

"Truth, No Matter The Cost"

The Torch

BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT NEWSPAPER
IGNITING STUDENTS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



VOL. 26... No. 4

TORCHBCC.COM

DECEMBER 2017

Missed Connection: WiFi and Service Issues Remain

JEREMY NIFRAS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Across Bergen Community College, students are always connected — whether it be for leisurely activities, such as using social media and watching Netflix, or for educational purposes, such as typing an important paper on Google Docs, or checking Moodle for class assignments. In addition, many students call and text each other on a daily basis for a variety of reasons.

In the information age, the constant use of the internet and wireless communication is a way of life around campus, which makes the growing issue of poor Wi-Fi and cell service much more problematic.

The lack of cell service is most apparent in the college's oldest building, Ender Hall. Itamar Mahal, a student at Bergen who takes a government course at Ender Hall, views the building as a "dead zone" for service.

"The service in [Ender] is never sustained, and we lose it all the time," Mahal says. "The school needs to install something to change that around here."

Ben Kadash, another student at Bergen, has experienced service issues, even at the main Pitkin Education Center.

The further you go [into



Students often struggle to find reliable internet access on campus. // Jeremy Nifras

the school], you start to lose cell service. I know for a fact that around the registration area, there's barely any reception over there," said Kadash.

Hudson Ribeiro, a student who frequently comes to the Pitkin Center library to study, believes changes need to be made to solve these issues.

"Whenever I come here, I can almost never get service.

When I do, it's very slow, and I think something needs to be improved," said Ribeiro.

Tyler Beebe, the Technical Systems Manager in Bergen's IT department, said the problem with cell service is mostly the fault of the providers.

"We don't provide the cell service on campus, and it would depend on what

provider you have, whether it be Verizon, AT&T or others," Beebe said.

According to Beebe, Verizon has been working to improve the cell service at the Pitkin Center building and presumably, Ender Hall. He suggests that anyone who has service problems around campus should contact their provider.

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B-Wing Beautification

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Measurements of Success

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Students Learn What It Means to be a Leader

CHARLIE LEPPERT
LAYOUT EDITOR

Early in the morning of Saturday, November 11, students boarded a bus at Bergen Community College and drove out to Hands In 4 Youth's Camp Vacamas in West Milford. The sprawling camp is home to obstacle courses, a beautiful lake, and various gymnasiums and conference rooms.

Every year, the Office of Student Life offers this retreat to help student leaders develop important skills to aid them in their leadership roles. This is the first year the retreat has been hosted at Camp Vacamas.

Students began the day with warm-up exercises as a whole before being split into teams, engaging in team building exercises and trust exercises, such as trust falls, before lunch.

After lunch, the individual groups worked as teams to complete various obstacle courses with both physical and mental challenges. One such challenge had a team lined up standing on a log, and they had to line up according to various criteria without speaking or leaving the log.

Another required students to first obtain a tire swing from the center of a zip line where it was suspended, then send each individual team member across the zip line to the other side of the course without touching the ground.

These obstacles challenged the students' problem-solving abilities, cooperative

capabilities, and patience, forcing them to work as a team to accomplish their goals and respect all of the possible solutions presented by their peers, valuable skills in all student leadership positions.

After the activities for the day were completed, students broke up into smaller groups to review what they felt they had learned that day before coming together as a whole again to express their definitions of leadership and what they had learned.

Fritz Batista described leadership as "an opportunity to help others stand out."

Similarly, Greg Kahanec, a member of the Chess Club, said that leadership means "putting yourself aside to let other succeed."

Rafila Naveed, who works in the Office of Student Life, said he believes a leader is someone "who makes the whole group work."

This theme of selflessness and cooperation as central to leadership skills continued throughout the group discussions.

Greg Fenkart, the Coordinator of Student Life, quoted Professor Win Win Kyi, the Faculty Advisor to Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society, who says "We have two ears and one mouth, so we should listen twice as much as we speak."

As students took the bus back to Bergen's Paramus campus, they brought with



Students using the "giant skis," an exercise in cooperation, since everyone on them must move in sync to move them at all. This was just one of many team-building exercises. // Erick Moreno

them invaluable skills of leadership and cooperation to their leadership positions on campus as well as their everyday lives.

The takeaway from the day was probably best summarized by Rachel Lerner, Dean of

Student Life and Conduct who advised students that "If there is anything you bring back with you today let it be a new friend, a new skill, and all those little things you bring with you."



Day of Transgender Awareness

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Bergen Cross Country Finishes Strong

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NEWS

The Torch

BCC Secretary Beautifies B-Wing

YOO RA KIM
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

If anyone had classes in the B-Wing prior to the spring semester, they would know that the hallway lacked a certain pizzazz. Sandra Haan, Secretary of the Mathematics department, has taken the necessary steps to make the B-wing look more lively.

There were plenty of plants and pieces of artwork placed around the hallway that made a world of difference. The artwork mostly features scenes from nature, but it is an overall diverse collection. Haan's daughter helped to contribute some of the paintings.

The paintings depict serene surroundings that fill the viewer with peace. Who wouldn't want to feel a sense of peace on their way to class?

Then, there's the B-wing conference room, which used to have rusting filing cabinets and drab curtains, but both of those pieces of furniture are long gone.

They have been replaced by a stunning array of African violets and a thoughtfully decorated bookshelf. Anyone holding a conference in this room will definitely notice the positive change in the environment.

The faculty bathroom in the B-wing experienced some minor renovations as well. The addition of wall decals,



Some recent improvements on the third floor. // Yoo Ra Kim

incense sticks and a convenient shelving unit to put purses or bags on spruced up the otherwise unaesthetic bathroom.

When asked why she chose to undertake this project, Haan simply said, "I just wanted the hall to look a bit nicer." She certainly accomplished

her job.

And who could forget the polished bulletin boards? There's colorful paper framing, the posters and advertisements on the boards which gives them more of a pop. Not to mention, they don't look messy from too much clutter.

The next time you walk down the B-Wing, make sure to check out the lovely decorations. The difference is subtle, but makes the environment much more visually pleasing and has overall increased the quality of the hallway.

Bergen Internet Connection Issues

"IT isn't in charge of the cell service; that's mostly up to the cell phone providers. If the providers get enough feedback from customers about problems at Ender Hall, they can reach out to us and say 'We'd like to do some work on the building;' and that it's worth putting a new cell site over there," said Beebe.

Aside from the concerns over cellphone service, the Bergen Wi-Fi network has also had its own share of complaints and issues. Many students around campus have complained of connectivity issues during the busiest hours on campus, which could most likely be attributed to the large amount of traffic on the network.

"During different times of the day we have a lot of users. We nearly doubled our bandwidth in the past year," Beebe claims. "The more people stream video, watch Netflix, and play games, the more bandwidth will be used. At this point, it's very rare that we max out [...] if that does happen, it may cause some problems, but it's not an everyday issue."

Beebe encouraged students who are experiencing issues to reach out to IT, and insisted they will work to solve any problems.

He told me, "I don't believe we've received any feedback from students in the past year about slowness on WiFi. If anyone is having an issue, it would be important for them to reach out to us or to the help desk, and (to) be as specific as you can. Detailed feedback really helps us evaluate what we need to be working on."

