de Blasio. Spencer had also heard from President Obama the Wednesday before his release to herald his recovery.

Even though the recovery was in fact a big deal, Spencer wanted to make sure no one lost their focus on the main problem, West Africa.

“Please join me in turning our attention back to West Africa and ensuring that medical volunteers and other aid workers do not face stigma and threats returning home,” Dr. Spencer said in a statement.

Over 4,000 people have died because of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, causing the United States to issue serious precautions on travelers. Any travelers that came from Ebola afflicted countries would be placed in quarantine, whether they had symptoms or not. Due to the fact that symptoms can take up to 21 days to appear, those who show no sign of the virus are placed in a 21 day isolation; this quarantine is not a voluntary decision.

The month of November is known as Diabetes Awareness Month, but there’s another condition that’s just as serious; epilepsy.

Epilepsy is a neurological condition classified by seizures, random abnormal acts of electrical activity in the brain. There are many different types of seizures, some can go unnoticed, while others may result in a hospital visit, comas, and, in rare cases, death. Epilepsy affects about two million people in the United States, or 1 in 26 people, so if you know more than 26 people, chances are you know someone who has Epilepsy.

Epilepsy can affect anyone, of any age, at any time. There is currently no cure, and although medications that can stop the seizures, there is no guarantee that the person will not get them again. People with epilepsy can go their entire lives with probably only a few seizures, but there are many cases where people cannot go a single day without a seizure. With so many seizures in a span of a few weeks, families of those affected fear for the worst.

“It’s terrible to watch your child have a seizure, not know if they’re going to live,” said Dorothy Cruthirds, who has a daughter with Epilepsy, to News 7 Mississippi. “You never know. That’s the kicker. There’s no guarantee of anything. Just like you never knew when a seizure was going to hit, you live every day praying. We’ve made it another day, because you never know.”

Each November, many people show their support by wearing the color purple. Some sports teams play their games wearing stickers to show their support for the condition. The Minnesota Golden Gophers football team host a “Go-Pher Epilepsy Awareness Game” every year, in support of Jerry Kill, their head coach, who has Epilepsy. This year, they plan to wear an Epilepsy Awareness sticker on the back of their helmets.

The Epilepsy Foundation of America is looking for anyone to help donate in hopes to find a cure for Epilepsy. You can learn more about Epilepsy and donate by visiting www.epilepsy.com.

2014 National Epilepsy Walk
Amber Jasmine/The Torch

THE MEDIA waits at Dr. Craig Spencer’s apartment in Harlem for a crew to arrive and remove his belongings on October 24, 2014. Photo Courtesy of MCTcampus.com
Tedesco Takes County Executive, Seeks Police Service Merger

The results are in. The people of Bergen County have spoken, and the new Bergen County Executive is former mayor of Paramus, James Tedesco. After 25 years of remaining undefeated, Republican Kathleen Donovan relinquished her position. Both politicians were more than qualified, and although it was a close race (54 percent of the vote went to Tedesco, 46 percent to Donovan) there could only be one winner.

The day after he was awarded the position, Tedesco began making moves to fulfill one of his main goals advertised in his campaign, the merging of the Bergen County Sheriff’s Office and the Bergen County Police Department. Tedesco’s request, made on Nov. 5, 2014, was that the lawsuit Kathleen Donovan filed against the freeholders to block the merger would be dropped. Tedesco's reasoning being that the legal fees over the next two months regarding the lawsuit, while Donovan is still in office, would be dropped as well. Donovan dropped her lawsuit in order to ease the transition.

In a 30 minute interview with northjersey.com, Donovan spoke about her term as Bergen County Executive, saying: “One of the things I’m most proud of is the clean-up of county government that I had to do, and did over the last four years...I'm not unhappy that I made them, but you make some enemies when people don’t get what they think they’re entitled to.”

Donovan has been criticized for this, since she spent over $1 million on seven different lawsuits filed between branches of county government, and had 30 vetoes during her first term; a record at the position. Donovan has stated that she has no immediate plans other than to take a day off - her first since August 31, 2014.

“Tedesco claims that the merger between the departments will save the county anywhere from $90 to 200 million dollars.

Speaking about the Bergen Regional medical center, he said he will “never close that facility.” He has also proposed a county budget that is $6 million below Donovan’s, and did not call for a county-wide property tax increase.

Tedesco "embodies everything that our great democratic party stands for," says Wendy Martinez, a campaign volunteer for Tedesco. "Driving job creation, working-class families, and I just really believe he will take this county to new heights, for all of our county."

You Can’t Take The Sky From Me

The Emil Buehler Trust Observatory in the Technology Building east of the Pitkin Education Center has been the root of some very disturbing rumors as of late. All of the rumors revolve around the possible closing of the free public tours and star gazing on Friday nights.

Several volunteers who work with the public during these free tours declined to comment on the rumors, citing the Employee Code of Conduct, page 3 which states, "refer all media inquires to the Managing Director of Public Relations who will provide all statements on behalf of the College."

In an email statement issued by BCC’s Office of Public Relations Managing Director, Larry Hlavenka said, “As a unique community educational resource that brings students, parents and astronomy observers of all ages to campus, the College supports this long-running initiative. Reflecting its continued support, the College recently hired a lecturer to lead, manage and direct free evening observations of celestial objects.

Why would BCC have to hire another employee when there was already a dedicated and core group of volunteers to educate amateur astronomers? It could be fallout from the recent Employees Code of Conduct that, through a bit of vague wording, volunteers at the observatory “MAY” be held responsible for tour groups actions. This wording could have caused the volunteers not to want to run the tours anymore, thus starting the rumor of the observatory closing.

Only time will tell if the hiring of a new lecturer to run the tours was the right choice to make, and if the Code of Conduct was the right document to pass. In the mean time though, the Emil Buehler Trust Observatory will still be open Friday nights to all students and guests.
The first amendment of the United States Constitution promises us five undeniable rights/freedoms. We’re given the freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, freedom to petition and freedom of peaceful assembly. As citizens of the United States, we must not falter on exercising these freedoms. In my mind, it is more than a right; it’s an obligation to have your voice heard and it’s our duty to not blindly accept things as facts without questioning them. From issues occurring in your school to issues that are world wide, voices make changes, and when it is at a greater volume, there is nothing more powerful than that to create a shift.

