



Choose Love Movement Comes to BCC



Scarlett Lewis gives a moving expression about her brave and beloved son Jesse. //Jonathan Orozco

ADRIANNA CARABALLO
NEWS EDITOR

On November 16, Scarlett Lewis drove for three hours in the pouring rain to share her Choose Love Movement with BCC at the meadowlands campus. Scarlett Lewis is the mother of six-year-old Jesse Lewis, who was killed in the Sandy Hook elementary school shooting that occurred on December 14, 2012, in Newtown, Connecticut.

Jessie Lewis stood up to the gunman, 20-year-old Adam Lanza, and told his friends to run so that they would have a chance to escape. For his bravery and courage, Jesse was given a commander-in-chief funeral.

Before the fatal shooting Scarlett enjoyed her last precious moments with her son, she never thought this would be the last time she would ever see her son. “That morning started like any other for me. We were supposed to build gingerbread houses

in the class with Jessie that afternoon at 2 o’clock. I’m a single mom so I never was in his class so that was kinda a really big deal for me,” said Scarlett.

As the two of them excitedly talked about building the gingerbread houses later together, Jessie had written a little message on her car when her back was turned.

“I turned around to give him a hug goodbye and I had noticed he had written a message on my car with the frost. He wrote I love you, and drew hearts on all the windows. I just realized that was one of the life’s moments so, despite the fact that I was late, I ran into the house got my phone, came back out, positioned him next to the message and took the picture,” said Scarlett.

That was the last picture she would ever take of him. In the picture, Jesse was smiling wide, however, wax goofy teeth blocked his smile. He wore them all the time according to Scarlett. She said, Jesse loved a few things, in particular, wax teeth,

army men, and yellow ducks. The symbol for Scarlett’s choose love moment is a little yellow duck inside of a blue heart.

The Choose Love Movement is centered around the idea of choosing love and forgiveness over anger and hostility.

After her son’s death Scarlet went into a depression, as any mother would. She could not get what had happened to her son out of her mind.

“I thought I was gonna die, I didn’t think I was gonna live, I didn’t know how I was going In that deep sadness, Scarlett discovered the strength that she never thought she had.

“I realized for the first time in my entire life I was without fear. If you think about it I experienced the worst thing that a parent could ever fear, and feel and I didn’t care if I lived or died,” said Scarlett.

She soon discovered PTG (post-traumatic growth), when an individual experiences a traumatic it reshapes their character in some form. Resilience and

courage emerge through the suffering.

After she acknowledged the inner strength she had gained from her loss, Scarlett Lewis put together the Choose Love Movement in Jesse’s name. She has gone around the country spreading her beliefs of choosing love and positive thoughts from kindergartens to prisons.

In 2014 Scarlett wrote a book titled “Nurturing, Healing, Love.” which was inspired by a chalkboard message her son left his family. Very randomly Jessie Lewis wrote on a chalkboard in their home “Nurturing, Healing, Love.” His mother, to this day, has no idea why he wrote this, she believes he had a spiritual awakening.

Since then she has been spreading those three simple words that her son left her. Scarlett has three strong beliefs on why choosing love is the way to go. “We are all connected through suffering, we all want to love and be loved; it’s a universal need as important as water, and lastly we are all here to help one another.”

PTK Holds Thanksgiving Day of Service



A gathering of PTK members. //Facebook

ADAM GRASSANI
FEATURES EDITOR

The Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society held their own Thanksgiving Day of Service at the Christ Church and Hackensack Shelter on November 24, 2016. Students who volunteered participated in a day where they prepared and served food to the homeless. Volunteers from PTK, The Stem Union Club and SGA began the day by sorting out beverages, including juices, waters and sodas. They followed up by carving a total of 15 trays of ham. Lastly, they prepared and carved the turkeys.

The Day of Service was not just a one-day event, however. It began with two turkey transports, one on Friday, November 18, and the other on Tuesday, November 22. With cooperation from Family Promise from Bergen County, the PTK had approximately 30 turkeys transported to Bergen from the culinary department. At Bergen, the turkeys were cooked and then transported to the shelter to be served.

“I think that it correlates in the sense that seeing the people line up, getting their food, helping them makes you feel thankful,” said Agatha Rodolfa, one of the Directors of Service at Phi Theta Kappa, when asked about how Thanksgiving and the event relate to each other. “For me that’s Thanksgiving. Giving back to the people and appreciating what you have as well as helping those who are in need.”

The Christ Church was decorated to fit Thanksgiving. It had tables spread across the area with Thanksgiving themed centerpieces in the middle of each individual table. The tables also had Thanksgiving colored tablecloths over them; colors such as brown, orange, yellow and red. The room also had decorations on it’s windows and hanging from the roof.

“The greatest thing about it is looking at it as a whole because we started with nothing,” said Agatha. “We had so many mess right here with dessert and stuff like that. But then during 2 pm where it started, I just looked at it and it looked really

great. Like you can really see the contrast from 7 am to 2 pm.”

The evening ended with the group sharing a group hug. Students were also able to participate in karaoke and the group even did the manikin challenge. The group of volunteers then went on to serve the prepared food to the homeless and asking if they needed anything else. The homeless people lined up with their families and were very thankful.

“Like I can’t even imagine we have so many homeless people,” said Agatha. “Considering that Bergen is number 1 in counties in New Jersey. So it really surprised me because there’s so many people that came here. Like 300 people. I was so scared. I was like ‘Do we have many food? Do we have enough? Did we count it right? Is this right?’ At the end of the day, I just see myself smiling because the kids right there; they were asking for milk and hot chocolate and stuff like that. I realized how lucky we are. That we are here in college. We have the food we need.”



*It's a Vegan
Holiday
pg. 6*

*Barefoot Man
of BCC
pg. 7*



NEWS

The Torch

Safety Pins: A Symbol of Baseline Passive Activism

SIMON SHKRELI
STAFF WRITER

Expressive political opinions have been something of a commodity within the people of the United States and beyond this year, especially due to (as well as the results) of the 2016 Presidential Election. With most people politically split between two major political agendas, tensions have risen due to the election of Donald Trump as President. Those who disagree with the promises or supporters of his campaign have showed disgust and disapproval of President-Elect Trump's views on various political concepts, as well as his own personal character.

For the last few weeks, since the election of Trump, millions across the country have expressed disapproval of our President-Elect in various way. Civil (as well as Violent) protests have emerged, Planned Parenthood volunteer applications and donations have been rising significantly in protest of Vice President-Elect Mike Pence's views on defunding Planned Parenthood for providing abortion, and the hashtag #NotMyPresident has become a symbol of denouncing our President-Elect.

Whether or not one may agree with the electoral victory for Donald Trump, this election, directly or indirectly, affects every citizen, current and future. Some of those who have feared Trump's presidency are those who have been felt discriminated because of Trump's opposing views on immigration, especially those of Muslim descent, as well as Mexican origin of have immigrated to the United States illegally. Also fearing this Presidency are members of the LGBTQ community, who have complete disagreement with the campaigns conservative views. For those individuals who have that fear in their political future, a subtle but symbolically fitting sign of protest, inspired by the Brexit, has emerged.

Enter the Safety Pin Movement, the



*The Safety Pin: A new symbol of peace?
//Simon Shkreli*

mutated, yet expressive way to defend for those affected by the fear of recent political shifts. The premise is simple: attaching a safety pin to your shirt or jacket to signify that you are an ally to anyone and everyone who wants to be reached out. Simple, yet, powerful, the Safety Pin movement speaks louder than any aggressive statement, without saying a single word. It signifies acceptance to everyone, affected by public outrage or fear or not.

But the chronicle of the Safety Pin Movement did not start in the United States after

President-Elect Trump's victory. In fact, the United States' version of the

moment took a page of inspiration of opposers of the Brexit results.

In June 2016, the British population decided that it's country should leave the European Union. This British Exit (aka the Brexit) has been commonly motivated for not only potential benefit in economical standpoint, but also in fear of outside involvement.

In fact, since the Brexit, the nation experienced a 57 percent rise in reported xenophobic incidents. In response to these incidents, a woman who is identified on Twitter as @cheeahs sent out a social media stand against these incidents, and made the suggestion of the Safety Pin Movement: "So I have an idea similar to

#ridewithme to help protect those being abused as result of Brexit referendum - but I need your help...I'd like to come up with something that can be made by anybody anywhere to pin on their jacket or coat to signify that they are an ally...I quite like the idea of just putting a safety pin, empty of anything else, on your coat. A literal SAFETY pin!"

Shortly after, many of Britain's opposers of brexit xenophobia have tweeted out picture of themselves wearing safety pins including medical professionals, celebrities such as Patrick Stewart, along with everyday Britons, who are in collective support of those who have feared being feared, Since the election of Donald Trump, a Presidential Candidate who had supporters of racism, including a sponsorship from the KKK, many opposers of his election have been inspired by the Safety Pin Movement in Britain, and have decided to follow along in this silent stand for the fear collectives as well. Most notable to the American safety pin movement is several writers of the upcoming Star Wars movie, Rogue One. One of the writers, Chris Weitz, tweeted out "Please note that the Empire is a white supremacist (human) organization." Luke Skywalker himself, actor Mark Hamill, also showed support for the American version of the movement,

What makes this movement distinct from other United States political protests is its volume: this movement is certainly not consisting of loud chants and picket signs, but it does have its message, which is as loud. Some people who support the concept of the movement do not support the execution of a silent protest. One Reddit User, Kaitlin4475, wrote "I think the pin is another stupid trend to make people think that they're taking a stand and doing something. We don't have to wear a pin to fight oppression, we can do a lot more with just being visible."

California Attempts to Secede From The US

CHRISTOPHER MOLINA
STAFF WRITER

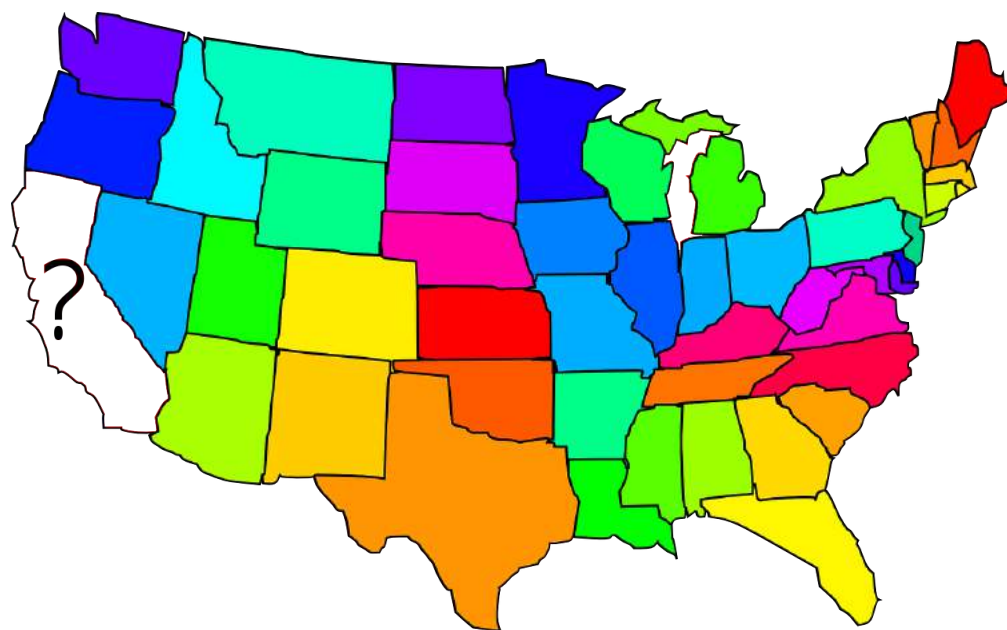
With the election results of Donald Trump becoming president of the United States, numerous protests across the country have come up, and California has experienced rallies calling for the state to secede from the country. A state that has a GDP of over 2 trillion dollars, and if compared to countries in the rest of the world, will be 6th largest economy according to data compiled by Bloomberg. With regarding Trump's harsh comments towards Mexicans, and released figures from the U.S. Census Bureau shows California holds a large Mexican population numbering at 14.99 million, edging out the 14.92 million whites as the largest ethnic group in the state. Which many see as the backbone for why people are calling for to leave the union.