Apart from connectivity issues, the main process of connecting to the network remains difficult for certain students.

Doguhan Karahan, a student who works within Bergen's ESL program, worries about the lack of knowledge of how to connect to Bergen's WiFi.



... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1.

He says these students resort to using their own hotspots or data because they don't know how to connect to the WiFi network.

"I know some of my ESL students aren't aware of how to connect to the network to begin with," Karahan says. "Someone should put up a poster around the school that instructs how to connect using their Bergen portal accounts. This way, it saves them time and effort. If you were to walk into the ESL class and ask around if they're connected to the Wi-Fi, 80 percent would say 'no.'"

He continued to say that many ESL students require Wi-Fi to finish their homework, as they cannot complete their work on their own and frequently require assistance.

Karahan said, "Sometimes ESL students need help and can't work on grammar-dependent work, such as essays, on their own without having to go the library. They have to constantly be at a computer that is provided by the school."

Due to growing complaints about the college's current technological state, it's only a matter of time before some improvements take place. As more people continue to use smartphones and laptops around campus, these concerns will only remain until someone decides take action.

However, despite these various complaints, some students haven't experienced much problems yet. Salim Alrashdan, a student who takes an English course at Ender Hall, believes the college's current progress with connectivity has been sufficient.

"As far as I can tell, I haven't had many problems connecting around campus," Alrashdan said. "The area near Dunkin' Donuts doesn't have great service, but other than that, everything seems to be pretty good."

// Jessica Rodriguez

Proposed Oil Pipeline Sparks Protests, Indigenous Resistance in Ramapo

IAN HARTMAN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Plans for the construction of two oil pipelines stretching 170 miles from Albany, New York to Linden, New Jersey have come up against protests organized by an alliance of municipal authorities; members of the Ramapough-Lenape Nation and environmental activists.

"The proposed Pilgrim Pipeline would carry up to 200,000 gallons a day of crude oil and refined petroleum products," according to the Record Online.

The Coalition Against the Pilgrim Pipeline, an alliance of environmental groups in New Jersey and New York, have concerns about the danger to local water supplies from the pipeline.

The group's website raises concerns about spills contaminating the local water supply and the long-term damage fossil fuels are doing to the environment. In addition, members of The Ramapough Lenape Nation object to the pipeline's path, which threatens to destroy their traditional ceremonial grounds, according to tribal elders quoted in The New York



Protestors speaking out against the Pilgrim Pipeline. // Wikimedia Commons

Times.

The Ramapough, who have never been granted recognition as a native tribe by The Bureau of Indian Affairs, organized protests beginning in late 2016 against the pipeline. These protests, which galvanized a wider coalition of environmental groups, have been inspired by the national attention garnered by the

struggle against the Dakota Access Pipeline.

The immediate response of the tribe to the pipeline was to occupy the Split Rock sacred site and to form the Sweetwater Prayer Camp. The goal of this camp is to inform the public about the threat posed by the pipelines to the local water supply in our region.

Warning about the damage a pipeline rupture would do to our families and wildlife, the camp aims to work with existing and ongoing grassroots organizations and water protectors to combat these pipelines.

In addition to the street protests and occupations, an alliance of town governments have formed the Municipal

Pipeline Group to object to the pipeline going through their communities. The group, which includes towns such as Oakland, Livingston and Mahwah grew out of a series of public information sessions about the pipeline and private meetings between the mayors of the participating municipalities.

The group retains legal council and aims to make its voice heard when "the pipeline company applies for permits from The New Jersey Department of Environmental Affairs," according to Tap into Chatham.

According to Coalition Against the Pilgrim Pipeline, the pipeline is currently undergoing an environmental review co-led by the State Department of Environmental Conservation and New York State Thruway Authority.

While Pilgrim Pipeline LLC, the company behind the project, has made initial contact with the New Jersey Environmental Protection Agency, they have not submitted paperwork yet.

It appears that the pipeline company hopes to receive the go-ahead from New York before attempting to get approval in New Jersey.

Students Celebrate Stress Free Week

PURNASREE SAHA
FEATURES EDITOR

On November 8, Bergen Community College held Stress-Free Week for all students, staff and faculty members in the Student Center.

The main purpose of this event was to relieve stress for midterms and finals. Posters were displayed around campus. Clubs also spread the news to students about this event.

Greg Fenkart, Coordinator of The Office of Student Life, and Magalye Matos, the Generalist of Student Life, ran Stress-Free Week, focusing on the benefits for school work

and relieving the stress of college life.

"It is good to relieve stress all around campus either inside or outside of school," said Matos.

Fenkart wanted students to feel relaxed and mentally well throughout the semester.

One-day sessions were offered at the Lyndhurst and Hackensack campuses on November 6. Professor Barton of The Center for Health, Wellness and Personal Counseling provided therapy dogs at the Lyndhurst campus.

"The reason why therapy dogs were provided was to reduce stress for students who may feel anxious during this semester," said Barton.

Stress-Free Week was open to everyone on campus to enhance the student experience.

"Students had access to counseling and support services on campus. We don't want students to have any barriers," said Matos.

Outside vendors, internal faculty members and volunteers from the massage

center provided services. David Rivera, an event coordinator, brought an infinity chair and a massage chair.

"The infinity chair helps align the spinal cord and the massage chair is beneficial for the back and the neck," said Rivera.

Tanisha Jones, a massage therapist, gave five-to-ten-minute massages. "Massaging allows students to focus on school and helps the brain to function," said Jones.

"Even though the stress event is different from

Mindful Bergen Workshops, the goal is similar by helping students to feel mentally healthy," said Fenkart.

New to the event this year was the relaxing herbal tea bar provided by Office of Student Life.

This beneficial annual event provides free services to faculty and staff members as well as students. Anyone who attends Stress-Free Week will benefit from the experience, but students who feel particularly overwhelmed will benefit the most.



You May Say They're Dreamers, but They're Not the Only Ones

JACQUELYN CARILLO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Some wake up on the wrong side of the bed, but others wake up on the wrong side of the law, at no fault of their own. Days are spent privately and quietly, working tirelessly for a better tomorrow. This plot is all too real for the 690,000 Dreamers currently protected by DACA.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is a two-year long renewal-based program that offers work permits and protection from deportation for immigrants who have arrived in the United States at an age younger than 16 but offers no path to citizenship or even residency.

To qualify for DACA, one must be younger than 31, have entered the United States prior to June 15, 2012, currently attend school or have obtained a high school diploma or an equivalent GED, have not been convicted of any felonies or "significant misdemeanors" and most importantly not have posed a threat to national security.

DACA has been renewable every 2 years for a fee of \$465 until September 5, 2017, when President Trump announced a rollback of the Obama-era DACA, leaving everything up to Congress.

DACA has not only transformed the lives of young undocumented immigrants, but also has strengthened our sense of community and economy with hourly wages of recipients raising by 42 percent.

There is no question of whether or not Dreamers, recipients of DACA, are contributing members of society, let alone "American as apple pie," said Nancy Pelosi; the facts say it all. According to Newsweek and Vox, 72 percent of Dreamers are enrolled in higher education, 65 percent bought



// Molly Adams via flickr.com

their first car after the instatement of DACA and 5 percent are business owners.