As a journalist, it really hits home because that is what we’re trying to do; we are allowing our voices be heard to incite change. Our goal as ethical journalists is to allow accurate, unbiased information to reach the public in a easily coherent way, so they may be able to draw up their own conclusions. We all took time to question things, find out what is really going on in the world and in our country - become knowledgeable in it, not just allow governments/societies including our own walk over us and our fellow man - inhumane things will start occurring and be able to draw up their own conclusions.

In our society, we are haunted by many things: the possibility of beheadings, explosions, and even being shot to death. In other areas of the world, this is a common issue amongst the people that must sleep to the noise of mortar shells, hoping that it will not be the one that lands on their head. With a voice like ours, we have the power to stop things like this from happening.

Even within our own borders, we still have issues that need to be addressed. Issues such as our irrational war on drugs, the education system, corruption of politicians, government and corporations, and the much needed effort to help people in severe poverty, just to name a few. Yet a large portion of the population is more focused on reality shows, celebrities on the red carpet and bickering on the noise of mortar shots, hoping that it will not be the one that lands on their head. With a voice like ours, we have the power to stop things like this from happening.

I encourage you all to try to make a change in this world, speak out, don’t just allow things to be the same because it’s the way they currently are. Let’s tackle the issues of this world together.

“Freedom of speech is a principal pillar of a free government; When this support is taken away, the constitution of a free society is dissolved, and tyranny is erected on its ruins.”

-Benjamin Franklin

Illustrated by Ricardo Montero
Uncle Blair: Freedom of Speech and Other Things BCC Forgets

BLAIR DELONG
NEWS EDITOR

I would like to start by giving the Veteran’s Initiative and Violet Surydya a big thank you for an incredible job putting together Bergen Community College’s Veteran Ceremony. I would also like to take the time to thank Professor Mike Estebon for sharing his insights during the ceremony. He quoted remarks during the ceremony, and forced him into psychological counseling because of a picture posted on his Google+ account. We all know the story by now, because for a while there BCC was the laughing stock of the collegiate world. Only now has a document come up that is BCC’s apology to a man that had his freedom of speech taken away. The funny part of this whole SNAFU is BCC’s administration thinks issuing a mea culpa for taking away a man’s First Amendment Right to the Freedom of Speech will fix something - I’ve got news for you, it won’t.

How can a college’s administration in good conscience write in a statement, “By sanctioning you as it did, BCC may have unintentionally erred and potentially violated your constitutional rights, including under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution,”? And that the college MAY have violated a constitutional right is a gross unstatement. Hey Middle States, do us all a favor and end this nightmare. How can an institution charged with higher learning become so negligent when it comes to a freedom that everyone in the United States gets to enjoy? Does such a place even deserve accreditation?

According to BCC not everyone has the freedom of speech. Only now has a document come up that is BCC’s apology to a man that had his freedom of speech taken away. The funny part of this whole SNAFU is BCC’s administration thinks issuing a mea culpa for taking away a man’s First Amendment Right to the Freedom of Speech will fix something - I’ve got news for you, it won’t.

A girl can be raped whether she is wearing socially proper clothes or not. It all depends on the twisted mind of the offender. You hear accounts of ladies being raped in the Middle East plenty of times, and girls in that region cover themselves. I personally have experienced the horror of being sexually harassed by a very religious man. Luckily, I knew how to act or else things would have lead to the unthinkable. I spoke up. It doesn’t matter who you are or where you are, it will happen. It is a sick greed. Girls will not talk about it because they believe they will always get blamed. It’s true, we will be blamed or even accused of being the cause. Sometimes the parents of these girls do not even accept it, like it was the innocent girls’ fault. Not to mention that, on top of all the damages, she can get pregnant. He gets away with it, while you pay the price.

Girls of BCC are not aware of the importance of rape alert. Ladies: When something happens, speak up, do not create a getaway for rapists. If a guy touches you inappropriately, or even just looks at you in an uncomfortable way, do not hesitate to tell someone. He knows if she were in a straight state of mind, she would have not allowed that. A girl can walk around naked for God’s sake, that still does not give men the right to rape her.

After class, she saunters alone to her car. It is a warm night, and there is almost nobody around. She doesn’t notice someone has been watching her. He has been waiting for her to get out of class. He walks behind her silently. The darkness just makes it easier for him to disappear. As she searches for her keys, the stranger approaches her and grabs her by the arm. The last thing heard was her gasp.

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JOSEPH CIRILLO
CO-EDITOR

When we in the first world tend to think about Africa as a continent, it can be easy to group the vast number of cultures that culminate to create the enormous continent as a singular representation. Of course, that’s not the case, but recent photographs on the internet had dissuaded this belief.

Recently, photographs of high-income neighborhoods and cities have been circulating around the internet, which strain our credulity on social media that Africa is being portrayed fairly in the media. To believe that both vast cityscapes and the more rural existence we are often lead to think about don’t and can’t exist on the same continent, or that our perceptions of Africa are being purposely obscured or manipulated for the gain of profit through charities, is wrong in itself – but it’s also important to address what these photographs do represent.

Africa isn’t exactly a melting pot like the United States might be, but in the U.S., we stillrefer to people from the continent as “African,” largely avoiding the separation and culture as we tend to do with groups of non-white individuals (see: Asia; Middle East). The same can’t be said for other continents like Europe, where we very rarely see people from different areas referred to as Europeans, instead electing to separate them by their appropriate cultural sub-groups like French, Spanish, German and Austrian.

An honest representation of Africa is hard to create, because Africa, unlike the U.S. or Canada, is a continent, not a country.

How can you compare life in the Congo to life in a place like Port Elizabeth? They both exist in the same continent, but in different geographical regions. Go one step further and examine cities in Egypt and compare to places in Liberia or Ethiopia. Do you see a problem with this examination?

Much of Africa is still rural territory that has not been developed into modern “first-world societies.” Imagine that rural America was experiencing a time where there was no clean water, and hospitals were in heavy demand of sterile equipment to decrease the infant mortality rate and boost the quality of life among its people. You spend your whole life believing in Kansas is America, then someone shows you a picture of New York City from a tourism brochure. How does this make you feel?