California is known for many years as a democratic stronghold, and since its formation in 1850 there have been 200 succession proposals. With a demographic different from the rest of the United States and a sustainable economy, California will be able to survive on its own. According to the campaign's unofficial manifesto, the state suffers from the federal government's trade policies and pays more in federal tax, than it receives in federal funding, all the

while the state itself is in debt of \$443 billion, where some state officials call it the "Wall of Debt".

But even with the obstacles the state has, a succession is harder than it looks. This passage will require two-thirds of votes from congress, along with the approval of at least 38 states in favor. A possibility that experts say is unlikely. What's more the YES California campaign is still considered to be small, with only about three thousand supporters. But the campaign has gained momentum since Trump was elected to office. With some twitter follower increasing from six hundred and fifty to just fifteen thousand in just a few months.

Most notably Hyperloop One cofounder Shervin Pishevar, who tweeted before the results of the presidential election stating that, "If Trump wins I am announcing and funding a legitimate campaign for California to become its own nation. Most patriotic thing to do is to questioning [sic] idea of a federation of states & calling a new constitutional convention for systemic change." with that Campaigners are self-assured that their state's secession is a real possibility.



California has a higher GDP than some countries. //Wikimedia

Keep Calm and Carry On!

FERNANDO VAZQUEZ
STAFF WRITER

Everyone knows the story and the news headlines that read “Donald Trump: President Elect!” Many read those with mixed emotions. Some people are happy and excited, others sad and depressed. Little by little, we’re facing the side effects.

There have been reports of kindergarten students bullying some classmates for their different background. The children have been using offensive jokes with derogatory terms to accomplish this. There were even reports of children getting scared and concerned about their personal problems, whether they’re not going to see their parents again, which some reports shows some students are avoiding school and which made the children’s innocence fade away.

“It’s a so sad listening and reading about this, we cannot tolerate this behavior anywhere, instead respect one another,” said Prof. Eileen Purcell.

Sadly, there’s been Police blotter reports that there has been serious accusations and serious incidents of racial profiling and hate crimes taking place nationwide. Bergen County Officer Mike Malakikis commented at the student centre “We take seriously of this terrible and atrocious actions.”

With so much horror, there’s been atrocious behavior especially on our neighboring Colleges and Universities reporting. “If you see any intolerance, and disrespectful behavior, whether it’s vandalism or verbally, please reported it to the school officials,” said Lieutenant Ed Zingg of public safety.

While the Hillary Clinton supporters and the Democratic National Committee blame the third party supporters and the write-in ballots, while third party supporters blame the DNC for cheating and playing dirty, BCC Student and Hillary Clinton Supporter Daniel Ramos, stated “There’s no need to blame, the



The polarizing election has sparked discourse. //Wikimedia

beauty of this country is democratic. You can vote for whomever you feel what’s in your conscience or if not, To bad!”

BCC student, Santos Garcia said “We have to be united! In these times of trouble, we cannot leave, we have to stay. If we leave, we will be cowards, we can’t give up!” Garcia went onto mention Trump’s idea of building the wall. “There’s no need to run away and there’s no need to leave. The only way to stop some people that supported Trump and trying to threaten us is that we have to ignore them and to accomplish our goals; live with our lives, that’s the way we’re going to defeat them, with silence and live with our own lives without anybody interfering.”

Multicultural Robert McKnight commented of this serious situation

“We have to be united in this tough times. Seeing this atrocities happening is making our beloved country backwards then forward.

But the fact that Donald Trump got elected shows there is a big problem in the USA.” Since, the President elect Donald Trump won the majority votes at the most impoverished neighborhoods in the Southern United State communities.

“No matter if Hillary Clinton would had been elected or if Donald Trump was elected. They won’t solve our personal problems, our pay our student loans.”

says Roberto Da Silva, BCC student, disagreeing on both candidates. “It’s been weeks and months of this nightmare for some people and for others “the change” has begun. We Will See?” Da Silva concluded.

How should parents speak to their

children about these concerns? Purcell commented wonderful, essential important keys if a child is feeling different.

“We have pay attention to our children and listen to them. If they pee in bed, if they give temper tantrums to avoid on going to school, if the children are eating less or doesn’t want to eat dinner or their not social as they use to be, there’s something wrong that we should talk to them,” Purcell said.

If the child mentioned a serious situation at school, speak with the school administration and principal on the next morning, reported to the school principal and school administration.” “Avoid talking about personal problems in front of children which make them more worried and concern than focusing on their school work and their activities.”

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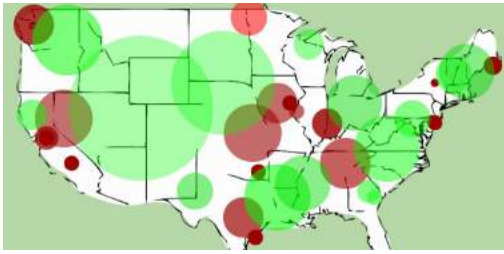
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Green Dot Urges BCC
to Action
pg. 12

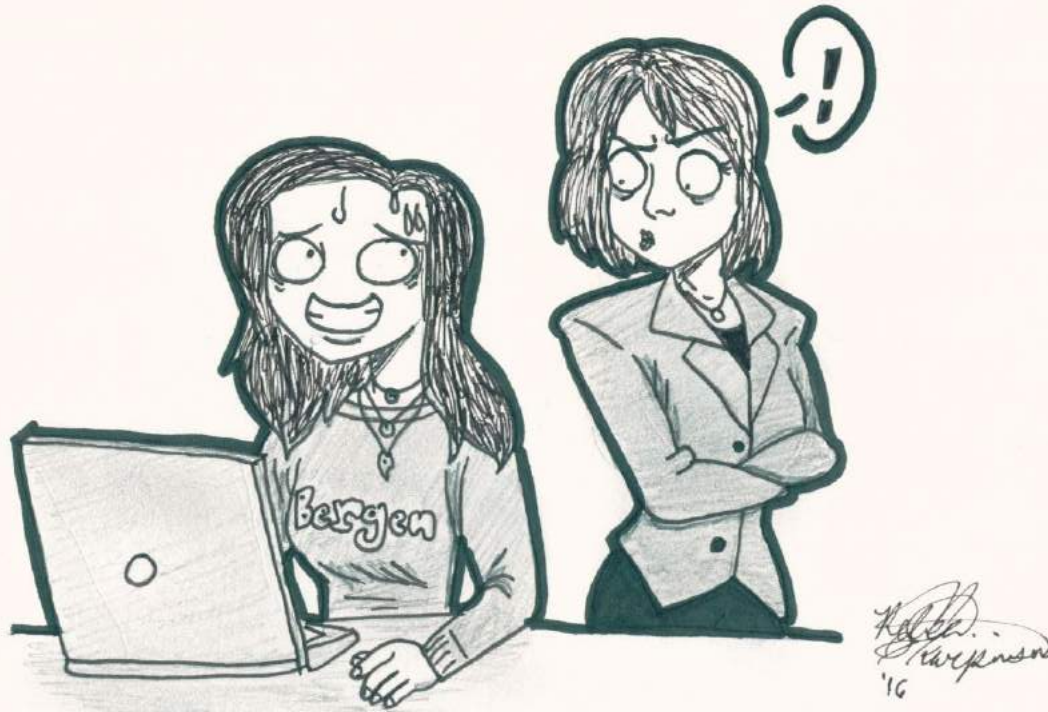


Transgender Awareness
Day Comforts BCC
pg. 8

OPINIONS

The Torch

Are you an Everlasting Child?



REBECCA KARPINSKI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

You'd think that a college student who has a car, a job and good grades would have so much freedom and a thriving college life away from their home, right? The answer to this for many college students is "yes."

In some cases, however the answer is "no." Students who may have been overly sheltered throughout their younger years often have difficulty in becoming trusted and responsible adults in their parents' eyes. For instance, these students say they feel like a child in many ways still. They feel they have little to no life experience and come across as awkward in certain situations, like a little kid around "grown ups" whenever they are in different social settings with people their own age.

For many college students who commute to school, they start to feel like the house they live in becomes only a place where they just commute to and from school or work and it no longer feels like it is their "home" anymore. It's just a place for them to

sleep at night and a place for shelter.

According to a study in the 2013 Journal of Child and Family Studies, "College students who have very sheltering parents have been reported to have higher levels of depression and use of antidepressant medications." The research indicates that this type of parenting often interferes with the development of independence and self confidence. As a result, sheltering at this stage in their life can ultimately lead to increased dependence on their parents and a decreased ability to complete tasks without their parents hovering over their shoulder all the time.

Being overly sheltered doesn't allow children to grow into trusted and self reliant adults. Parents are supposed to be teaching their children to be useful adults, not to be everlasting children. Sheltered children also have a reputation for going wild once they are finally left off the leash. They can't handle the freedoms they're suddenly given because they have been sheltered for so long. They first need to

learn how to handle their own money, sexuality, occupational responsibilities, alcohol consumption and so many other life lessons in order to deal with the realities of adulthood on their own and to become trusted individuals.

There are many ways you can gain your parents' trust. This is something that can be very difficult to do, but it is still very possible. Here are three ways to help the situation:

You should talk to them about yourself. Be completely open and honest with your parents. Show them that you are responsible and mature enough to handle certain types of situations by talking to them about those situations and the decisions and actions you made about those situations. Over time they will trust you more and more each day and eventually all trust will be restored.

You should also talk to them about them. If you feel as though something they are saying or doing is unfair, simply speak up and explain to them your reasons and how you feel about it. If they argue with you, give it more

time and try again later.

You might want to consider talking to a counselor. You can go by yourself or go with your parents and talk things out together in just a few short sessions. Respectfully share your opinion if you disagree, but don't fight fire with fire by being confrontational. That never fixes anything. Odds are, they will listen to you because at the end of the day, they still love you and care about you and what you have to say.

If you believe you are a sheltered college student, please know that you are not alone and there are a lot more people out there that are just like you; more than you realize. The most important thing you need to know and keep reminding yourself of as you grow into adulthood is that all of this is only temporary. There will eventually come a day where you'll be all moved out of your parents' house and out on your own where you will have all the responsibilities and freedoms in the world that you desire. It may seem like forever from now, but it will come. You are not alone.