If the statistics show how viable and valuable Dreamers are to society and the economy, where does the incessant desire to end this program and punish nearly 700,000 people come from?

Trump's announcement of the morally and economically wrong rescinding of DACA has fear running ramped throughout the immigrant community. Whether the rollback of

the monumental program comes from a place of ignorance or xenophobia, we, a community of young students, must band together to resist hatred, stay educated, break the stigma and advocate for our Dreamer friends.

As of September 6, 2017, the fate of 700,000 college students, teachers, business owners and many other people is left up to Congress.

CNN has reported on several occasions that Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader of the United States House of

Representatives, and Chuck Schumer, United States Senate Minority Leader, have been working closely and relentlessly with President Trump to cooperate on a bipartisan plan by the deadline of March 5, 2018 for the future of Dreamers.

There is a strong urgency among Congress and the general population of the United States to include a path to citizenship in this plan, or else Dreamers and Congress alike will be back to square one.

Marijuana: A Road To...?

ALYSSA BORGES
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Do you think marijuana should be legal in the state of New Jersey? Whichever side of this debate you're on, the presentation and panel discussion Marijuana: A Road to...?, which was presented in TEC -128 on Thursday, November 16, would've made you think twice about your position.

The program is part of Bergen Community College's Addiction Series, partnered with the Center for Peace, Justice and Reconciliation and the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Kevin Sabet, is the director of the Drug Policy Institute at the University of Florida and an Assistant Professor in the College of Medicine.

He has studied marijuana for 20 years, won many awards and travels internationally, working to reduce drug abuse and its consequences.

He informed the audience on the subject of marijuana during his presentation at this important time, given that our elected governor promised to legalize marijuana in New Jersey.

"We now have more people dead from opiate overdoses than car crashes and gunshot wounds, something we would have never thought would've happened years ago," Dr. Sabet said as he continued to explain, "I'm actually here to talk about marijuana."

Dr. Sabet explained how the legal drugs we have already, such as alcohol and tobacco, haven't been working out so well, being that they have killed 650,000 people a year combined for the last eight decades. Also they're the number one reason why people are



// flickr.com

arrested, to say the least.

Dr. Sabet informed the audience that most people dying from the opiate epidemic are not kids or teens, but the people in their late 30's who've probably been in and out of treatment a dozen times. They are also the ones whose drug problem started when they were young with accessible drugs of alcohol and marijuana.

"If you don't remember anything from this talk, just remember this: the only customers that anyone in the addictive business cares about are heavy users," Dr. Sabet said.

At the end of Dr. Sabet's presentation, he wrapped up his informative speech with the project Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM), which he is a co-founder of. The

website for more information is www.learnaboutsam.org. Another website he encouraged for more information was www.NJ-RAMP.org.

Lisa, the member of the recovering community, explained that she had been smoking weed since she was 12 and is now 22. She is currently in Spring House for her addiction. She first believed smoking marijuana wasn't a big deal until she realized it started becoming a problem.

Waking up, thinking about smoking marijuana, moving onto other drugs, such as xanax, robbing to get marijuana, stealing from family and doing anything to get high.

She ended up in jail for a couple of years and institutions due to her problem. If it wasn't for Spring House,

she said she would have ended up dead if she continued going down that road and found other ways to find joy and happiness.

A police officer of East Rutherford, New Jersey and Vice President of Chief and Police Association, John Russo, explained that he still has not seen a good outcome from marijuana users.

Bergen County Municipal Alliance coordinator Judy Forman said that their main priority for the community is promoting wellness as much as they can.

Kristina Ziobro, being a mother of a victim of marijuana use was strong enough to come to talk about her son Michael's experience.

He used marijuana for his stomach pains that he had his whole life, and with no diagnosis, found that the pain only went away when using marijuana. After he did all his research to make sure it was safe, but one day, she found her son dead on his bedroom floor due to a heart arrhythmia. She explained how her main reason for coming was to let the younger audience know about her son's tragic experience with weed.

Joanne Zito of the Coalition for Medical Marijuana, explained how she had been arrested before for weed, and it had prevented her from getting a job when she was younger, which has had lifelong consequences.

Examples of these consequences are losing insurance and financial aid. She explained legalizing marijuana is a matter of life or death, and that a lot of people are dying due to medical reasons because marijuana is illegal and expensive.

Zito said they were advocating to legalize marijuana to get the best medication to the right people.



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The Double Edged Sword of Trump's Bigotry

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#MeToo Movement

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OPINIONS

The Torch

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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The Torch strives for the highest journalistic standards and accuracy. Readers are encouraged to contact us if they find any mistakes in any edition of the Torch

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As an open public forum, The Torch welcomes guest opinion pieces and letters to the editor from any member of the Bergen Community College community. Materials should be submitted to eictorch@gmail.com or delivered to The Torch office, SC-111.

Such submissions must include the writer's name, contact information and affiliation with the college. Students should include their major; faculty and staff should include campus title or position. Opinion pieces are limited to 600 words and letters to the editor to 200 words. The Torch reserves the right to edit and to refuse publication of any submission.

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Measurements of Success

LESHAY JONES
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

If there is one thing that society loves to do, it is materializing everything that is out there. One that really grinds my gears is materializing success.

Think about it. When you are young, you dream about having a huge house with a beautiful family, a fancy car, and diamond rings on each finger. Then, the older you get, the more you realize what a load of crap that all is.

Success should not be measured by the amount of money you have in the bank or by how many luxury cars you have in your driveway. Instead, it should be measured by how you see fit.

There are people out there who don't have anything but five dollars in their pocket and work three jobs and go to school, just to make sure that their kids have food on the table at the end of the day. To them, that is success.

There are people out there who don't have a car in their name but still manage to make it to and from their job everyday, working their behind off to get that promotion they have been trying land for the past few years. To them, that is success.

There are people out there who have trouble just getting



// pexels.com

HOLIDAY SEASON WITH FAMILY...



out of the bed in the morning but somehow they find the will to do so. To them, that is success.

Success, to me, is when you find something that motivates you to keep getting out of bed in the morning and working hard. Once you reach the top, you keep working hard and never stop because there is so much more out there to learn and to gain.

When you put your heart, mind and soul into everything you do, success will come and in turn, so will happiness.

Sure, all of the material things are great, but to me, they don't add to the value of your

success. All it does is prove to others that you are what society defines as successful, and it helps when you want to prove all the people who said you could not do it wrong.

Like I said last month, we are all here for a reason. We want an education, and we want to be successful. Just know that it is okay to measure your success differently; it is okay to be humble.

To me, success isn't just about the flashy, material things; it's about the experience and all of the lessons that you learn along the way.

Corrections to the November Edition

Danita Ruiz's article "Smoking Ban Is Ineffective" on page 10 incorrectly stated that the smoking ban was imposed two years ago, considering the wishes only of non-smokers. The smoking ban was instituted 10 years ago, in 2007, based on surveys of the full college community. The article "High-End

Theater Brings Ultimate Movie Experience" on page 19 was incorrectly attributed to Alyssa Borges. This article was written by Alyssa Blundo, Staff Writer.