In the same way, rural societies in Africa are separate from more developed areas. What complicates it all that much more difficult to understand is that these borders are of separate countries. We tend to group the people of the continent together as “Africans,” but “Africa” includes Egyptian, Moroccan, Liberian, Zambian, Kenyan, Ethiopian etcetera, and all of these places are different than the other.

Yes, many of these places do include very urban cities like the ones you might see in pictures of Detroit or Liverpool if you’re in the UK, but that doesn’t mean that in other areas of the continent that there aren’t people suffering, and that’s where we get it wrong in our assumptions of these illustrations.

Clean water and sanitation are still two very important things we need to help provide, but that doesn’t mean we should overlook the people of the rural areas. The rural way of life is vast, and large, see only pictures of rural societies is because they’re the ones that need our help and need to be represented. We need to constantly be reminded that these places exist and that these are real people who need real help. A mix of both is unethical in this way, because charities aren’t trying to sell you a tour guide, they’re asking you to help people who desperately need it.

It’s our responsibility to think of the world more complex, and not let the faults in our blogs obscure the presence of truth in our world.

Mental Health First-aid Class

DEIN MERCADO
Staff Writer

Every year, nearly 40,000 Americans take their own lives. For young people between the ages of 15 and 24, suicide is the second highest leading cause of death, before automobile accidents. 15 percent of people who are clinically depressed die by suicide. However, 80 percent of people who were clinically depressed and sought help have been treated successfully.

Mental health is critically important to the overall quality of life, and although some illnesses are harder to purge than others, mental health first aid training and the development of this production may be the cure.

After meeting with the insightful and inspiring Kathleen Pignatelli, it was obvious that the program she leads is going to help many people, especially the students at BCC, although not limited to them. The Mental Health First Aid program has given six professors from BCC the eight hour course, and they have, in turn, taught 450 people the course, with most of the participants being students. The teachers do not get paid, nor does it cost anything to receive the training for mental health first aid, which displays the true interest and passion in the well being of those with mental health illnesses.

Upon attending the Sources of Strength program on November 20th, I saw the effectiveness of Mrs. Pignatelli’s (and staff’s) work. The project utilizes the power of peer social networking to change unhealthy norms, prevent suicide, bullying and substance abuse. However, the program can be an asset to everyone, since the ideals taught can be appreciated by anyone. The program highlights a variety of internal and external sources of strength (hence the name).

Internally, the program encourages generosity, spirituality and healthy activities. Externally, it encourages medical access, family support, positive friends and mentors. These qualities of life are immeasurably valuable to mental health, especially to younger people.

The five-step action plan for providing mental health first aid, (named ALGEE) stands for Assess (for risk of injury or illness), Listen (without judgment), Give (reassurance and information), and Encourage twice (internal and external sources of strength).

It’s our responsibility to think of the world more complex, and not let the facts in our blogs obscure the presence of truth in our world.

Uncle Blair: Freedom of Speech and Other Things BCC

Continued from pg. 9

Now, how in the name of Satan’s sphincter can a little girl in a t-shirt pose that much of a threat to a campus. Nice going in 3rd Floor, or where the administration lords over us, you have just tarnished a man’s reputation. There isn’t a Google, Bing, Yahoo or any other search I’ve conducted with Francis Schmidt’s name that didn’t coincide with the words, school shooting or AK-47. It’s funny, because now that I think about Schmidt’s name that didn’t coincide with the words, school shooting or AK-47. It’s funny, because now that I think about it, if there is anyone on campus that has a negligent history regarding the program include: Professor Pignatelli, Margaret Cirillo, Dr. Peter DeLugus, Professor Ilene Purcell, Lois Charmichael and Jaime Saraceno.

It is encouraged that as many students as possible participate in the course, it could mean the difference between happiness and depression, life and death, even. You may never know who is under distress from mental health illness, since some people walk around like a one-man army, fighting with the shadows in their head.

Illustration by Valerie Batista

DECEMBER 2014
VOLUME 23 ISSUE 4
THE TORCH
Illustration by Valerie Batista
There was police everywhere. It was 6:30 p.m. and I walked out of the Downtown A train, into 42nd St. Port Authority Bus Terminal station, the first thing I saw was a flood of NYPD officers roaming the underground tunnels of the subway like white blood cells, ready to attack any virus that might infect the delicate New York system. It was December 3, 2014. They all had the same nervous grimace on their face, which was made more evident whenever they would look at my chest and read “Press.” Most would turn away, others would give me a defiant look, which I pleasantly returned.

I made my way up the terminal and into the fluorescent lights and loud honking of 42nd and 8th Ave., listening for any commotion or looking for any anomaly.

Half jogged, half walked through 42nd street. I knew Times Square had the story and the iconic pictures. I raced against Eyewitness News Channel 7 and reached Dyquawn Thompson; a young African-American waving a white flag that said “Justice. Respect,” with a peace sign in the middle.

“I need to stand up for what is right,” Thompson said. “There is a disconnection between the police and the people, enough is enough.”

As Thompson waved his flag, more people came, some who were protesting injustice in Mexico, holding Mexican flags with red paint on them, and shouting to the heavens in Spanish.

There was a white gentleman, Jerry Goralnick, in front of me, holding a sign with two faces.

“Every 28 hours, this has been going on forever.”

Goralnick advised me to be careful, since the lighting of the iconic Rockefeller Christmas Tree was taking place, but it had been infiltrated by protesters.

They all had the same nervous grimace on their face, unable to cross 5th Ave. without being noticed.

Before the police saw me, and was able to jog all the way to 6th Ave and 50th St., where the police had barricaded the entire avenue. I cursed my luck and began walking Uptown, determined to slip through the cracks, stick to the shadows and bypass the police, which would probably be impossible, may Ethan Hunt inspire me.

On my way to a miracle, I walked by a young white man, standing alone and holding a sign that read “NYPD. Blood on your HANDS.” I approached him. “Hello sir, my name is Ricardo Montero from The Torch.” He turned, looked at my press pass, at my face and smiled, “What’s up Ricardo, I’m Patrick Waldo.” I found him.

We talked briefly, and then I asked him why he was there. His face grew red with passion and began, “Today, I’m embarrassed to be a New Yorker. I am here to voice my opinion to the decision to not indict the NYPD officer who did an illegal chokehold on Eric Garner, even when he said “I can’t breathe” 11 times. I feel embarrassed to pay taxes to fund useless and racist cops.”