Though over 18, many students who commute don't feel like adults. //Rebecca Karpinski

Self-Paced or Self-Effort

DAVID PEREZ
STAFF WRITER

Depending on your math skills and major you may or may not take that many classes in mathematics. For those that struggle in mathematics you may end up taking a hybrid course in math. This class is half online and the other half is showing up for class to take notes and do homework for a certain amount of time. This is known as a self-paced class. Students have until late December to complete the class with five tests to complete. Go to class each week and keep working at home unless you finished early. Some of the chapters are very long and

require a couple of hours to complete.

This can be seen as a massive benefit to the class, you determine your grade. You could in theory, redo an entire section just to get a 100 on the questions and on the chapter review and test. However, this is all just a theory and the only factor in this is time. Some of the few things that separate those from everyone else is how much time you put into the class not in the classroom but outside the classroom. It is recommend that you spend time outside the class to keep up so one doesn't fall behind with all the work. It's recommend but it feels as if it's mandatory due to the amount of

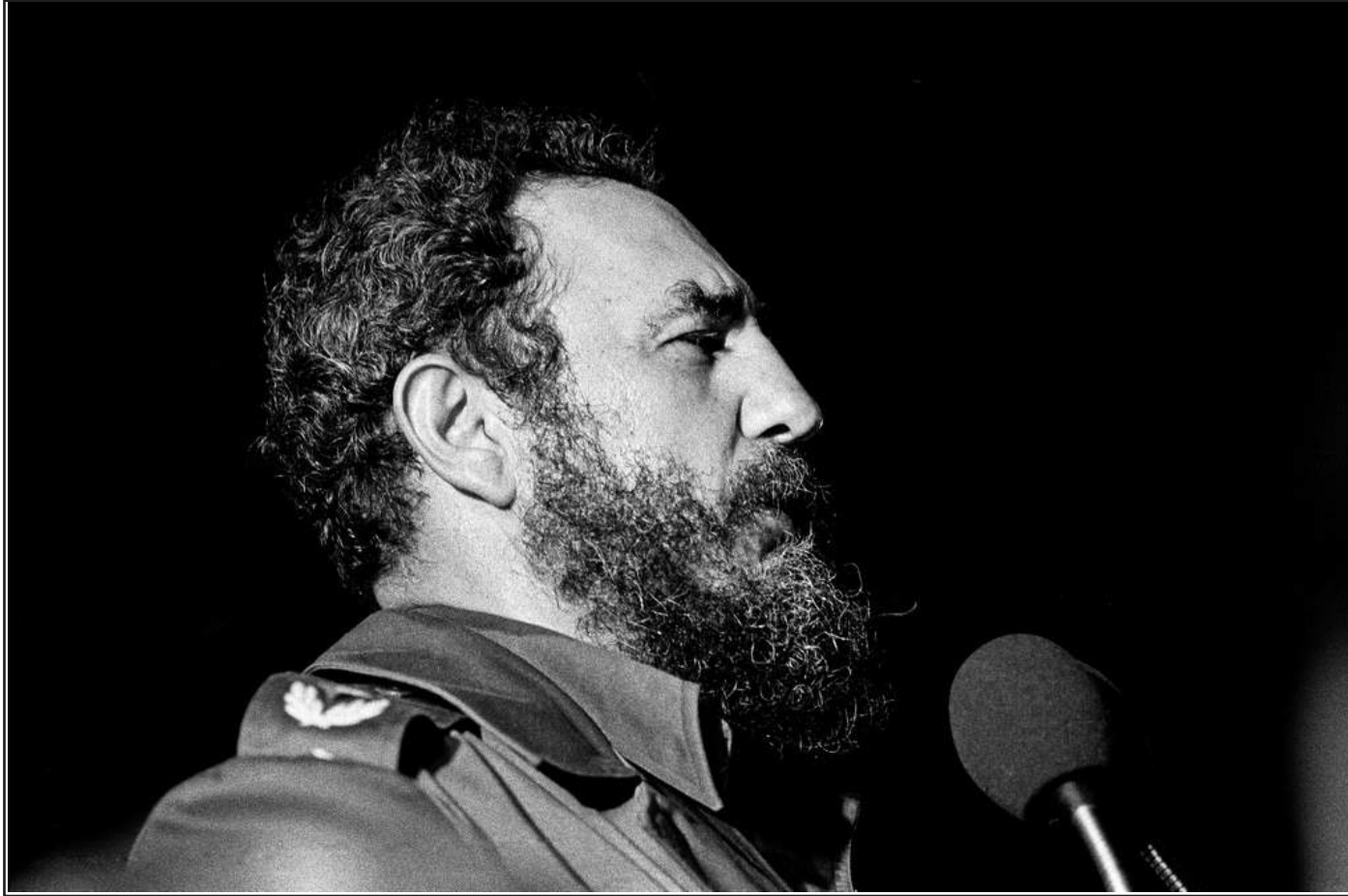
time necessary to keep up.

Another problem would be someone's lack of prowess in math and being left behind with all the work. This is where all the extra time outside the class comes into play, one may spend an entire weekend and only get through a chapter or two. Furthermore, if you take too long and if you think that you're going to fail the class, don't worry. There is a "fail-safe" so to speak, if you are able to pass the first three tests and have attended a majority of the classes you will get an extension of two or so weeks to finish up the class. Now if you still by some odd miracle don't pass the class this time then that

is when you will fail the class.

Granted, the computer lab in the technology building where this class is held has another lab next to it where you can go whenever to get help and do the tests. Looking for other self paced classes are hard seeing that when I looked I was only able to find another class and that was writing 101 or writing 201. These two could be considered self pace but from what I was able to gather they aren't at the same level as math self paced. So when you enroll into one of these classes be mindful of what you're getting into.

Hating Castro is My Heritage



For over half a century, Fidel Castro was in office. //Flickr

GEORGE R. GUERRA

CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

Fidel Castro existed in my life as a specter. He was something akin to the boogeyman; only spoken of in hushed whispers by my older relatives. I think their portrayal of the man in that way stemmed in part from the fact that they felt there was a mythic quality to him. It was as if Fidel Castro had swept into Cuba overnight and taken all that they'd defined their lives by. As a child, all I actually knew about Castro was that he had a beard, and when I pictured him, I envisioned a cartoon devil. I'm somewhat chagrined to say that was still the case until I was about 14 years old.

As time went by, I grew older and

(I'd like to imagine) more mature; and with time came the deaths of many of my older Cuban relatives. One such relative was, my great-aunt Angela "Mama Lina" Linares, who died early last month. She was like a second mother to my father when he arrived in this country as an 8-year-old in 1972. Towards the end of her life, she suffered from a shortness of breath that she "wouldn't wish on Fidel Castro." Apparently she didn't have to, since Castro died 23 days after her. Castro was over 90 years old at the time of his death, as was Mama Lina. With Mama Lina's passing, I felt as if I'd lost a piece of my heritage. She was a remnant of a Cuba that was no more. A Cuba that held a place in my family's collective memory treated with the sort of wistful

reverence one can only give the land that they used to call home. It's a homeland I will never see, because if it ever existed, soon it will only be in the memories of the dead, and the stories they shared with children like me.

Hating Fidel Castro is a part of my heritage, but as I've matured, I've come to realize that the Fidel Castro I've been culturally conditioned to hate is a fictional character. The Castro that I hate is a cartoon devil in army fatigues and a great big beard. I've learned to separate that image of Castro from the man himself. My feelings for the real Fidel Castro are mixed. He was a successful revolutionary, and there's a romantic quality to that which has widespread appeal. There's something to be said for a man that can spend

well over half a century being a thorn in the side of a superpower just 90 miles north of him. Fidel Castro was a great man, however (to paraphrase Churchill) he may not have been a good man. Perhaps he was once, and perhaps sacrifices had to be made in the name of his revolution. Maybe he believed that the seizures of property, and imprisonments, and executions were sacrifices committed in the service of a higher power. It doesn't matter anymore. As irony would have it, Castro now lives on in the same way as my family's Cuba; a polarizing myth and a matter of perspective.

What Do Disney Princesses Mean to You?

LESHAY JONES

STAFF WRITER

I don't know about you but I have learned a lot of my life lessons from Walt Disney movies.

"The Lion King" taught me that you can't run from the past. Peter Pan taught me that all you need in life is faith, trust and that good old pixie dust.

No matter how cheesy and cute the movie, there is always some kind of message that can be taken away. These messages can be extremely influential, especially for children. As a little girl, I was influenced very much so, by Disney princesses just as many other kids.

My favorite Disney princess was always Ariel from "The Little Mermaid." She taught me that you should never let anyone stop you from following your dreams and true love. She was driven and determined and got what she wanted in the end.

Another one of my personal favorites is Princess Tiana from "The Princess and the Frog." This movie was record breaking because Tiana was the first African-American princess in Disney history.

Tiana taught me that wishing on stars will only take you halfway there. The rest all depends on you and your hard work.

After asking around, I found that a lot of people love Mulan. The lesson that we get from her strays from any other traditional Disney story of true love.

Instead, we get the story of a woman living in a misogynistic society where the only man in her life, her father, is forced to go into war with an injury. Mulan defies all odds and takes her father's place by pretending to be a man. We learn from this that women can be just as good, if not even better, than men.

The movie "Frozen" also took a similar route in the message that it wanted to send to children. Instead of true love's kiss thawing Anna's frozen heart, it was her act of true love, saving her sister Elsa, that really saved her life. This taught us that you do not need a prince charming to have "true love."

One thing that I find that stays consistent through all the Disney



Many young girls aspire to be like Disney Princesses. //Rebecca Karpinski

movies that I have seen is that everyone finds their true love. You know, that whole "they all lived happily ever after" bit.

Even though these happily ever afters are extremely unrealistic for a lot of people, I feel like a big chunk

of us are, still looking for it. We still subconsciously hope that these fairy tales somehow come true.

Think about it, I'd be a liar if I say that I have never thought about a Prince Charming sweeping me off of my feet and carrying me off into the sunset at

some point.

We take these lessons from these fairy tale princesses and apply them to our lives a lot of times. This just goes to show how much they influenced us.

The Torch

THE TORCH, a member of the Associated Collegiate Press and the College Media Association, is the official student newspaper of Bergen Community College. The purpose of THE TORCH is to report on the events at BCC and the local community, and to offer the BCC community a forum for expression. The opinions expressed in THE TORCH are not necessarily those of THE TORCH. All the materials submitted to THE TORCH become property of THE TORCH.

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OPINION PIECES

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Welcoming Back Noura Dakka



Sometimes you get really homesick, even if it's just Jersey. //Noura Dakka

INESS RABAH
CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

Noura Dakka is a BCC student and former Torch member that has a history of excellence in several editor positions, and is a winner of a New Jersey Press Foundation award for her opinion writing. Just as she assumed her long-time dream position of editor-in-chief, disaster struck. Dakka discovered that she had several cancerous tumors throughout her body.

Dakka was diagnosed with carcinoid cancer in the lungs, a rare form of cancer. Being her best friend, I was the first person she told. I was in total shock when I received the call, however, I put on my bravest voice to calm her down and assure her that everything would be just fine. After all, our country has some of the best medical equipment and experts in the world, and our friends are the more supportive people we know.