The Rate of Opioid Overdose Could Stop Marijuana Legalization

MARK GUCIA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The opioid crisis plaguing society has been carving a nest for itself in Bergen County, New Jersey for the past year, and it shows no signs of slowing down.

NJ.com has stated that so far there have been 79 overdose deaths in Bergen County. Now, Governor-Elect Phil Murphy plans to legalize recreational marijuana, which some may feel is a gateway drug.

Is it possible that he will be met with heavy opposition from those opposed to legalizing marijuana, who may use opioid and heroin overdose as their battle cry?

Nj.com writer Susan K. Livio reported in her article "With Phil Murphy's Win, It's 'Full Steam Ahead' for Legal Marijuana," that Governor Chris Christie called legalizing pot

"beyond stupidity," and a public health hazard that could promote the use of opioids and heroin.

Before the marijuana users of New Jersey rejoice in the fact that they may be able to come out of their basements and backyard, to smoke weed legally, the legalization may not be smooth sailing.

The opposition came from the former Republican Party front-runner Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno.

A spokeswoman for her said, "She is opposed to legalization."

Now, some may think that her opinion may not matter, given that she lost the election which is because New Jersey is a liberal state. However, to believe that the road to legalization will be easy, is far from the truth.

No matter the opinion of the



// Pixabay

reader, there is a divide between those in favor of marijuana legalization and those opposed to it. It is all going to come down to a vote, and we have seen that voter turnout has dropped in recent

years. Only 35.1 percent of New Jersey residents casted a vote on election day. With a hot-button topic like marijuana legalization, that number may rise.

Conspiracy Theories in American Politics

IAN HARTMAN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Do you believe that they are out to get you? The phrase "conspiracy theory" usually conjures up images of weird loners wearing tinfoil hats, but there are more and more Americans who believe in them.

Nationally, the first sign that Donald Trump was going to run for president came when he joined the chorus of right-wingers who questioned whether Obama was born in America.

This so-called "birther movement", which played on white anxieties about the first black president, was one of the core grievances animating the conservative Tea Party movement that won control of Congress in the 2010 midterm elections.

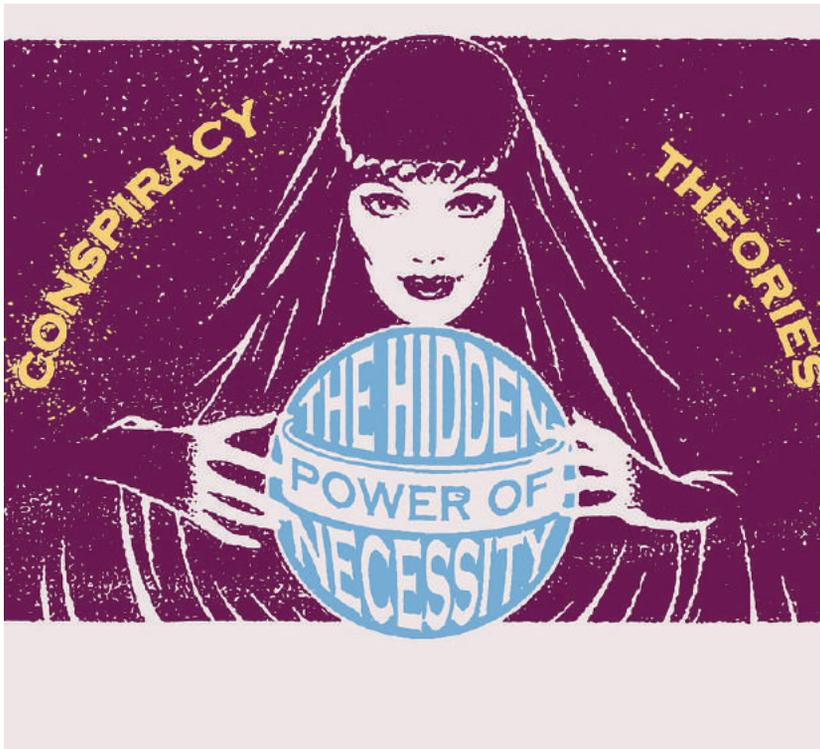
Conspiracy theory is not a recent phenomenon in American political life. Populist political movements such as the nativist Know-Nothing-Anti Masonic Party date back to the post-revolutionary era.

In times of major economic upheaval, Americans have often blamed shadowy cabals for social dislocation. These groups, often referred to as The Illuminate (after an obscure enlightenment-era revolutionary group) or The New World Order, guide world events toward some nefarious goal.

Conspiracy theorists tend to turn their fire upon bankers who are accused of making "money out of thin air," and are opposed to industrial capitalists who actually produce goods.

This, of course, plays into the anti-Semitism that almost all European and European diaspora conspiracy theories draw upon whether their authors are aware upon of it or not.

While conspiracy theorists come



// Wikimedia Commons

in many flavors, almost all modern ones owe a debt to Alex Jones and his Infowars media empire.

Since 1996, Jones has peddled his unique brand of American nationalism with a daily radio show and website. Since 2016, Jones was most famous for spearheading the "9/11 Truth Movement," which argued that the US government orchestrated the destruction of The World Trade Center.

However, since Donald Trump began his campaign for President, Infowars has become a major voice of the "alt right" (the less openly anti Semitic and racist wing of the alt right) movement.

He has a habit of accusing any protest not organized by the extreme right of being funded by George Soros, the bete noir of the far-right from America to Hungary.

Most recently, Jones stoked fears that protests called by Refuse Fascism (an anti-Trump campaign organization) on November 4 were cover for mass uprisings organized by Antifa (a militant anti-facist direct action movement).

The problem with combatting conspiracy theories is that they are born out of real anger at real powerlessness in the face of massive economic-political forces.

Most Americans spend more time at work than anywhere else, for most of our waking lives we are making money for someone else. Is it any wonder that people imagine large, unseen forces control their lives?

A few papers get moved around on Wall Street, and millions of people are homeless. Conspiracy theories may not be accurate, but they provide a convincing narrative to explain real suffering.

However, they render ordinary people powerless, if the all powerful illuminati is behind everything what resistance is even conceivable?

The reality is that those who control society are merely human, and that they are not doing it in the service of a million year grand plan to destroy civilization.

They run society to profit themselves at the expense of those under them, like every other ruling class in history.

As an old German said, "the history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles," it's not a conspiracy; it's just history.



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Trump's Administration Emboldens Those It Targets

OWEN MCCLOSKEY
COPY EDITOR

Donald Trump's presidency -- an administration hallmarked by racism, sexism, homophobia and xenophobia -- has brought about some hideous divides in the country and coerced a large population of Americans to reveal their true colors, which just so happen to be the same colors as the Confederate battle flag.

With no advocacy from the current administration, women and people of same-sex orientations and opposite gender identities have felt disheartened.

For example, Trump's failed transgender military ban, that he attempted to push through last summer, has left many willing and able transgender Americans who currently serve in the military concerned about the future of their careers. Furthermore, Trump, to little surprise of the general population, has failed to make steps toward paid maternity leave.