I gave him a second to catch his breath, he sighed deeply and continued. “There is a system set in place that protects police officers from breaking the law. And there is a system of institutionalized racism in America” his voice filled with emotion. “As much as people like to say that racism is dead, it is very much alive. Serious changes to the system need to be made before this continues.” I thanked him for his service, he thanked me for approaching him.

I walked all the way up to 56th St. and found a gap in the barricades, I ran to the other side of the Americas before the police saw me, and was able to jog all the way to 5th Ave. without being noticed.

Using building courtyards, passages and alleyways, I was able to arrive at the other side of the street in front of Rockefeller Center. Headquarters wasn’t wrong, there were at least 3,000 people in my immediate space. I was stuck between humans and the barricades, unable to cross 5th Ave to the Rock, so I applied the only tactic that I had left, my press pass.

“Ow! Officer! I’m press and I need to cover the lighting of the tree!” I yelled. The officer in question did not even turn around and continued to ignore me for the following eight minutes, until I gave up and grudgingly headed back to Times Square.

The heart of New York was calm when I arrived. I stood by the TKTS pavilion, most commonly known as the red stairs, and watched a group of twenty-somethings gathered in a circle, praying to their god for justice.
I decided that there was nothing more to report and looked at my watch, it was 10:00 p.m. I walked to Times Sq. 42nd St. subway station, putting away my camera and excited to go home. I was walking through a tunnel on my way to the A train, when I hear loud, terrifying screams coming from a woman's vocal chords, and at least 30 cops standing at the mouth of my tunnel.

I immediately went for my camera when I see an African-American woman being lifted by the limbs, her body parallel to the ground, and squirming from the grip of the law. The officers were yelling commands as her screaming continued, and a large crowd of onlookers gathered around the scene. I began to take pictures but an officer got in my way, and prevented me from getting a decent picture.

She was swiftly handcuffed and taken away, while I switched to video. The buzzing of the crowd grew to a higher, louder pitch, and the officers turned their attention towards the gathering crowd. Then began pulling out their batons.

The officer's commands rebounded off the walls of the narrow tunnel, while a young man came into my field of vision and said "God Bless America."

The crowd began moving away from the scene by the commanding voice of the police. I looked around and filmed, but stayed at a safe distance, when I noticed one of the officers, whose hand never left the holster of his gun.

"Are you a reporter?" said the bearded man behind me on the escalator as I left. "Yes. Did you see what happened?" I asked the man. He handed me his business card.

"Justin Lees, Guitarist," it read. "What do you know Mr. Lees?"

He was nervous, and asked me before he answered to keep him on deep background, so I had to talk him out of it. When he accepted, he said, "That woman asked the police for help. The police asked her for ID, but she did not have one. I don't know what happened that led to her arrest, after she said she didn't have ID, she screamed that the police couldn't help her. Then something happened and here were are.

He spoke about his own experiences with the police, he talked fast and assured, and I simply listened. He denied my request for a picture as the Q train arrived at the station, and he shook my hand, turned with the guitar on his back, and left.

I took my train in silence and went back to the security of my home, where the only social and political unrest is what will be for dinner, and things made sense again.
A Moment in “Conversations”

Heather Cornell and friends in “Conversations,” took place at the Anna Maria Ciccone Theatre, November 12 at 7:30 p.m. A group of performers took the audience on a journey full of connection and improvisational encounters with the texture of sound, sight and great emotion.

Improvisation is allowing the artist to be as free as they can be, allowing themselves to express their passion to create that moment in time, which was fully accomplished in this show.

“Since each and every artist has their own unique approach, so each meeting of artist is in need of a different type of structure. Some of the encounters you will see here are the result of brief meetings, some of more involved rehearsals, some have happened before and some we will be having for the first time tonight,” writes director Heather Cornell.

Cornell is a distinguished artist, who is known for her passion towards the art form of tap dance. She is also a director/choreographer at Manhattan Tap, her dance ensemble. Through this, she's grown and is known for “movers and shakers of tap dance renaissance.”

Each scene was spoken through words, dance and movement. Cornell took on center stage with an experience or story she's been through, while she spoke there was a performer tapping her way through Cornell's words. It's as if you felt her emotion through the performer's feet. Each performer really did express themselves through their dance, they showed a great amount of connection.

This performance felt so natural; a group of friends recounting themselves with each other, reminiscing as well as shared laughs, shared emotion, shared the stage. An opportunity to show the audience through shared conversations that re-connecting music and dance in our culture is so important.

Under constant threat of domination by foreign forces, Armenians became fierce protectors of their culture. In commemoration of the centennial of the Armenian genocide, the Center of Peace, Justice and Reconciliation presented “Fractured History, Reconstructing Identity: An exhibition of Contemporary Armenian Art,” from November 7th to December 8th. The Armenian Art Display took place in the PJR pocket gallery in the Pitkin Education Center here at Bergen Community College.

The poster exhibit was based on a Gallery Bergen show of original artworks, curated by Vicky Hovanessian in 2012. The display offers a testimony to the will of the Armenian Culture that has survived and outlived the genocide of 1915.

Despite the trauma they went through, they have preserved their cultural identity, and that was, in part, reflected in the exhibition, “Burn their homes and churches. Then see if they will not laugh, sing, and pray again. For when two of them meet anywhere in the world, if they see they will not create a new Armenia,” said William Soroyan, a quote that was also part of the exhibition.

There were nine very interesting and large photos of works by contemporary Armenian artists. The October 25 at 12:35” by Vahan Rudelian, “Winter Lyris” by Rudik Petrosyan, “Armenian Dress” and “Sasunt Davit, Sitting Bull and Buffalo” by Arman Grigorian, “March to Desert” by Vartoush Magarian, “At 11:30am” by Vahan Rumelian, “Beyond Sorrow” by Kardash Onnig, “Child With Gorky (One)” by Aran Jibilian, and “Archetypes” by Ararat Sarkissian. Each poster represented something different, and meant something for each artist. Many students passed by the hallway and noticed the exhibition.