"They were my family. If it weren't for them I wouldn't have recovered as fast as I did," she said in regards to an operation in which she lost three-fourths of her left lung. "They were there every step of the way. I didn't feel sick with them. They were always visiting me, bringing me gifts, and making sure I was comfortable. They went above and beyond to make sure I was going to be okay. I was so lucky to have them in my life."

After a rather physically painful recovery, Dakka made the decision to go back to Lebanon, where her mother resided, so that she could help take care of her. That brought about uncertainty regarding the fate of the Torch.

"I was put in a position where I had to choose what was best for the Torch. I could have taken online classes to remain a student at BCC and continue to be EIC overseas, but that doesn't do them justice. The Torch needed someone to be there in person and I wasn't going to be able to do that. I was sad that I had to give it up, however, I knew it was in good hands."

Dakka had an equally supportive group of people awaiting her in Lebanon. She has been trying out treatments, and is hopeful, awaiting reports on their effectiveness. After five long months, Dakka has come back to us, and will once again spread her beautiful charisma to everyone around her. When asked about her future with the paper, she replied, "I definitely plan on going back to the Torch. I mean I put my heart and soul into it. I'm not just going to leave it like that. Although I would have loved to have an editor's position, I'm perfectly fine with being a staff writer and still write as much as I can."

Dakka's experiences, passion for journalism and overall inspirational positive outlook will no doubt benefit not only the paper, but everyone who comes in contact with her. Welcome back Noura Dakka. You've been missed.

It's a Vegan Holiday

KARINA QUINTERO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

With all the holidays, the most amazing time of the year is now! The gathering of friends, family, and all the food you can eat... unless you're a vegan. I have been a vegan for two months now and being the only vegan in my family comes with its own obstacles. There's turkey, chicken, ham, and various other meat concoctions everywhere and that's not even mentioning all the delicious desserts you can't have. That cake or cookie was made with eggs, milk and butter which come from animals so, can't have that.

Family gatherings can be great if you don't think about all the food your family is cooking and you are well prepared. Bringing your own food means no one will take your food and there will be more food for you. While everyone is fighting for the last batch of food, you can just enjoy your meal in peace and the next day when everyone isn't feeling too well from all the food they ate, you'll feel energized.

Going out with friends isn't an easy trip. While pizza has been ordered for your group of friends you're left with an empty box of hopes. Vegans love pizza too! So now you're stuck with the salad again.



Sometimes vegans can feel left out. //Karina Quintero

I guess pasta works, but who doesn't love pizza. Then comes the desserts...flan, ice cream (even though it's freezing outside), cupcakes and chocolate bars for everyone, except you. Once again, you're stuck watching everyone else enjoy their sugary deliciousness.

Now that I've pretty much put a big, gray cloud over everything that I believe in and

your thoughts of possibly becoming a vegan... Here's a whole lot of sunshine! There are a lot of places that have vegan/vegetarian options. Going to a family gathering isn't so bad. I like to get my meatless meat at Target which, has a whole section of affordable plant-based goodies. Pizza with friends doesn't have to be the saddest experience. You can go ahead and

order a veggie pizza with no cheese..., but if that still sound like a nightmare, there are pizza places, like Blaze Pizza, that offer vegan pizza. Let's not forget desserts, my personal favorite part of the day, there are so many options for vegan desserts, like Oreos, Ben and Jerry's, and so many more. If you're still thinking this is too hard; there are plenty of apps and pages, like

PETA, peat2, vegan.org, etc, that give you advice on where to find food and even the meals offered at any restaurant for vegans (it's not all salads, I promise). Not only can you eat whatever you are craving, feel more energized, and feel healthier, but you will know that you did your part in helping save an animal's life.



First Place Awards: General Excellence, Layout & Design, Editorial Writing, Biography/Personality Profile, Enterprise/Investigative Reporting, Photography, 2014-2015
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FEATURES

The Torch

SANTA PAWS COMES TO TOWN

STEPHANIE CRUZ
STAFF WRITER

Most of us consider our cherished pets as family members. From dressing them up with elaborate costumes and accessories to taking them to their weekly salon treatment, they demand more high maintenance than a 5-year old toddler. Truly, American culture values companionship with pets. So like any parent taking their precious kids to see Santa for the first time, pet parents were given the chance to get their beloved pooches to pose with the jolly old fellow last December 3, 2016.

All was merry and bright when over 40 furry creatures decked the halls of the Ciarco Learning Center in Hackensack, dressed up in their festive outfits. From Yorkies, Pugs, Maltipoos to Siberian Huskies and German Shepherds, pet owners brought in their four-legged children to cozy into Santa's lap for a photo. They also get to snag a printed photo of their furry friend's adorable moment with Santa for a small price,

a heartfelt donation to the Bergen County Animal Shelter also known as the BCAS.

The fundraiser was a wonderful way to get the community involved as some of the pets that dropped by were also either adopted from animal shelters or were rescued strays. Thousands of animals are being cared for in shelters every year instead of being left to survive on the streets. Others are being abandoned by former owners who can no longer secure a home for them. Shelters often struggle to accommodate all of these homeless pets that's why their work is profound and critically important. The BCAS alone houses over 400 rescue dogs and cats and the event was a way to help raise funds for the shelter.

The event was sponsored by Bergen Community College in collaboration with Parisian Beauty Academy as an animal charity fundraiser. All donations and proceeds went to the BCAS and the Ramapo Bergen Animal Refuge.



Furry friends deck the halls of the Ciarco Learning Center.
// Stephanie Cruz

Barefoot Man: An Interview With Bergen Community College's Foot Nudist

THEA OH
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

There is a rumor in town: somewhere, wandering the halls of Bergen Community College, is a guy who never wears shoes. Occasionally, students might catch a glimpse of him and say "it's that barefoot guy".

Daniel Szetmiklosy is his name, and from the ankles up, he looks like any other nineteen year-old college kid: curly brown hair, half-rimmed glasses, black zip-up hoodie and a worn-in pair of blue jeans. He has keen eyes and a gleeful smile that reaches his temples.

Upon scanning his feet, they are indeed as naked as the rumors say. Though it had been raining all afternoon, Daniel is unfazed by the dampness of the ground. Heat and cold pose little challenge to his feet, tempered into a tough hide over months of barefootedness.

It started on a whim, he says, an exercise in personal freedom of sorts. When Daniel entered his first semester at Bergen last September, he recalls thinking, "it's a free world, like, who cares. If you don't gotta wear em, you don't gotta wear em." Personal expression, he believes, "is what marks us as individuals".

"In terms of feeling, I'm more concrete, connected to the earth," he gesticulates. "You're more in tune and grounded with the earth itself", which helps stimulate his meditation and movie writing. He laments that, though people are essentially made from the same materials as everything else in the cosmos, most have fallen out touch with nature. We "don't even feel our own earth at times".

Daniel and the wilderness are like two peas in a pod. Name a local hiking location and he likely knows the terrain by feel. "It's just nice being out in nature and all" he shrugs "I like to hang out with my guitar." Some days, he will hike around for hours, enjoying his thoughts and the greenery.

The barefoot lifestyle does not come without pain, however. Recalling his early days of shoeless travel, he laughs, "at first, hell yeah, it was painful". For the most part, he's avoided the usual dangers of the road, like glass shards, rusty nails, and dangerous debris, but his feet are far from untested.

One time, "When I was in the woods--I was with my father--we were walking on this really rocky path and I looked down and I was bleeding. I had

shed off my pinky toenail.

"My father then asked me, 'do you wanna keep going?' And I was just like, uh... yeah. Just kinda washed it off so he wouldn't notice and kept going" for several more miles.

Although Daniel chooses to spend the majority of his time shoeless, he is not opposed to footwear. He wears shoes while working, and socks or sandals make occasional appearances in his life, like when it is raining or snowing. "It's a common sense thing, right?"

His Chevy Impala has a front bench seat, a sight so rare it immediately hearkens back to an older America where cars had no seatbelts and drive-in movie theaters were still in vogue. In case of emergency, Daniel has tossed a pair of flip flops and sneakers onto the backseat.

When he flips on the CD player, John Lennon's 1969 live single "Give Peace a Chance" begins to drift through the car speakers. It's the sound of a bygone era, remembered wistfully by some as a time when anything went and countercultural expression soared at an all-time high. Woodstock reverberated with the electricity of Jimi Hendrix's Stratocaster, politics



Szetmiklosy feels more in tune with the Earth. // Thea Oh

were rocked by anti-war protests, and the smell of urban rebellion filled the air as, somewhere out there, Yoko Ono and John Lennon huddled in bed naked.

It's easy to see how Daniel would have fit right into such a time. Sitting completely relaxed in the front seat, arm draped around the the headrest and a bare foot hinged on one knee, he might start a train of thought by explaining the sensation of being spiritually in touch with your ego, only to change course and begin talking about the Suite

Life of Zack and Cody in one moment, and Socrates and Libertarianism in the next. Some would call him eccentric or a modern-day hippie, and while it is true that his barefooted quirk sets him apart from the crowd at times, for the most part, he doesn't mind the stares or double takes he receives. "It makes me happy, I guess, you know, just to see that people are intrigued [...] like they don't seem to mind"

At the end of the day, "I'm just a regular human being".

Transgender Awareness Day Comforts BCC



“I’d rather be in danger than be someone I’m not and that doesn’t always translate to other people.”

-Charlie Leppert, P.R.I.D.E Club Secretary

STEPHANIE CRUZ

STAFF WRITER

From limited job opportunities and harassment to violence and discrimination, the transgender and gender non-conforming people are among the most vulnerable communities in the country. In a collaborative effort to highlight and address the issues that the community faces, the Third Annual Transgender Awareness Day was held at Bergen Community College (BCC) last November 17, 2016.

The second panel discussion in the afternoon involved a representation of students from the transgender community on campus. They voiced out their inputs on what’s working and not working for them in the College as a transgender.

Charlie Leppert, P.R.I.D.E. Club secretary and BCC student said that there are great resources on campus like the P.R.I.D.E. Club and the gender neutral bathrooms are a plus. He also pointed out how certain professors would misgender him, and would continuously correct them every time.

“Classmates generally follow the lead of a professor and that can be a problem.”

Leppert continues, “but people are relatively supportive. They’re more afraid of conflict than they are afraid of me.”

There are many agencies responsible for changing the gender markers for transgender people, like birth certificates or driver’s licenses but they require proof of surgery. “I feel that it’s creepy that what may or may not be between my legs is on a government document,” says DJ Scheibe, a BCC professor. He added, “But I was hoping that there can be more flexibility like my Bergen I.D., but I acknowledge that it’s complicated.”

Surgery and medical transition however, is not easy to access. Before a referral letter is given to allow a transgender person to receive hormone replacement therapy, they are expected to see a therapist for several months.

This choice is often difficult to make and even then, the financial, legal and psychiatric aspects of it can be a frustrating process. Aaron Barthold, a student at BCC said, “since medically transitioning, I have been in a far better place than I ever was in my life. Everything became brighter and a lot better.”

There are also documented adverse

effects that the therapy entails and for Nikki Sprieser, it’s almost as if she had a female brain and was forced to live a life that was not who she really was. “That was more prone to cause severe depression.” She continues, “I would say now, I’m not anything near that. Life’s beautiful. Why would you want to end it?”