If you wanted to examine a litany of comments that undermine civil rights and the wishes of many Americans, then let yourself fall into the wormhole of our President's Twitter page.

The point is, Donald Trump has disenfranchised women and minority groups to the tune of applause by millions of Americans who want to consolidate their power, or are just anxiously awaiting a massive change that will save them from the clutches of crestfallen poverty.

However, voters in New Jersey and Virginia have made their voices heard and sent a signal to the Republicans and Trump alike that Americans are not going to sit in silence in the face of inaction.

The 2017 New Jersey and



President Donald J. Trump // vimeo.com

Virginia elections may mark a new emboldening of Democrats, who for months have promised to represent the very people that Donald Trump has put down throughout his election and administration.

Mollie Hemingway of The Federalist writes, "Democrats are finally focusing on statehouse races, and this should terrify Republicans."

This sentiment could not be more accurate. Democratic incumbents, like New Jersey's Phil Murphy, have attracted progressively-minded voters to a game-changing extent.

In fact, the very groups that Trump has failed to advocate for have swept the recent Democratic races.

Washington Post reports on Danica Roem, a former journalist and the first transgender woman to win a state legislature seat in Virginia. Roem defeated Bob Marshall, a historically conservative delegate.

In northern Virginia, seven female Democratic candidates unseated a handful of Republican male senators. One of the incoming seat members is Latina and one Asian-American, marking yet two more firsts for the Virginia State Legislature.

It seems that Trump's administration has called more voters to action against his party than he had intended. Democrats won elections that were not expected, all because of the action brought upon by progressively-minded voters.

Although Trump's rhetoric may seem terrifying, it is calling people to action in a pretty incredible way that could mark a turning point in American history.

Holiday Season or Cuffing Season?



Love during the holiday season. // pexels.com

KAYLEE ALZAMORA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

With the holiday season upon us, most kids are making their wishlists for Christmas, and most parents are out buying the gifts on the list. However, single people have a different holiday ritual— for them, this is cuffing season.

The name in itself sounds funny, but it's self-explanatory. For many singles, this season is the season to become attached to someone; or in other words, "cuffed."

Whether it's the cold, icy air or the image that has been imprinted into our brains basically since birth by movies, we have been conditioned to think of how wonderful it is to be in love during the holidays.

Whatever the reason may be, it's a known fact that during the holidays, whoever isn't in a relationship chooses this time of the year to get into

one.

There's something about the cold weather that makes people want to get into relationships, or maybe it's the fact that during the holidays, most people spend time with their families. Showing up to the family Christmas party without somebody is only going to lead to a lot of chit-chat and advice from family.

Trust me, Aunt Lucy isn't going to let go of the fact that you showed to the Christmas party alone and will keep insisting that you give her friend's neighbor's son a chance, even though you have told her a million times you're not interested.

This happens fairly often to many people, so if it's happened to you, trust me, you're not alone, but is just another reason why most singles choose this

time of year to get into relationships. It's because this is the season where there are the most holidays, especially family-celebrated ones.

The weather also has something to do with the fact that a lot of relationships happen during the cold part of the year. During the summer or spring, if you're in a relationship you enjoy it; but if you're single, you yell it from the rooftops.

There's something about the cool, breezy air and the beating sun that makes you feel overly proud of being single. You can spend the nice weather with your friends, make memories and forget about relationships altogether.

Sadly, we can't say the same thing about the winter because the moment the cold weather hits is when we feel the loneliest. This is the season where

it's too cold to be alone; whether it's inside or out, you need someone by your side, especially if you're inside, so you have someone to cuddle with on those days that it's too cold to even get out the door.

There are countless of reasons why someone would go out of their way to get into a relationship for the holidays, but that's not always the case.

While a large majority of people choose to be with someone during the holidays, there are some people that would rather be alone and just enjoy the company of their family, and that's great too.

Whether you are spending it with just family and friends or you cuff someone down for this special season, don't forget to enjoy the holiday season and to make the most out of it.

Christie Raises Smoking Age to 21

ROBERT C. MCDERMOTT
AD MANAGER

As time was running out for Chris Christie as governor of New Jersey, he left young smokers displeased. Christie passed a bill that raised the smoking age to 21.

Young college students who are addicted to smoking will likely be affected the most as they were probably already taking out their ID every time when the legal smoking age was 19.

Christie's decision is well defended, because according to a 2015 study by the National Institute of Medicine, raising the smoking age will resolve about 250,000 premature deaths in children and youth.

This sounds pretty nice for our society and seems like it could be a good way to go, but what about the youth that is already addicted? Should there be no grandfather clause? It seems that no one has really asked these kind of questions. This could be because most of the people who are in support of this law are old enough to buy tobacco products.

Don't take this the wrong way, it's good to see that our state is trying to prevent underage smoking, but what if it's already too late? Those under 21 are left to quit cold turkey or get the tobacco products from friends and family.

This law seems like it would be forcing many to quit because nicotine gums and patches also must be bought by someone 21 and over.

When most of us think about nicotine or tobacco products, we think about cigarettes and cigars most of the



// pxhere.com

time. In our modern era, however, we have invented a way to get a similar effect to our bodies: vaping.

The law also bans anyone under 21 from purchasing a vape or vape related products. Okay, banning cigarettes can be justified very easily, but vapes, not so much.

According to the National Center for Biotechnology Information, using vapes rather than cigarettes can reduce the intake of toxic chemicals such as tar and carbon monoxide with the

exception of nicotine.

Let's put this into a real life situation. You're hanging around at school with a couple of friends when you get this sudden urge. You want to hit your vape, but then you realize you aren't old enough to buy vape juice anymore. This feeling of need just might push you to ask people for cigarettes since they are more commonly purchased by others.

When convenient stores are going to ID you, do you honestly think that

guy you barely know that you just asked for a cigarette is going to?

No matter who is in favor of this decision or not, it already happened. Something that now has taken notice is that stores are less lax about asking for IDs.

If you like to smoke and are devastated by this law, there are other ways to get an amazing feeling about life. Joining a club, a sports team or just doing something fun with a couple friends are a couple ways to kick back that annoying feeling of addiction.

#MeToo Movement

REBECCA KARPINSKI
PHOTO EDITOR

Me too. The two words that have flooded our timelines. Mothers, sisters, friends, cousins, coworkers and even men. Me too. With two simple words, they stood up and said so much. The words mean that they have survived or endured some form of sexual abuse; either harassment or assault.

It may seem easy to type those two words, but for some, it took massive amounts of inner strength. It made memories long since shoved down come flooding back to the surface.

The feeling when someone predatory comes onto you and creeps you out is awful. You feel unsafe immediately and fear that you won't get out of the situation, but the worse part comes afterwards when you tell someone about it, and they tell you their story.

Every person has their own story about someone creeping and trying to make their advances in a way where your common sense just tells you to get out of there.

To all the people who ask "why did they wait so long to speak out?," "Why didn't you press charges?," "Why didn't you speak up sooner?," "Why didn't you tell someone?," "Why didn't you go to the police?" and "Why won't you name names?":

Let me clarify a few things for you:

1. Those responses are exactly the reason why many women and men don't come forward about sexual abuse, assault and harassment. The fear that no one will believe them is one of the main reasons (along with misplaced shame and guilt) victims keep silent.