“I thought it was very interesting and different. It really caught my attention,” said Ivone Ventura. The exhibition offered examples of individual creative impulses. Armenians have reconstructed their culture, and are refashioning it through artistic impulses and new visions.
Pride Prom

When the DJ slowed down, they yelled for more. Bergen Community College students rocked the dance floor to a 1950s throwback. Bergen P.R.I.D.E hosted a 1950s inspired dance at BCC's Meadowlands campus. Students dressed up to the theme and with some couples even matching in classic outfits.

From leather jackets and pedal pushers to bermuda shorts and bolder patterned shirts, everyone really outdid themselves to make the 1950s come back to life.

The DJ played a variety of classic '50s songs and mixed them with today's popular hits. Everyone was on the dance floor rocking the night away. Guests helped themselves to food and refreshments all night. Disco lights flashed to the music, and everyone just enjoyed their time with their friends.

When the time came to crown king and queen, it was difficult, because so many people were dressed perfectly to the theme. There were over 10 people nominated and the voting was repeated several times for a tie breaker. With so many outstanding outfits, it took a while to make a decision. Eventually, Ricardo Montero and Jessica Rodriguez walked away with the crowns, with a twist to the traditional king and queen dance. They requested the DJ to turn it up a bit and play salsa music.

Bergen P.R.I.D.E club's ambition was to make sure everyone on campus is accepted and included. As a campus, we are all diverse - and they want to make sure that we are accepting of one another no matter who we are or what our style is. Everyone is unique in their own way. P.R.I.D.E Prom gives students the chance to interact with each other and learn to just love.
A total of thirteen pieces of art created at Bergen Community College (BCC) were held from Nov 10 until Nov 14, where students were welcomed to join in the workshops. Veterans and new language students were taught the tools and techniques so that they can find a new way to talk about their experiences, so we give them a platform to share their experiences, and that is thru art making. David Keefe said, “The reason why we run these workshops is so that veterans can find a new way to communicate, and that is a very good development for them.”

The exhibition not only presents amazing and unique artwork, such as drawings, photographs, iconic images and words into their Combat Paper, but each one also contains and communicates a profound personal story. Eli Wright, an instructor and member of Combat Paper shared: “The purpose behind it is about communicating the military experience through art which isn’t a very traditional way of talking about a military experience or a military culture, but there is actually a long history of people in the military engaging in art. In some ways we are kind of keeping an ancient tradition alive through hand papermaking which is 2000 year old process but we are working with a newer younger generation of veterans who are dealing with their military experiences in ways that previous generations of veterans never did, and there is a long history of veterans often remaining silence about their experiences and we are seeing that younger veterans coming out of the military today don’t want to be silent about their experiences.”

Younger generations of veterans are finding this process of papermaking an easier way to communicate, and that is a very good development for them.

This program also facilitates and provides the public to understand better what veterans have endured, and helps veterans move ahead with their lives. We can all get involved with this by donating, and spreading the word. Go to www.printnj.org/combatpaper, or visit their Facebook page www.facebook.com/combatpapernj. Don’t miss the chance to experience and witness such a meaningful exhibition and visit the gallery, who’s hours vary everyday make sure you check them. We are lucky enough to have this in our own school, so don’t miss this chance.

Each semester, the gallery at Bergen Community College brings an incredibly unique exhibition of art to the public. This semester, Bergen is fortunate enough to have a presentation from such an important and strong community: our American veterans, who bring to us their “Combat Paper” project. This is their third year at BCC, with plans of having more. The gallery opening reception took place on Wednesday, Nov. 19 at the gallery, which is located on the third floor of West Hall. The exhibition will run until Dec. 19.

What exactly is “Combat Paper,” and what will we be able to observe? Program director David Keefe said, “The reason why we run these workshops is so that veterans can find a new way to talk about their experiences, so we give them the tools and techniques so that they can find a new language.”

Bergen Community College veterans and students were welcomed to join in the workshops that were held from Nov 10 until Nov 14, where unique and meaningful pieces of art were made. A total of thirteen pieces of art created at BCC that week, as well as 4 other artworks which were brought in from the past weeks here at BCC. The rest of the exhibit also showcased works from previous years.

This is a process in which the paper could come from deconstructed uniforms that either a veteran wore in combat or military experience, or it could be uniforms from the community. Keefe also said, “Those uniforms hold all those experiences and so when they transform that into paper and reclaim it into something different and new, it gets a new meaning and it also gives a platform for them to share their experiences, and that is thru art making.”

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Win Win’s Adventures in Myanmar

GABE WANISSIAN
SPORTS EDITOR

You may find her teaching in a classroom, counseling students in room A-118, or even taking part of an impromptu meeting at the United Nations; in a moment’s notice, Professor Win Win Kyi may instead be Myanmar-bound.

It shouldn’t come as a surprise, aside from the newly democratic (since 2011) nation being her land of origin, Kyi is deep rooted in Myanmarese society in more ways than one.

With her father being a diplomat, and her mother coming from a family of political influence, Kyi continues the tradition by maintaining public relations with both the nations parliament figures and its citizens. Visits to Myanmar happen swiftly for a variety of reasons - like earlier this year in March, in which she provided counseling for Red Cross facilities and refugee camps located in impoverished Rakhingya villages.

Lessons on topics such as the dangers of narcotic use and AIDS prevalence raise awareness amongst the educationally starved youth; Kyi reveled in the opportunity to give back to her country. “I am, in a way, a servant of the people [of Myanmar] and of the world,” she declared.

In that willingness to serve, Kyi aimed to be an integral part in the re-acclimation of Myanmarese society post-dictatorship by pushing for the rights to Inclusive Education for all citizens.

During her effort she recalls, “In March, I went back (to Myanmar) to train the teaching faculty. And in the middle of a conference, I was told that the President of Myanmar phoned for me.”

President Thein Sein’s interest in Kyi’s stance led to another visit to Myanmar this past September, further shedding light on the necessity for Inclusive Education. This time speaking, whilst members of the country’s parliament figures and of the world,” she declared.

That very moment, but the intention of going remains forward just so happens to come with the perks that come with partaking in an adventure.

As well, she was repeatedly imprisoned and shipped to Thailand throughout the 70s for marching against the military junta-led dictatorship that plagued Myanmar (then known as Burma) for over 45 years.

The Dictatorship was lead by Leader Ne Win - ironically, a relative of Professor.