Society can put pressure to an already emotionally challenging whirlpool of risks and complications to the lives of transgender people. Schiebe recalled being in a dark place for a long period of time and not getting the support from her mother when she finally came out. “She was not supportive not for any religious reasons, but she was scared about what the world could do.”

After taking the big step of coming out, they find themselves losing the support of those people closest to them while they adjust to their authentic gender and facing discrimination in various ways. “I came out to my friends and school, before I came out to my family. I lost friends over that. People said they were supportive, but clearly weren’t.” Leppert said, “I’d rather be in danger than be someone I’m not and that doesn’t

always translate to other people.”

Understanding their child’s gender identity or transition can be some of the difficult realities that parents have to face. Through it all, acceptance from close family members is a heartwarming feeling for transgender people. “Finally this year, my grandmother sent me a birthday card with my preferred name on it which was like! Grandma! It was heartening that it happened this year,” Barthold said.

Whether intentional or unintentional, they often get questions that may or may not be comfortable to them. Some people genuinely care and support but don’t know the appropriate questions or statements. Then there are questions that are too sensitive to disclose especially if you barely know the other person.

Sprieser said, “you can’t really invite yourself into someone’s private area and expect them to give you a positive feedback.” She continues, “I went from being disrespected, to people being curious, a little too curious. I would stray from that, until at least you got to know them.”

Bergen Community College is

teeming with support groups and departments that offer resources and information to anyone who needs them. Barthold wants students who wants to come out to be honest with themselves. “Know that at least in Bergen Community College, there’s a great support system here that you can find and have easy access to.”

It’s important for gender non-conforming people transitioning to have encouragement that will enable them to advance in their educational goals especially in the current social climate that were in. Schiebe said, “It can be scary but you have your right to come out or explore your identity in your own pace.”

Being authentic to our true selves all starts with that a decision of letting fear go. Sprieser said, “stray away from fear with anything in life because that is the master manipulator that will ultimately stop you from living to the fullest.” She continued, “I overcame that fear, I’m bereft now of that feeling of what other people think of me.”



Several Lesser-Known Major Holidays Occuring in December



People gathering to pray on Bodhi Day//Wikimedia

is a Buddhist holiday that takes place on December 8, is a holiday that commemorates the day that the historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, experienced enlightenment.

Bodhi day is observed in many different places in the world, including China, Korea, Japan and Vietnam. Services and traditions vary depending on which sect of Buddhism you belong to, but all of them commemorate Gautama's achievement of nirvana and what it means to Buddhism today.

Individuals may choose to commemorate the event through additional meditation, study of the Dharma (the teachings of the Buddha), chanting of Buddhist texts, or performing kind acts towards other beings. Some Buddhists celebrate with a traditional meal of tea, cake, and readings.

Muslims, more specifically Iranians, spend December 22 celebrating the holiday called Yalda Night. This holiday, which is celebrated on the longest and darkest night of the year, is where friends and family gather to eat, drink, tell stories and jokes, dance and read the poetry of Divan-e-Hafez, whose work is very prominent and important to Iranian culture. Fruits and nuts are eaten and pomegranates and watermelons are particularly significant because the red color in these symbolizes the crimson color of dawn and the glow of life. They celebrate this holiday because it is the opening of the 40 day period of the three month winter.

There are many light-hearted superstitions that run

high on Yalda Night. These superstitions are based off of consumption. It is believed that consuming watermelons on this night will ensure the health and well-being of the individual during the months of summer by protecting him from falling victim to excessive heat or disease. There is also a belief that whoever eats carrots, pears, pomegranates, and green olives will be protected against the harmful bite of insects, especially scorpions. Eating garlic on this night is believed to protect one against pains in the joints.

Another holiday observed in December is Kwanzaa, which is a week long celebration from December 26 to January 1. This holiday is observed by African-Americans, and the celebration honors African heritage in African-American culture along with the seven principles of Kwanzaa.

Each of the seven days of Kwanzaa are dedicated to the following principles. Day One - Umoja (Unity): To strive for and to maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race. Day Two - Kujichagulia (Self-Determination): To define and name ourselves, as well as to create and speak for ourselves. Day Three - Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility): To build and maintain our community together and make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and to solve them together. Day Four - Ujamaa (Cooperate Economics): To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together. Day Five - Nia (Purpose): To make our collective vocation the

building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness. Day Six - Kuumba (Creativity): To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it. Day Seven - Imani (Faith): To believe with all our hearts in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Representations include The Seven Principles poster, the black, red, and green bendera, African books and artworks along with corn being the primary symbol for both decoration and celebratory dining.

As we start to put out our Christmas lights or our Menorahs for Hanukkah, we have to remember that even though the majority of us are celebrating Christmas or Hanukkah, December may mean something completely different to somebody else.

The idea of December being more than just Christmas is often overlooked and many celebrations go unnoticed. These religious and spiritual celebrations throughout the month of December deserve the same amount of attention, recognition and appreciation given to Christmas.

So as we head into a month filled with many different holidays, let's try to make an effort to recognize these celebrations and give these people the same recognition they give us when we celebrate Christmas or Hanukkah, it's only fair.



A tablecloth displays some Yalda favorites//Wikimedia

WILLIAM FEOLA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When most people think of December, the first two holidays that come to mind are Christmas and Hanukkah. Both are two perfectly fine answers considering they're two of the biggest holidays celebrated around the world, but what most people fail to realize is

that there is much more to the month of December than just Christmas and Hanukkah.

While December encompasses the Christian and Jewish celebrations of Christmas and Hanukkah, it also holds spiritually significant days for, Buddhists, Muslims and African-Americans. Bodhi Day, which

Native American Heritage Month

PURNASREE SAHA
STAFF WRITER

November is referred to as the Native American Heritage Month for American Indian and Alaska Native people. This is when Native people celebrate their diverse and rich traditions and cultures that represent their important contribution. About 100 years ago, Natives and non-Natives were urged to get permanently designated by the nation to have a special tradition in this month. Which will help honor the sacrifices, achievements, contributions, cultural and historical legacy and this is now part of the United States and the descendants who are Native Americans and Alaska Natives.

Starting in the early 20th century, there was a quest for a national honoring of Native Americans. The nation's American Indian and Alaska Native was celebrated during the late 1970s due to the legislation that was enacted by the Congress and annual proclamations which were designating a day, month or a week. The annual proclamations were issued by subsequent presidents. President's signature of legislation and the pass of legislation by Congress allowed "Native American Heritage Day" every year on Thanksgiving day.

During the past years, there were also many advocates who honored citizenship for the American Indians. Dr. Arthur Caswell Parker who was a noted anthropologist, historian, author, and director of the Rochester Museum in New York honored Native Americans after 1900. He was also one of the first presidents of Society for



We've begun trying to honor Native Americans.//Wikimedia

American Archeology from 1935-1936. The National Congress of American Indians, which began in 1944, and the Society of American Indian which started in 1911 were the two American Indian rights organizations in which Dr. Parker was a founder of and this is when he allowed the Native Americans to earn U.S. citizenship.

Reverend Red Fox James, who was also known as, Red Fox Skiukusha, was another Native's rights advocate during the spring of 1914. James started a 4,000 mile trek on a horse

to Washington DC because he wanted to petition the president for an "Indian Day." Therefore, the year after, James travelled by horse to different states because he wanted to earn support for US citizenship that will cause an extension to most Native Americans. James gave a presentation to the White House which was based on the endorsements of 24 governors in 1915 and then on 1919 an Indian holiday was designated on the fourth Saturday in September due to the petition of State Washington.

In the year 1992 there was a celebration for Native Americans with the help of President George Bush, who assigned the Proclamation 6407. There were public protests that allowed marks of American Indian responses in the anniversary. Conclusively, in the community it was seen as a special, long year opportunity, which held celebrations for the survival of Native people, ancestral sacrifices to America, and public education events that will help educate the general public about tribes.

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Green Dot Committee Urges BCC to Action

THEA OH

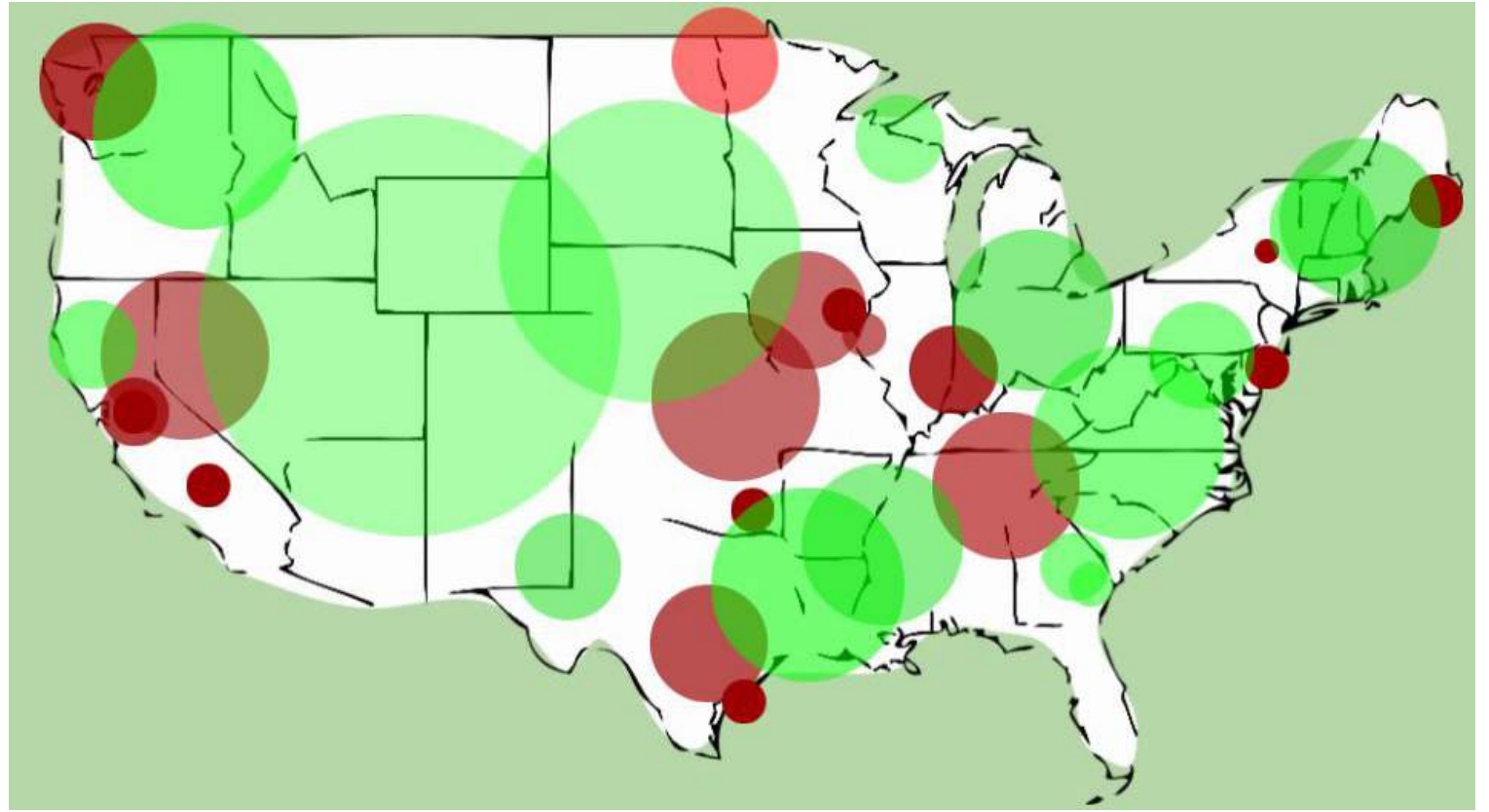
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Suppose it is nighttime and you see a drunk girl stumbling alone in the dark. Two strange men approach her and start to pull her towards their car. What do you do?