2. Asking for evidence of sexual assault, abuse and harassment is like asking someone to prove the existence of Bigfoot. These predators are careful and practiced. There often is no physical evidence or witness to "prove" that the person is guilty. That's why many in law enforcement refer to these crimes as "he said, she said." It's only when multiple reports occur that they often get taken seriously, and they often have to be from two different people.

3. False accusations are rare. You know what's not rare? Unreported

harassment, abuse and assault. If there is one victim, I guarantee there are more. No normal person wants to get attention for a sex crime; people look at you differently (not in a good way). Who would volunteer for this?

4. "Why are so many coming forward now?" The answer is that it's

easier to come forward and to find your voice when someone else's courage has inspired you. The idea that "if they can come forward, then so can I" is what has propelled this #metoo movement.

Abuse, sexual assault and rape are terrifying. Many victims (female and male) are young, manipulated and

in shock. We do what we can to get out of these situations, and then feel absolutely lost. We just want to get on with our lives, and we repress.

By the time some of us even realize the damage that has been done, so many years have passed that we may want to talk about our experiences, but we don't want to deal with charges and naming name, opening up old wounds and reliving it all.

I can understand questions being raised because plenty of people make things up nowadays. These liars hurt real victims in the process by causing people to not only be skeptical, which is totally understandable; but also to automatically not believe us when we speak out. It's a tough situation for everyone.

To all of the victims speaking out: I believe you. I stand with you. I am amazed by your courage and strength and I hope that you continue to inspire others to speak out against their perpetrators. We need to see these disgusting predators for what they are and to stop supporting them.

There are people out there who are truly understanding, but they don't know what it's like. The daily toll assault takes is something that can't be fathomed. It's not always in the form of sadness or being brought back to that moment and having to relive it. It's not just cringing every time you hear about it on TV. It's something that just pops in your mind for no reason.

You could be folding laundry and suddenly remember the PJs you were wearing when it happened. It could be seeing leaves on the ground of your attackers favorite type of tree.

It's walking back to your old campus for the good memories, and then suddenly realizing you're walking by the tree you sat under with your friend to tell her what happened.

It takes over your whole life in the most subtle ways, and it's draining. Maybe this movement will make us realize just how many of us have this experience on a daily basis, and maybe we'll get the support we need. Not because we need recovery, but because we need someone to understand.

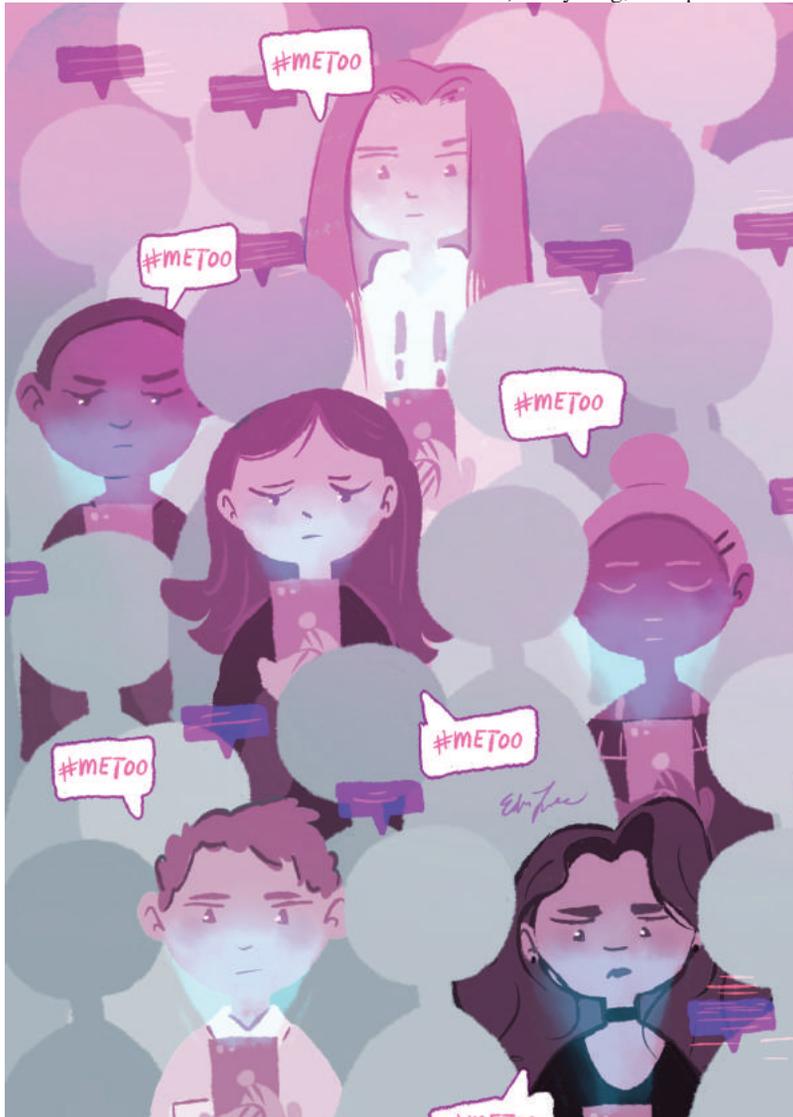


Illustration by Edriel Fimbres

Bergen's Transgender Awareness Day Helps Squash Transphobia

OWEN MCCLOSKEY
COPY EDITOR



Transgender awareness has become a staple of modern American culture in recent years, and transphobia is gradually fading away as an archaic epithet that no longer has a place in a post-progressive society. There are about 253,000 individuals in the United States who identify as transgender, according to the keynote speaker of Bergen's fourth annual Transgender Awareness Day.

For those who are uncertain, let me provide a little background on what being transgender means. Transgender people aren't necessarily homosexual — in fact, sexual orientation has nothing to do with gender identity.

A transgender individual identifies as a different gender than they were assigned to at birth. Transgender people prefer to be referred to by the gender that they prescribe themselves as, and it is considered boorish if one refers to a transgender individual with the incorrect pronoun.

In the United States, trans individuals have to travel a road paved with discrimination of all calibers. Transgender communities are — albeit quite slowly — coming out of the cultural woodwork and are starting to become more accepted amongst average Americans.

Bergen Community College is taking further steps to bridge the divide between the trans community and cisgender (non-trans) students.

On November 8, BCC held its fourth annual Transgender Awareness Day. A crowd packed into a room on the first floor of the Technology Building as the aroma of freshly-brewed coffee and finger-snacks wafted over a sea of intrigued students who wanted to learn more about their fellow transgender classmates.

The keynote speaker of the Transgender Awareness Day event was a United States Army veteran named Jennifer Long, who spoke about her time in the military as well as the initial reactions of those close to her after she came out as trans.

Long had done tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, spec ops missions in South America and the Middle East during the Desert Storm campaign, and worked security detail at Guantanamo Bay prison.

Long had attributed her attraction to a military career to the concept of "hyper-masculinity," when trans women enter masculine professions to quell how they truly feel on the inside.