Although there were shared relations, Kyi objected to the presence of the Burmese Regime; that meant her life was frequently at stake. “Many times I didn’t think I’d see the light of day, but was I afraid? No.”

Professor Kyi’s escapades in Myanmar also contain moments in reconnecting with her upbringing. Her earlier years gave way to an affluent and relatively peaceful upbringing - one that included the raising of her 60-year old pet Asian Elephant, Moe Moe. Originally being raised by the family, the old friend now resides in a zoo located in the Myanmar’s capital city, Yangon. Kyi still makes visits, however, even humorously adding, “I’ve gone and seen my Moe Moe before even seeing old friends. My friends would say ‘you saw your elephant first?’ and I would tell them ‘yes thats exactly what I did.’”

Kyi’s travels to Myanmar can be spur of the moment, but the intention of going remains uniform. “I’m going back only when I know I can push the agenda,” she states. That very desire for Myanmar to continue to take strides forward just so happens to come with the perks that come with partaking in an adventure.

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Top picture: Win Win feeds her pet elephant Moe Moe. Bottom picture. One of the many Buddhist temples in Myanmar. Photos by Win Win.

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Thanksgiving is the real start of the holiday season. It is a time for appreciating who and what you have in your life, spending time with family, being thankful, and of course, eating a lot of delicious food.

This year, students from Bergen Community College’s chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People really embodied the spirit of the holiday by doing something selfless to give back and really show their thanks. Nearly 20 members of the chapter went to serve the homeless in Newark at an event called Breaking the Bread. The chapter helped volunteer with an organization called Future Potential Youth Outreach.

FPYO is a community based organization in Newark, started by a man named Ali-Tariq Best to help empower, entertain and educate youth and families.

The members brought donations of food, both to serve there, and for people to bring home. They also brought clothing donations, including answers. It yokes technical audacity to ordinary drama and complex cinematic half-assedness: it tackles big questions and offers conventional answers. It yokes technical audacity to ordinary drama and complex cinematic half-assedness: it tackles big questions and offers conventional answers.

Iñárritu depicts the truth in our societies interests for entertainment in a single movie: Birdman.

With a cast including actors such as Michael Keaton, Naomi Watts, Zach Galifianakis, Emma Stone, and Edward Norton, we see the plot rupture into madness and resolve into sanity.

Keaton plays an actor, Riggan Thomson, who is famously known for a role as a superhero. While trying to recover from celebrity, he battles himself, family and the public to make a name for himself on Broadway as the writer, director and star of his own play. One critic said, “Birdman, right now, is on the money.”

In Riggan and the rest of the cast, writhing with the dread of being a nobody but appalled by what it takes to be a somebody, we see not just the acting bug but also the New York bug, the love bug, and, if we’re honest, the life bug, diagnosed as what they are: a seventy-year itch.” Shot in New York City, Iñárritu nods and references to mid-sixties cinematic classics in style and creativity through his filming.

The plot is based on the storyline of a single man who you see may or may not have supernatural abilities (like that of the Birdman that he is so famous for), and needs to overcome the term “celebrity” while on the Broadway stage. Emma Stone plays Riggan’s tortured, young daughter who, as a recovering addict, clashes with her father repeatedly.

Nancy members pictured with a homeless man Chris (at left in green jacket) in Newark. Photo by Kimi Wei.

The unexpected Virtue of Ignorance

“Popularity is the slutty cousin of prestige.” Intensely refreshing, dark-humoured and absolutely brilliant, director Alejandro González Iñárritu depicts the truth in our societies interests for entertainment in a single movie. Birdman.

Everyone and everything in this movie has a purpose and a role that intricately connects to the themes of this movie: performance, ego, and truth.
As a woman, a constant drawback is the double standard we are born into. From common objectivation to demeaning catcalling, being a woman can be a challenge. Women are no strangers to being mistreated and sometimes even harassed. With technology nowadays, it is easier and becoming more common to cow over behind a screen and speak more vulgarly than one would in person. This has had enough of this grotesque and meandering behavior; it is inexcusable to not only treat a lady, but a person this way. Therefore, the female population is taking a stand; an Instagram account has been made where girls post conversions of men bluntly addressing women as a piece of meat.

The account is called Bye Felipe and it was established on October 14th, 2014. With only a month online, the account has over 258 thousand followers and 68 posts of women who are tired of the abuse. The account has stated their mission clearly in their description “Calling out dudes who turn hostile when rejected or ignored because a woman made the decision any way. Women do not owe men anything; not their attention, not their bodies, not their time, not a smile, not even a glance.”

The name of the page is inspired from the Urban Dictionary term where they explain it as, “A male who says they are leaving and you do not care at all.” Including referencing the name Felipe, “A random male that nobody is sad to see go.”

The Instagram page is a safe place to post these conversations. In the course of a month it has liberated females everywhere and raised awareness. The female population should not be martyrs and with Bye Felipe they are uniting together to prove a point. This behavior is disgusting and it downgrades women to the point where they become victims. A woman does not deserve backlash for a male’s bruised pride, and grown men should not snap in such a rude, angry frenzy. A woman is an individual and like a man they have the right to interact or not interact with whoever they please; that decision should be recognized and not disregarded because a woman made the decision any way. Women do not owe men anything; not their attention, not their bodies, not their time, not a smile, not even a glance.

The three fantastic performers took turns while singing, they contrasted each other without upstaging, and made their names be remembered in Teaneck.
Still Star-Crossed by Melinda Taub picks up where William Shakespeare left off after killing off his main protagonists in Romeo and Juliet. Shakespeare leaves the citizens of Fair Verona and the readers devastated, but Taub's bold move to continue the classic is contemporary and invigorating. This continuation of Romeo and Juliet is unique and audacious. The novel is a refreshing change in the young adult genre and a much needed change from the typical paranormal.

Taub's adaptation begins where the play ends, at the funeral of the original star crossed lovers and now focuses on the two cousins from feuding families. Rosaline is a woman before her time who is independent, bright, and refuses to have a man think for her. Benvolio is now facing the obligations of being the heir of the Montague family after the tragedy of his cousin Romeo. The two, both stricken with grief, are thrust together in an arranged marriage to merge the two feuding families together and put a rest to the violence.

Taub plays up the 1595 setting at every chance she obtains, bringing life to Cobblestone streets, bustling market places and ruffling skirts. Melinda Taub really commits to her setting by composing the dialogue in old English only adding to the unique experience that book delivers.