Many, if not most, would choose not to get involved. Bystander apathy is a powerful force, one that, sadly, drives us to turn a blind eye to the distress of others, even as it unfolds right in front of us.

The Green Dot Committee of Bergen Community College, however, challenges students to take action when faced with potentially victimizing behavior. Any active choice to curb violence and harm, according to Deborah Ajagbe, Green Dot coordinator and facilitator of the Violence Prevention Intervention (VIP) Center of BCC, is called a “green dot”. The philosophy behind the nationwide Green Dot movement rests on the idea that positive action is contagious. The more people help, the more others will inevitably want to join in.

Entering December, the VIP and Green Dot chapter of BCC have centered their focus on educating students about power-based violence, which encompasses such predatory behaviors as sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic abuse, and stalking. Students can visit the VIP Center, located in room A-126 of the Pitkin Building, to learn about safety planning, violence prevention, and strategies for intervention. Additionally, on-site facilitators like Ajagbe and Green Dot coordinator Sonia Wadhvani,



Bystander apathy is a powerful force. //Thea Oh

are available to guide anyone in need of help, to confidential counseling, emergency services, medical assistance, housing, and legal advocacy.

“Creating” a green dot can be as simple as making an disapproving remark to disarm the woman threatening her boyfriend in the supermarket checkout line. It can be diversive, like “accidentally” dropping a pile of papers to distract two would-be fighters, or yelling “police” at a house party gone wrong.

Meanwhile, other situations might demand

more direct intervention, like talking to the stumbling drunk girl in the above scenario and escorting her away from potential danger, calling a guy out for tampering with a girl’s drink, breaking up an act of aggression, or even asking for help when the situation is more serious than you’re equipped to deal with. Keep in mind, says Ajagbe, “your safety is always first”.

You create a green dot whenever you choose to speak up or act to help others.

A red dot is, by contrast, any action that seeks to “inflict harm or violence

against another”. Think of a map, covered in green and red dots, with a sea of neutral zones in between. The mission of the Green Dot Committee is to turn the map green, or to inspire a more widespread culture of solidarity against violence through prevention awareness.

There is a distinct optimism in Ajagbe’s voice as she impassions, “When I think of violence prevention, I think of hope”. Hope, she explains, that that victims of violence will see better days, and that there is enough empathy and courage in

bystanders to overcome the apathy, hesitation, fear, or embarrassment that too often stifles action. “Care for one another,” says Ajagbe, “not because they are family, friends, or people you know, but because we are all in this together”.

As a social movement, Green Dot can only grow with the support of the communities it serves. That means that, at the end of the day, cultural change starts with you.



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HX: THE HOTEL EXPERIENCE' – Rooms to Restaurants

ANDREW SUNG BONG KIM
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

HX: The Hotel Experience is North America's largest trade event for hotel and food service owners, executives, directors, and GMs from across the hospitality spectrum as well as manufacturers and marketers of all things hospitality. It is held annually and 2016's edition was held November 13-15 at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York City.

HX welcomed over 12,000 attendees to a show floor saturated with approximately 400 or more exhibitors. This unique and diverse collection of manufacturers and suppliers from the hospitality, food-and-beverage and technology industries featured "everything hospitality." Exhibition items included cleaning and maintenance materials, fixtures, kitchen design elements, housekeeping and laundry equipment, lighting, bedding and more back and front-of-house enhancements. The expansive show setting gave attendees an array of business-building opportunities



as they connected with leaders behind present and future hospitality solutions.

"This hotel show is actually annual convention of the American Hotel and Lodging Association and is the largest hotel convention in the country and probably in the world," said D. E. Chadwick, the professor of the Hospitality Management at Bergen Community College. "Hundreds companies come

and display their products. Many students in Colleges and Universities come to the show. This show provides new products and new services. Participants can discuss pending issues and problems through attending seminars and can meet employees who are working in different fields. Actually, I have been to this show about 44 years. I think that this show is very important hotel industry show



Several students attended HX.//Andrew Sung Bong Kim

because members get to come and see new products and new services. They get to learn new ideas and new concepts. I know that tens of thousands of people come to the show every year." He was very proud of this hotel show.

In fact, the professor highly recommended that all students who are studying in Hospitality Management in Bergen Community College should attend this hotel show

as one of the curriculum offerings. It was easier to wander around the hall because the exhibition hall was not crowded and was quiet. One of the interesting things shown was making chocolates in a seminar. The hotel show with some alcohols and refreshments that were provided in exhibition for people to enjoy.

The Game Awards Light it Up

DAVID PEREZ
STAFF WRITER

Every year there are a few things that come as a standard. Christmas, the 4th of July, Thanksgiving, and if you are a gamer, you've got The Game Awards. This year was different than last for several reasons and one of them was that this was the first time The Game Awards were live streamed to China. Another noteworthy point would be that this would be the first time the Awards were streamed via Virtual Reality. The 2 hour show began with Hideo Kojima winning the Industry Icon award. Last year, he was forbidden by his former employer Konami to attend the show and thus wasn't allowed to receive the Best Action/Action adventure game for his work on Metal Gear Solid V: The Phantom Pain.

Thankfully, this year was different, as he was happy for receiving it and prior to leaving the stage announced that his studio had a little present for them, which was a trailer for his new game Death Stranding.



The VGAs is a major event for gamers.//Pixabay

There were other World Premieres that also followed and were scattered throughout the two hour show. Some of them include Halo Wars 2, The Walking Dead: A New Frontier, and Prey. There was also new game footage for the upcoming games The Legend of Zelda: Breath Of The Wild and Mass Effect: Andromeda, the former winning Most Anticipated Game.

Overall there were 14 award categories that were

mentioned or given the entire show floor when presented. One of the more emotional categories and that was Games for Impact the award was given to That Dragon, Cancer. The person who went up to receive the award for the game was the father of the child of which the game's story was based about. After receiving the award he went on a tearful and a sincere thank you for the fact that the journey in the game is the story of his family

dealing and coping with his son's cancer.

In other areas Uncharted 4: A Thief's End won two awards and was nominated for three categories. Sadly enough Naughty Dog was not able to secure Game of the Year, which went to Overwatch, seeing that this is the last game in the Uncharted series. However, they were able to receive Best Narrative for the campaign.

Another event that

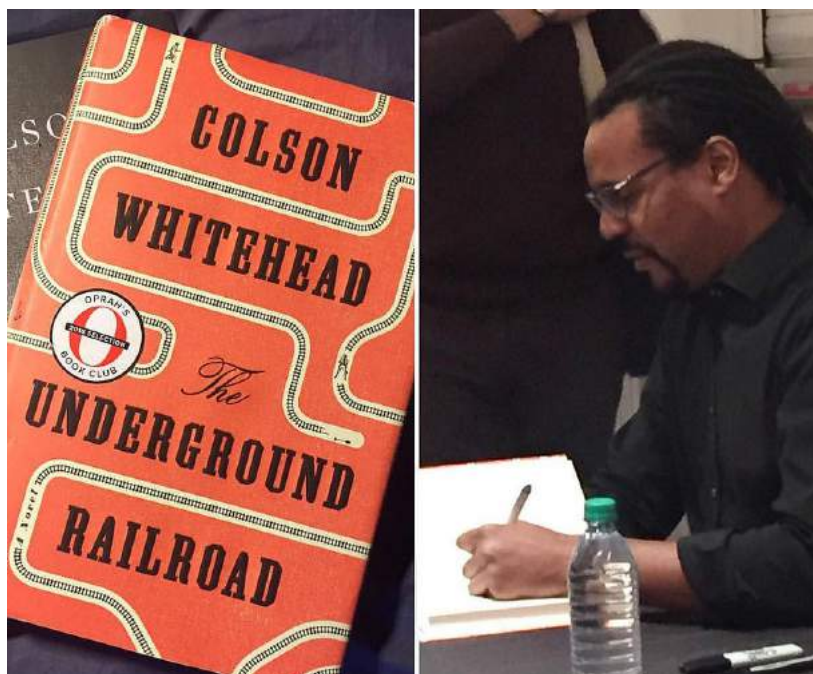
happened was the appearance of Michael Phelps and him presenting Best Esports Player. The winner of this would be Marcelo "Coldzera" David for his time playing Counter-Strike: GO. Overall, the game awards this year was interesting for showing the awards and for the first time streaming to China as well as streaming on Virtual Reality. The Game Awards is always a great time for gamers, and this year was no exception.

Colson Whitehead's The Underground Railroad

FERNANDO VAZQUEZ
STAFF WRITER

Colson Whitehead's tragic-fiction novel interprets one of the most atrocious historic moments of all humankind and in the history of the United States from the era of slavery. Whitehead's tragic-fiction novel illustrates on this with the protagonist of the novel, Cora, a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. Life is painful for all the slaves but especially for Cora, an exile even among her fellow Africans; she is coming into womanhood, where even greater pain awaits. When Caesar, a recent arrival from Virginia, tells her about the Underground Railroad, they decide to take a terrifying risk and plan the escape. The plan of escape is frustrating and yet they manage to find a station and head north, while they are being hunted.

In Whitehead's representation, the Underground Railroad is no minor metaphor as the astonishing adventure which explains in Cora's eyes, engineers and conductors operate a secret network of tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora



Colson Whitehead (right) signing his influential book.//Flickr

and Caesar's first stop is South Carolina, in a city that initially seems like a haven. However, the city's easygoing ambience masks and dangerous plan designed for its black inhabitants. Even the worse, Ridgeway, the relentless slave catcher, is close on their moves. Forced to flee again, Cora enters on a traumatic flight, state by state, seeking true freedom.

In conclusion, Whitehead wisely re-creates the story with the atrocious and unique terrors from the black people in the pre-Civil War era. Whitehead's narrative smoothly interprets the story from the Americas of the brutal importation of Africans to the disappointment and broken promises of the present day. The Underground Railroad is a portrayed adventure of one woman's brutal and dangerous will to escape the horrors of bondage and a shattering, powerful meditation on the history we all share. Whitehead's tragic-fictional novel illustrates on this novel with a powerful message which it's better to find out in the book.

The First Rumble in NYC 2016:UFC 205!