Jennifer went into personal detail during her speech, perhaps the most powerful anecdote being when she spoke about dressing up as a woman for the first time at a trans bar in New York City.

"Jennifer was breathing outside air for the first time," and Long felt accepted, but ashamed because of her family's conservative ideals.

Long recounted her time in Afghanistan working as a security advisor with French forces on the frontline. Because French culture encourages the use of co-ed showers and restrooms, Long felt accepted because she didn't feel comfortable in the men's room.

Long actually felt some acceptance from her brothers and sisters on the frontline. When her estrogen pills were found by an army doctor, Long had to come out to a few close friends, some of whom actually chipped in and bought Jennifer a sports bra.

"This [sports bra] was the greatest gift because it was a gift of acceptance," Long said.

Jennifer earned a bronze star

for her service in Afghanistan, as well as the French National Defense Medal; however, after she was found out on Facebook by her employer, she was honorably discharged.

When Jennifer had to reclaim her military ID, she showed up dressed as her natural self, which acted as a symbolic victory against the very institution that discriminated against her.

Long's story highlights that of many trans Americans. After fighting and saving lives for her country with a courage and conviction unparalleled by most, Jennifer was treated as a second-class citizen, forcibly discharged from the profession that dictated her life for over a decade.

After Long's speech, a panel of transgender students and professors sat to take questions. The panel included DJ Scheibe, a Bergen professor, Justice Gaines, a Rhode Island poet and activist, Aaron Barthold, a world languages major at Bergen and the Torch's very own layout editor, Charlie Leppert.

The panel unanimously concluded that BCC has made proper accommodations to trans students. According to Aaron Barthold, Bergen has been very successful with making trans students feel at home, the only thing the school could work on is creating more gender-neutral bathrooms in auxiliary buildings like the Technology Building.

Bergen's Transgender Awareness Day brought about an exchange of ideas and stories that truly encapsulated the themes of transgender acceptance and awareness that are becoming all the more prominent in the year 2017.

Hopefully, Bergen will hold more events like these in the future so that students, faculty and attendees alike can learn more about their transgender counterparts.



Counter Clockwise: Jennifer Long addressing the crowd; Aaron Barthold a Bergen World Languages Major; the panel consisting of Aaron Barthold, Charlie Leppert, Justice Gaines, and Professor DJ Scheibe answering questions from the crowd; Charlie Leppert, the Torch layout editor and a literature major at Bergen; Justice Gaines, a Rhode Island based poet and activist; Tim Eustace, the state assemblyman for the 38th district of New Jersey, who delivered a call to action at the closing of the event. // Rebecca Karpinski



Thor Ragnarok: Weird, Wacky, and Wonderful

pg. 17

Labyrinth Literary Magazine Winner

pg. 15



FEATURES

The Torch

Native American Heritage Month

ESMERALDA LORA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Every November, Native Americans all around the United States are recognized for the historical event, trying to defend their land against European invaders from the days of Christopher Columbus, who discovered America to their historical and modern contribution in our society today.

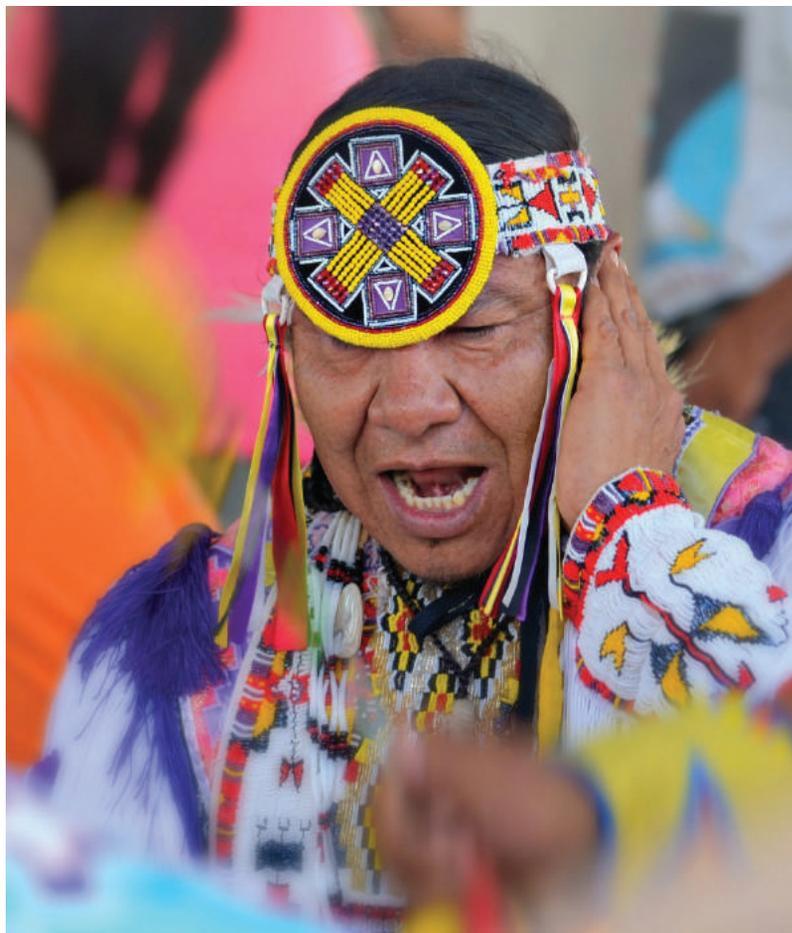
There are over 100 tribes of the Native American community all around the United States that have served a purpose politically, socially and religiously. Just recently, tribes like Standing Rock Sioux show examples of what tribes are capable of when it comes down to what they believe in.

The Standing Rock Sioux tribe protested against the North Dakota pipeline and other tribes around the United States gathered to support them. They united in a time of need and support in defense to keep the oil pipeline from entering their reserved land, despite the bigotry they faced.

Native American Heritage Month is a reminder of the diversity in America and celebrates their contribution and culture in the United States.

Thanksgiving is celebrated differently for many people in America, like camping in front of stores to be the first online to get their hands on their desired possessions on sale or providing feast for families to gather together.

Others dedicate the day to the homeless by providing a cooked turkey meal, but for Native Americans, November 24th may not be seen as a celebration. It is a reminder of how their culture outlived many years and



A man in traditional dress at the Nanticoke Lenne-Lenape 2014 PowWow. // flickr.com

survived.

For Native Americans, Thanksgiving is more of a ritual of everyday practice than a one day celebration. They give thanks for the gifts that nature provided them and the Earth they live in.

There is a conversation about the history books in school being false on what they are teaching children about Thanksgiving by Native Americans that Pilgrims and Natives gathered together for their first Thanksgiving feast declaring peace among themselves.

Native Americans just gave up their territory to make space for more settlers to come to America.

Truth be told, Native Americans were forced out of their lands and Pilgrims brought diseases to the Native Americans. They faced a major increase in deaths among the Native American government seeming like genocide, as well as experiencing enslavement.

There is a day that Natives gather together to mourn over the Pilgrims arrival, dated in the same day of Thanksgiving. This day is to truly educate non-Natives and Native Americans about what happened when Pilgrims arrived.