Best of all, Taub made her characters realistic in that she did not have her heroine, Rosaline, portrayed as a delicate damsel in distress, but almost as a budding feminist for her time period. Rosaline has opinions of her own, is well read and has plans for her life.

Still Star-Crossed romanticizes historical fiction and spices it up with adventure and love triangles. The story is full of twists and turns and unexpected plot twists. Still Star-Crossed does not give us the ending that we all wanted, but it gives a thrilling story and a breathtaking ending.

**BOOK REVIEW**

**MELISSA PEREZ**

*Stills,* page 104. "Dare to dream big! This book will stay with you for a lifetime. It will give a thrilling story and a breathtaking ending.

**RICHARDO MONTERO**

**Athletes Don’t Run On Dunkin’**

It is not a mystery that athletes are always looking for an edge to be in top physical condition. Just ask A-Roid — since they are forced to maintain excellent physicality and constantly perform at their very best. When it comes to performance enhancing substances, there are thousands ranging from sports drinks filled with electrolytes, all the way to steroids and their promise to give you all the muscles you could ever want at the cost of ones physiological health.

As it is known for almost everything, excessive usage can be harmful. On the other hand is the substance known as caffeine. According to Webmd.com, caffeine is not considered addictive, but its stimulation of the nervous system can cause physical dependence. Although it may not be destructive, like narcotics and alcohol, it is perfectly accepted in society, giving the user the user gets from caffeine, it is more honorable of the athlete who earns his victories with his or her own power, not a double shot of espresso.

The latest study shows that ingestion of “3-9 mg of caffeine per kilogram (kg) of body weight one hour prior to exercise increased endurance running and cycling performance in the laboratory.” These results were positive, but it was only for a small majority of the subjects, to which we can conclude that caffeine affects each individual differently. However, recent consumption of caffeine can cause withdrawal symptoms. Like less regular Venti can include headaches, fatigue, anxiety, irritability, depressed mood, shakiness, insomnia, irregular heart rhythm, dehydration and difficulty concentrating. Due to these symptoms, the user may feel like caffeine is the medicine for their maladies, when it’s actually merely subduing their caffeine crave.

Although caffeine is mostly related to coffee, it can be also found in most energy drinks, soft drinks, teas, chocolate etc., sometimes at even higher doses than a large coffee. This make the exposure to caffeine extremely common, and since it can be found in most energy drinks, athletes looking for an extra boost of energy are consuming caffeine without realizing it.

In frequent studies carried out by the American College of Sports Medicine, the results of whether or not caffeine affects athletic performance have been contradicting. The latest study shows that ingestion of “3-9 mg of caffeine per kilogram (kg) of body weight one hour prior to exercise increased endurance running and cycling performance in the laboratory.” This is understandable to want to make the arduous physical activity of sports a little easier, but it is not wise to abuse substances such as caffeine to turn you Super Saiyan for three minutes and then crash you like a blind Nascar driver. Apart from the obvious withdrawal symptoms and dependence that the user gets from caffeine, it is more honorable of the athlete who earns his victories with his or her own power, not a double shot of espresso.
There was a time where the letters “NY” before a team name would inject intimidation and respect into the hearts of opposing fans and teams everywhere; but now after a few painful years, whenever a New York team plays, everyone knows nothing short of legendary

Babe Ruth, John Starks, Mike Piazza, Walt Frazier, Tom Seaver, Patrick Ewing, Mickey Mantle, Joe DiMaggio, Joe Namath, Babe Ruth, John Starks, Mike Piazza, Walt Frazier, Tom Seaver, Patrick Ewing, the list of legends goes on. Apart from Derek Jeter, which nothing compared to the legacy that these teams have previously had scattered victories and occasional happiness, but we can all agree that it is nothing compared to the legacy that these teams have previously had nothing short of legendary.

Listen, I know I am generalizing here, since there have been scattered victories and occasional happiness, but we can all agree that it is nothing compared to the legacy that these teams have previously had nothing short of legendary.

I am not talking about fame, I am talking about legends, game-changers, athletes that brought the five boroughs to tears. If a Bostonian did some voodoo, bad juju evil spell upon our Gotham teams wrong. Unfortunately, this year all I’ve had left for myself is deep depression and constant facepalming.

I am not asking for a Superbowl ring, or a trophy, or a medal. I understand, New York teams, that those are kind of hard for you guys right now. All I need to get off the Zoloft is a little bit of hope; a reason to want to watch your games and cheer for you, instead of expecting a loss and preparing myself to become a punchline to a sports joke. “What does a Nets/Jets and Mets fan have in common with Donald Trump's hair? They're both in denial.”

At the time of writing, the Giants have a 3-9 record, even losing to the Jacksonville-Jaguars. Really Giants, The Jaguars? Christ. The Jets are 2-10, well on their way to being the worst North Eastern team in recent memory. The Mets finished their 2014 season 79-83, the Knicks are currently 4-14 and the Nets are 6-9. These are all losing records, and pathetic ones to say the least.

The only winning season records are the Yankees at 84-78 (which is not very comparatively impressive to the Yankees from 2009-2012 who all had records of 90+ wins) and the Rangers with a mediocre eleven wins and nine losses.

New York’s professional athletes are not the sole reason of these teams baring sub-.500 records; executives and team managers can also share some of the guilt, given how they treat their franchises like a business, not like a sport. These balking individuals buy, sell and trade their homegrown rosters without hesitation, putting the teams’ chemistry in peril, along with the opportunity to win games. Gentlemen, let me speak to you in terms that you might understand: Good team chemistry creates wins; winning leads to profit - I promise. I live a sad life. In my closet I have a Darrelle Revis Jets jersey, a Jason Bay Mets jersey and a Nets hat. I have always been proud to be a fan of the underdogs, since I believe frontrunners are almost as bad as Call of Duty campers. Every single one of my teams has constantly given me a reason to love them, even if everyone else thinks that they suck. Every year, they give me hope that we’ll make it to the playoffs and that we will prove the “good” teams wrong. Unfortunately, this year all I’ve had left for myself is deep depression and constant facepalming.

It is not fair, New York teams, it simply isn’t.