FERNANDO VAZQUEZ

STAFF WRITER

More than 20 years since New York State banned professional mixed martial arts from its arenas, the Ultimate Fighting Championship has arrived in New York City for the first time in history. On November 12, Madison Square Garden hosted UFC 7, one of the most highly anticipated events of UFC franchise, with its interesting undercard and tickets commanding anywhere between \$1000 and \$25,000. The last time an official event was held in the state was September 8, 1995, at the former Memorial Auditorium in Buffalo, New York. Headlining the night was the main fight card, UFC 205, which pitted Irish-Dubliner featherweight champion Connor McGregor against the Philadelphian former UFC lightweight champion Eddie Alvarez.

According to Ticket City, the median ticket price on the secondary market for UFC 205 was for \$971, more than \$300 more than UFC 200, which had previously held the record for median price at \$657. With UFC 205 included, four of the six most in-demand tickets on the secondary market in UFC history will be the last four McGregor fights -- UFC 194 (\$600), UFC 189 (\$502) and UFC 196 (\$420).

The night kicked off with the Women's Bantamweight Preliminary Card, which resulted in American mixed martial arts fighter Liz Carmouche's split decision victory over Katlyn Chookagian. Catch-weight class, Jim Miller from Sparta Township, NJ defeated on a unanimous decision the Brazilian native from Fortaleza Thaigo Alves. The three undercard fights consisted of Knockouts, New Jerseyan and Brazilian native Vicente Luque defeated Belal Muhammad for the Welterweight Class. Tim Boetsch defeated Rafael Natal on TKO submission winning the Middleweight Class.

The opening the main card began for the women's bantamweight bout between former Strikeforce and UFC Women's Bantamweight



UFC is seeing increasing popularity. //Wikimedia (logo),Pixabay (skyline)

Champion, Miesha Tate and Raquel Pennington, who defeated Miesha Tate on a unanimous decision. Miesha Tate decided that this fight would be her last. In the Middleweight bout, the Cuban Yoel Romero defeated Chris Weidman on a Knockout with a flying knee. Romero then jumped over the Octagon and celebrated with a soldier's march around the outside perimeter of the cage. He entered back in for the official results, his march lead to a two-month suspension for Romero for leaving cage right after defeating Weidman.

The main event involved Connor McGregor who defeated Eddie Alvarez with TKO retaining his championship while becoming the new Lightweight champion. McGregor became the first fighter in UFC history to hold two belts at the same time when he

defeated lightweight champ Eddie Alvarez. McGregor now holds four of the UFC's top six gates of all time, including Saturday night's record.

According to ESPN Saturday's UFC 205 event "drew an announced attendance of 20,427 and a live gate of \$17.7 million, which broke the record from the UFC's previous live gate record and set a new venue record for Madison Square Garden."

It's been long overdue that the NY state legislators, senators and house representatives allowed a mixed martial arts event to take place in New York City, especially one of the Holy Grails of Sports and Concert Venues in the USA and around the world, Madison Square Garden.

What The 2016 World Series Means To Baseball

ADAM GRASSANI

FEATURES EDITOR

The 2016 season of baseball has ended in arguably the most thrilling World Series anyone has ever seen. The baseball world has waited 108 years to say these words, The Chicago Cubs are World Series champions. They defeated the Cleveland Indians in seven games, coming back from being down 3-1, to win their first Commissioner's Trophy in over a century. Baseball simply couldn't ask for a better World Series in any way shape or form.

Starting off with the matchup, you have the Chicago Cubs, who not only hadn't won a World Series since 1908, but haven't been in one since 1945 with the notorious Curse of the Billy Goat. However, what sometimes may go overlooked is the fact that the Cleveland Indians haven't won baseball's ultimate prize since 1948. Furthermore, with the Cleveland Cavaliers 2016 NBA championship ending the entire city's 52 year championship drought, the Indians had a chance to really put Cleveland back on the sports world map.

This pitted two extremely hungry franchises against each other with each getting a chance to end a franchise long drought, which only multiplied the magic that the World Series brings each year. You could find yourself rooting for both teams at the same time! And to have the series go seven games, to have one game to decide which drought will end, you couldn't ask for a better matchup, which is why Game 7 averaged 40 million viewers, the most watched game of baseball in 25 years.

However, the biggest thing that this World Series did, and the previous two World Series did beforehand, was lay out a blueprint for all MLB front offices to follow if they want their franchise to be lifting the commissioner's trophy. That is to build through the MLB draft



The Chicago Cubs celebrate after winning their first World Series championship in 108 years.//Wikimedia

and minor league system, rather than through spending crazy money in free agency.

Looking at the Cubs roster, they never spent big time money signing players. Instead, they brought up players from their farm system, then added missing pieces through free agency. Pitching wise, they had Kyle Hendricks brought up, who lead the league in ERA this past season with 2.06. Then they signed veteran Jon Lester through free agency and acquired Jake Arrieta and closer Aroldis Chapman through trade, the latter whom provided the Cubs a must needed weapon in the bullpen. This applies to their lineup too, as they drafted and developed third baseman Kris Bryant, who happened to win the 2016 MVP award and catcher Kyle Schwarber. Then they signed second baseman Ben Zobrist to complete their championship winning roster.

The same thing applies to the Cleveland Indians. Their lineup consists of homegrown talent such as Jose Ramirez, Francisco Lindor, and

Carlos Santana. Their rotation is lead by homegrown Corey Kluber, and a deadly bullpen duo of Cody Allen and Andrew Miller, the former homegrown and the latter acquired via trade. This roster was able to make it all the way to the World Series after making the playoffs for only the first time since 2013, and the first time they won the AL Central.

The examples don't stop there. Let's look at last year's World Series Champions, the Kansas City Royals. The Royals won the World Series with homegrown players such as Yordano Ventura, Eric Hosmer, and even young guys they got via trade like Alcides Escobar. Through building through the draft, the Kansas City Royals made it to the World Series in 2014 and won the World Series the very next year almost immediately after coming out of rebuilding.

Using one final example, let's check out the most successful baseball team of this decade, the San Francisco Giants, who have won three

championships in the decade. (2010, 2012, 2014) How does one build a team that successful? Simple, by developing homegrown talent. Who needs to spend \$200 million dollars on an All Star hitter or pitcher when you already have homegrown ones in Buster Posey and Madison Bumgarner? To build a roster capable of winning championships, you first must draft and develop a core of homegrown players. Then if necessary, you add missing pieces through free agency or by making trades. You cannot rely on spending crazy money in free agency or by making huge trades and expect to win championships.

The 2016 World Series will go down as arguably the greatest one of our generation. With two teams getting a chance to end franchise haunting droughts, a Game 7 that dominated the ratings, and most of all, a blueprint being laid out to baseball executives everywhere, this year's World Series was most definitely a beautiful things for baseball.

Mannequin Challenge Sweeps Locker Rooms Across the Nation



#Mannequinchallenge //Wikimedia

LESHAY JONES
STAFF WRITER

Throughout the years, people have created hundreds of crazy internet trends and challenges. One of the newest trending challenges to make its way not only on the internet, but also into the locker rooms of athletes across the country, is the mannequin challenge.

The mannequin challenge is when a scene is set and everyone strikes a pose, standing completely still while the song, Black Beatles, plays in the background.

Thousands of teams, fans and sports executives have thrown their hats in the ring, attempting to make the best mannequin challenge on the internet.

NFL team, The New York Giants, took a shot at this internet craze in their locker room and were extremely successful. Though

there weren't many of the funny poses that the challenge is known for, the team still managed to pull it off.

The Dallas Cowboys also tried their luck with the challenge on a plane and it had the potential to be on of the best ones done by a sports team. But they forgot the one thing that makes the challenge what it is: the music. The absence of the music makes watching this challenge quite awkward. Fans did however seem to love watching wide receiver Cole Beasley being shoved in the overhead bin.

In an attempt to include all of their fans, the Phoenix Suns did the mannequin challenge with the whole entire stadium. It was a great idea and worked out for the most part, despite there being a lot of movement from the fans. Pro players are not

the only ones killing the mannequin challenge in sports. Hundreds of university teams have done it as well.

The Penn State Lions did an epic post-game locker room mannequin challenge after blowing Iowa out of the water with a score of 41-14. Their video seemed to go viral overnight with over 50 thousand retweets and favorites on Twitter. West Virginia University did a two-minute-long mannequin challenge that was extremely well done. At the end of it all their coach walks into the middle of the locker room and hits the folks, another popular internet dance craze.

The mannequin challenge is not the first, and it will definitely not be the last, epic challenge to break into the locker rooms of the nation.

Hear Him Roar Once More



Tiger Woods gets victorious after winning a tournament//Flickr

ALYSSA BLUNDO
STAFF WRITER

After withdrawing from the Safeway Open and the Turkish Airlines Open, there has been speculation that pro golfer, Tiger Woods would soon be returning to the golf scene. Woods was hoping to tackle one more tournament, will be teeing up at the Hero World Challenge at Albany in The Bahamas. Woods will be hosting the tournament from December 1st-4th. Woods has bounced back from several back surgeries after not participating in the PGA tour during the 2015-16 season. According to an ESPN report, Woods's agent, Mark Steinberg, says he will be a participant in the upcoming PGA tour.

"Excited to get back out there and compete, see the guys and be in the locker room instead of being an assistant captain." Woods has also revealed his excitement about returning to the golf course. He told PGA Tour about his reactions as well.

"I am excited to make my return at the Hero World Challenge at Albany and to play in this terrific tournament." Woods said. "Albany is an outstanding setting, and I can't thank Hero MotoCorp enough for their support of the tournament and my foundation."

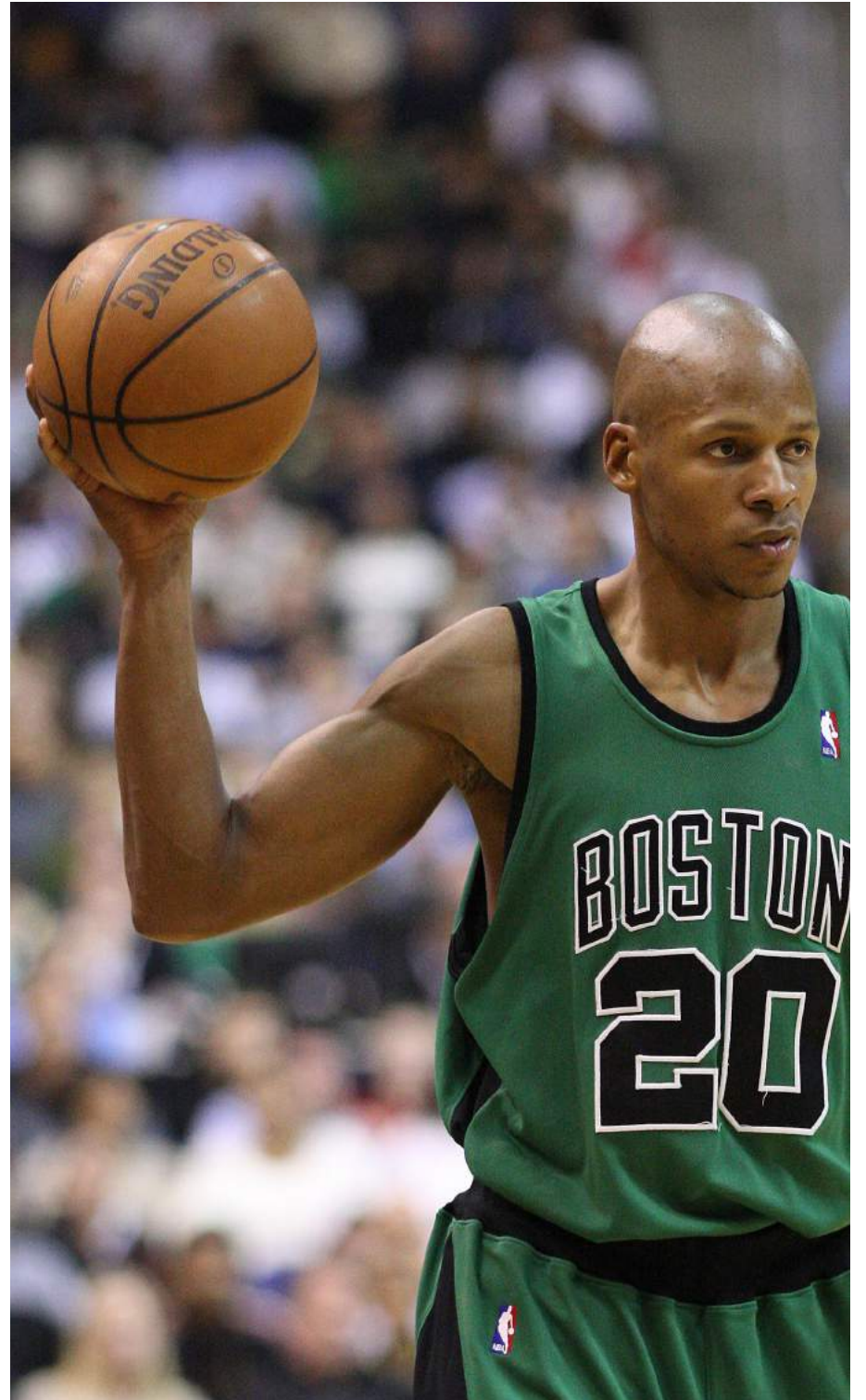
Hero MotoCorp, an Indian-based company that manufactures two-wheelers has signed a four year deal

to serve as the title sponsor for Woods's World Challenge. Hero MotoCorp isn't the only sponsor for this tournament. Woods's organization, the Tiger Woods Foundation will also bring charitable benefits as well as the Tavistock Foundation and the Albany Scholars Program.

The five-time winner of the Hero World Challenge will compete with the defending champion, Bubba Watson. Watson earned his spot just a few weeks ago by replacing Zach Johnson, another pro golfer who was exempt from this tournament.

Tiger Woods will be competing in his first tournament since his back surgeries and months of recovery.

NBA All-Time Three Point Leader Ray Allen Calling it a Career



Ray Allen is considered one of the greats. //Wikimedia

BRYAN SUAREZ
STAFF WRITER

At the age of 41 after 18 spectacular seasons, with four teams and two NBA championships, shooting guard and ten time all-star, Ray Allen is finally deciding to hang up his jersey and call it a career. Allen's career began in 1996 where he was drafted fifth overall by the Milwaukee Bucks. He played seven and a half seasons with the Bucks before being traded to the Seattle SuperSonics in the 2002-2003. After four full seasons with Seattle and averaging a career high with 26.4 points per game in the 2006 season, Allen then would get traded to the Boston Celtics where he would win his first championship.

Allen may be remembered best in Boston where he teamed up with stars Kevin Garnett and longtime Celtic, Paul Pierce to

form their own "big three." In five seasons with the Celtics, Allen averaged 16.5 points per game, and pass then All-Time three point leader Reggie Miller in career threes, all while helping Boston win a Championship in 2008 and first since 1986.

After his great run in Boston, Allen finished his career with the Miami Heat where he would join the Big Three of LeBron James, Dwyane Wade, and Chris Bosh. Allen took a lot of criticism for what people considered "ring chasing." In the end, if not for Allen, the Miami Heat would have not won the 2013 NBA Finals against the San Antonio Spurs. His game six heroics and his game-tying three that forced overtime in an elimination game, propelled the Heat to come back after being down in the series three games to two. The Heat would then go on to win

game six and seven and become the 2013 NBA champions.

Allen's legacy will be remembered for many years to come. He currently holds the NBA all-time three point record which currently sits at 2,973. There are only three other players with over 2,000 threes in NBA history, former teammate Pierce and veteran Jason Terry are the only active.

Allen will also be remembered for his part in "He Got Game", where he played "Jesus Shuttlesworth," directed by Spike Lee which featured star actor Denzel Washington.

Before Allen's retirement on Nov. 1st, he eyed a possible return with championship aspirations teams but ultimately decided to retire. He goes into retirement as arguably the greatest shooter of all time.



SPORTS



MEN'S SOCCER, CROSS COUNTRY TEAMS BACK TO BACK CHAMPIONS

ADAM GRASSANI
FEATURES EDITOR

It's Deja Vu! Taking the Region XIX championships by storm and earning a trip to the NJCAA Division III Nationals, both the Bergen's Men's Soccer as well as both the Men's and Women's Cross Country Team have kicked off yet another season of Bergen athletics to an excellent start.

The Men's Soccer Team finished their season with a 13-8-1 record, which cinched a spot in the Region XIX playoffs. There, they defeated Harrisburg 1-0 at home, then went on the road to defeat Brookdale 3-2, after scoring 6 out of 9 penalty kicks during double overtime, placing the Bergen team into fifth place in the nation. Finally, Bergen triumphed over Rowan Gloucester 1-0 in the Region XIX championship game, sending the soccer Bulldogs to the Nationals for the second year in a row.

Unfortunately, the Men's Soccer team was quickly dispatched at the National Championships, where they lost 3-0 in the quarterfinals to Richland, then 5-1 to Nassau in the consolation match, and were officially eliminated from the tournament.

That, however, does not devalue the consistent performance Bergen was able to deliver this season. Midfielder Brahyan Taberes played a big role in the playoff run, and was named the "Offensive Player of the Region Tournament." Goalkeeper Brian Sanchez played just as big of a role in the Bulldogs success this season; he posted a 1.33 Goals Against Average and a .750 save percentage, as additionally played the ninth-most



The Bulldogs are champions again. //Bergen Sports

minutes in the nation with 1487:00. In the Region Tournament, he did not allow a goal in all three games, which earned him the "Defensive Player of the Region Tournament" award. Lastly, for the second year in a row, Bulldogs coach Freddy Herrera was named the 2016 Region XIX DII Men's Soccer "Coach of the Year."

Looking at the Men's Cross Country team, not only did they win their Region Championship, they finished third out of 25 teams at the 2016 NJCAA National Meet. Daniel Silver lead the team, finishing 25th out

of the 182 total runners with a time of 30:43.0. The rest of the team followed Silver's lead, as Andy Jaipersaud and Christopher Loughman finished back to back immediately after Silver finished.

"This is not our first year at nationals," said Deana Dedovitch, the men's and women's cross country coach. "This is my third year of coaching. We've gone every year since I started. This year was probably just a little more exciting because we were ranked pretty high all season long so I expected them to do better than past

years. And they succeeded in that. Unfortunately our women fell a little bit behind but you know, that's okay. It's one step further than what we've done in the past. It's a growing program so we're heading in the right direction."

Last but certainly not least, the Women's Cross Country team also went to their National Meet. There, they finished sixth out of 13 teams, their highest place since 2002. Justine Conca stole the show, finishing fourth out of the 116 runners with a time of 20:27.5. She was named the First Team All-American for her efforts. Furthermore, Justine also won the Region XIX Individual Title in 19:47, earning her the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association Women's Athlete of the Year.

"She had a phenomenal year overall," said Dedovitch. "She was always on point at every single race. She's had ups and downs herself, personal and school/academic wise. But she's always kept herself levelheaded. She's just a phenomenal athlete, phenomenal student-athlete I should say. She works hard in everything she does. Phenomenal, phenomenal kid. I can't believe how successful she was this year and I'm so glad she was on our team this year."

Congratulations to all three programs, the Men's Soccer team, the Men's Cross Country team, and the Women's Cross Country team for representing Bergen Community College at each of their respective Nationals. Let's all hope this is just the beginning of another great year for the Bergen Bulldogs athletic program.

THE SPORTS WORLD REACTS TO TRUMP WINNING PRESIDENCY



Many athletes within sports share their mixed reactions to presidential election results. //Wikimedia

ANTHONY KHELIL
SPORTS EDITOR

Republican Presidential nominee Donald Trump won the 2016 presidential election on Tuesday November 8th, against Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton. The results were announced early Wednesday morning, and the sports world had mixed reactions regarding the results.

NBA stars took to twitter to publicly display their surprise and displeasure with the results of the election. Chicago Bulls star guard Dwayne Wade tweeted a gif of a dog wagging

its head with the caption of the photo saying, "Do not want." Oklahoma City Thunder Center tweeted out a picture of the American Flag, in which the usual stars on the flag were replaced with the infamous Crying Jordan face meme, along with the photo Kanter tweeted, "Mood." Kings center Demarcus Cousins tweeted out a crying face emoji and Knicks center Joakim Noah tweeted, "How!!!" Former Quarterback Joe Theismann tweeted, "This is a night that u can tell ur kids about. This will create a worldwide tidal wave." Former Major League Baseball player Vernon Wells took to twitter asking his

followers to, "Pray for our country and our leadership," after he had seen that Trump took control of the Presidential race.

Not all reactions from current and former athletes involved shock or anger as others used social media to make the best of the situation. Chris Betts of the Tampa Bay Rays organization tweeted that game seven between the Cubs and Indians was better, bringing some humor to a somewhat negative social media feed. Tyler Danish of the Chicago White Sox organization took a patriotic approach to the election results tweeting, "No matter the outcome tonight... Everyone needs to remember we live in the greatest country in the world!" Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban also took a patriotic approach when he said, "I'm an American Citizen First. Last. Always."

Van Jones an analyst for CNN discussed the election outcome saying, "It's hard to be a parent tonight. You tell your kids don't be a bully and then have this outcome." NBA MVP Stephen Curry responded to Van Jones with a tweet saying, "Van Jones..... Nothing but respect!" Minnesota Timberwolves guard Ricky Rubio tweeted, "Really America?"

Indianapolis Colts owner Jim Irsay commented on what he expects from presidential elect Donald Trump at the time he reaches the White House saying, "The WEIGHT of the White

House; rounds n softens the edges of any man or women. It demands greatness n inspires all souls towards leadership!"

During President elect Trumps acceptance speech Falcons Tight End tweeted, "We are about two minutes in, but I like President-elect Trump better than President Candidate Trump." USA softball player Jennie Finch called for unity from all Americans when she tweeted, "We voted- but we need to be the change, help unify, join together in & through our brokenness. One by one- change the world WE live in!" Manchester City defender Vincent Kompany of the English Premier League provided an outside perspective when he tweeted, "WTF.. Let's put all the idiots around the world in power and see what happens. Next gen reality TV. #SadWorld"

There were strong opinions regarding the final results of the 2016 presidential election. Athletes took to social media to display their feelings toward the election. The one common theme here is that Donald Trump will be the United States of America's 45th president in January when Barak Obama finishes his second term. What is to come? According to Frank Kaminsky, forward for the Charlotte Hornets, "What happens next? I seriously don't know..."