This past season, Bergen’s cross country team has been full of ups and downs, but with teamwork and good leadership, they ran their way into the National championships.

Starting off the season with new coach Deanna Dedovich, the team banded and progressed together. “We’re like a family,” coach Dedovich commented.

The team as family lowered their times, improved their stamina and made their way to the championships.

After their reign at NjCAA regionals at Branch Brook Park with 78 runners, the running Bulldogs achieved second place as a team. Their win in Newark brought them to the district championship in Philadelphia; earning 34th place, Captain Edgar Aguilar obtained his position with the time of 33 minutes and 22 seconds. Teammate Ryan Reyes attained 56th place with the time of 35 minutes and 29 seconds, and literally a minute behind Vinny Maresca got 68th place with the time of 36 minutes and 29 seconds. And for the last win of the day, Thomas Concannon retrieved 72th place with a time of 37 minutes and three seconds.

With that win under their belt, the Cross Country team ventured to the meet they have anticipated all season. The National Championships hosted at Finger Lakes Community College in Canandaigua, New York, had 139 runners from all over the country. The Bulldogs faced D1 and D2 schools and seized 15th place.

The Bulldog runners had a successful season even with a new coach who was out sick mid-season. They surpassed their top competitors, Cumberland and Finger Lakes, and were solid competitors throughout the entire season. Gathering win after win, the cross country team finished their season strong; the foundation for a successful campaign next year has been laid.

Cross Country Goes National

MELISSA PEREZ
STAFF WRITER

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Wrestling With Purpose

A wrestler forgoes endless hours of physicality on the mat in a nearly starved state; Bergen student athlete Nick Williams finds meaning through the grueling sport.

"Wrestling gave me a big reality check," states Williams in regards to the challenging nature of competition. "It also gave me a sort of purpose. It makes me strive to succeed."

A New Milford native who is currently majoring in General Education, Williams looks to transition his high school successes into the collegiate level - a process that he knows will lead to some growing pains. It's a step he's all too familiar with, however, going through the very same fallout after seeing his middle school victories turn into high school doubts. "I went from winning 3rd in my district in Eighth Grade, to losing as much as I won Freshman year. It was a struggle," Williams stated.

He later found his footing around junior year, and by his senior campaign, Williams escalated to one of the better wrestlers of the school; earning the title of team captain.

That title is not earned without putting in a rigorous training regimen though, as Williams states, "You're going to war on that mat, so you better be ready." While Williams maintains his shape all year by teaching the New Milford's rec wrestling team, along with doing bodyweight exercises and cardio, it's his in season work that truly tests his warrior mentality.

Daily practices that consist of working on various takedown techniques, sparring with a partner for extended periods of time, and bodyweight exercises can occupy nearly 3 hours at a time. It may sound like overkill, but as Williams puts it, "You have to want it, you have to want to win."

The very will to climb over the obstacles perhaps lies in his relationship with his late father Craig Williams, who had his fair share of wrestling accomplishments for Hackensack High School. "When I told my father I wanted to wrestle in 8th grade it made him so happy, and before I knew it, he started showing me all of these medals and trophies," Williams said with a nostalgic smile. "He went to all of my matches...we had a father son bond."

The unfortunate passing of his father lead to initial grief, but did not deter his love for wrestling, as he found solace in the sport. "Wrestling is in my blood, and I have a chip on my shoulder to win."

Williams' incentive to achieve was deep-rooted in something that transcended the mere wanting of trophies and recognition, and it showed in his performance by placing 8th in Counties during his senior year.

It also shows in his willingness to pass on knowledge to young wrestlers in the New Milford rec wrestling team, where he gains experience in the field of teaching; an aspiration for Williams is to turn that into a career one day.

Being a new member of the Bergen Bulldog Wrestling squad, Williams looks to expand his purpose in wrestling not merely for the sake of winning, "I want people to say 'I want this guy for his character and will'."

GABE WANISSIAN
Sports Editor

"You have to want it you have to want to win."

Bergen Wrestler Nick Williams gets into position for the opening whistle
Courtesy of BCC Athletic Department
The Lady Bulldogs haven't had the best of seasons thus far, and head coach Tracdy Green recognizes that the team may be in a rebuilding state. “We have a new team with a lot of freshmen, the current goal is to keep the scores as close as possible,” Coach Green states.

While their record is 1-6 as of December 5th, that very potential for progress has made its presence known throughout the season with hard fought losses against Duchess CC (50-56) and Bronx (63-60); their sole victory against Bucks CC (57-36) showed the sound play on all sides.

The teams two captains Marissa Lortz and Jessica Diaz bring the needed veteran presence that will better prepare Freshman-dominated roster for player development into bonafide players themselves. The younger team is looking to take the experiences of their current season and develop it into a sound winning group when all is said and done, as Green states “We are all currently working on making the team better for next season...the girls are hard workers.”

The campaign is still young and plenty of basketball is left to be played for both teams. Each game played from here on out will have its place: a step closer to playoff contention, a step closer closer to team development, and a step closer to being a victory against SUNY- Delhi with the score of 79-69.

As of December 1, the 2015 wrestling Schedule only shows three home matches. January 22 versus Sullivan County Community College and Springfield Technical Community College at 11:00 a.m.; January 24 against Valley Forge and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute at 12:00 p.m.; and February 4 versus Yeshiva University at 8:00 p.m. All BCC students are encouraged to come and watch some good ol’ American wrestling.

“Last year we only had one match at home, but there aren’t a lot of matches in the season. You just have to win them, so you are perceived well by your classmates,” said Henry when asked whether it made him nervous to mostly play away. "I want my team to go undefeated," declared Henry with determination and power, a difficult goal, but plausible if this team can grit their teeth, train hard, work, prepare, and keep my grades to keep wrestling. Luckily for Henry and his team, it is all about dedication and hard work.

They are fully aware of the champion shoes they have to fill, given how successful the BCC wrestling program has been in the past five years. Nationally acclaimed wrestlers walk our hallways, and our current team is well aware of the potential within each individual, recognizing the promise of bringing in a NJCAA medal back home.

For this to be accomplished, these men must be comfortable duking it out on foreign grounds and winning. “You want to win away because that’s their home, and you have to show that you’re comfortable fighting on other people’s mats. Then when you win, people will be like, “this kid is good,”” said Henry.