They march around in protest at Plymouth, Massachusetts where their ancestors were slaughtered and land was stolen from them. Thanksgiving has more to offer from the Native American themselves and I encourage that we all get to know more about them.

Dental Hygiene Clinic in Health Professions Building

ANDREA RUIZ
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Did you know that Bergen has a Dental Hygiene Clinic located at the Health Professions Building? Before the Health Professions Building even opened, the Dental Clinic was located in the Pitkin Education Center in room S-327.

Since then, while the Health Professions Building was being built, they have decided to move the Hygiene Clinic over there. The clinic is open to all BCC students and the public, which provides precautionary dental care services.

It is managed by students in the dental hygiene program, who are under the control of certified dentists and dental hygienists. The dental hygiene clinic offers many services to BCC students and the public.

Located on the BCC website, the Dental Hygiene Clinic says, "our students have been providing quality care to the community since 1972."

Since September, there have been advertisements for children of ages 6-14 years old.

There are free appointments that are funded by a grant called Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, which were held Friday, September 29th, Monday October 9th, Saturday of October 14 at 9:00 a.m., and Friday of November 10. The last appointment will be on Monday, December 11th at 8:30 a.m. or 1:00 p.m..

If anyone has children, I'm sure



// Andrea Ruiz

they would be pleased with having a teeth clean or any other services done for clean, white teeth.

Other than the appointments for the children, the services given at the dental hygiene clinic are examinations and prophylaxis (prevention for disease), x-rays - Bitewing X-rays, sealants and

fluoride treatment. The prophylaxis: (cleaning) is \$20, x-rays: Bitewing X-Rays are \$5, Full Mouth X-Rays are \$15, a single x-ray is \$5, which can be sent to your dentist, sealants \$5 per tooth and fluorides for \$5.

During the fall semester, appointments are available at 8:30 a.m.

and 1:00 p.m. on

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The Spring semester is Monday through Friday. For the ones who are taking summer classes, it's on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:00 a.m.

The clinic is located at the Health Professions Building on the 1st floor.

BCC Students Share Their Holiday Traditions

ALYSSA BLUNDO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

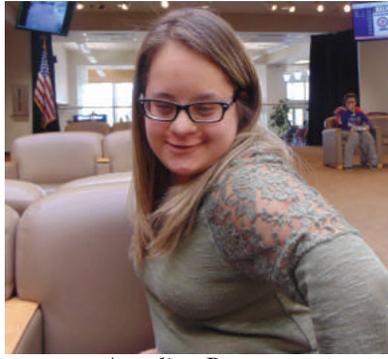
BCC students were given the opportunity to share their holiday traditions. These traditions have brought them and their families so much joy, and they would like to share them with students, faculty and staff members at Bergen Community College.



Kevin Chaves
Major: Criminal Justice
"I will be spending time with family."



Shhil Vitha
Major: Business: Accounting
"My family does celebrate Christmas, but we are not technically Christian, but we still do festivities and stuff."



Angelica Romano
Major: Undecided
"For me, I go to church every Christmas Eve."



Janisa Mendez
Major: Biology
"I go to Pennsylvania with my cousins, and we all go camping out there for like a weekend."



Khadija Ziauddin
Major: Business Accounting
"I like to give presents to literally everyone I know, even if it's not about how much I spend on them, it's that knowing everyone gets something."



Robert Meg
Major: Unknown
"My grandma lives with me, and so all of our family comes to our house to light the candles whenever it is nighttime and we have a big first meal on the first day of Hanukkah and the younger kids get like presents and everything."

// Rebecca Karpinski

Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Sarah Shurts

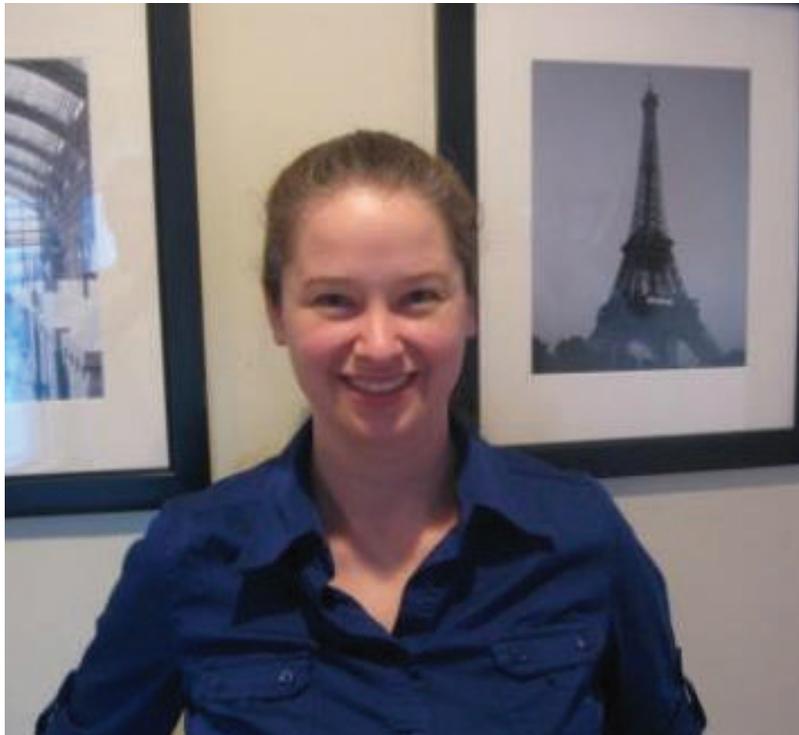
JULIANA OLEKSY
NEWS EDITOR

Dr. Sarah Shurts is an honors history professor who runs the History club every Tuesday at Bergen Community College. While asking students who know Dr. Shurts what their opinion of her is, I received a completely positive consensus of how truly incredible Dr. Shurts is. As someone who has taken multiple of her courses, I can verify the assessment that she is a professor who puts her students first and goes over and beyond for them.

Dr. Shurts has always wanted to teach ever since she was little and always pretended to be a teacher while playing as a child. She shared with me her journey to teaching at a college level, "I started when I was fifteen or sixteen teaching dance lessons, and for a long time I thought I was going to teach fourth or fifth grade. Then, I fell in love with history, and I decided that I wanted to focus on teaching students history, so that sort of pushed me towards high school. I taught high school for five years, and I loved it. You know, I would go back in a heartbeat, but I really wanted to be able to do more. I wanted them to do some readings and be able to talk about some more complex ideas, so that lead me to teaching college."

Dr. Shurts originated from North Carolina where she completed all of her schooling, including her graduate degrees. She ended up moving up North because her husband took a job in New Jersey. She went about looking for a job an hour away from her home, and Bergen happened to be hiring. Dr. Shurts describes this as "serendipity" and feels "very proud, privileged and honored to be here."

I asked Shurts why she chose to teach at a community college, and she told me, "I actually see community college to be no different from a four year school. I'm just getting students for their freshman and sophomore years -- at the beginning of their college experience as they are exploring their interests and trying to find their profession and academic



// bergen.edu

paths- rather than at the end. I've found it incredibly rewarding to help students recognize their abilities and their strengths and move into a four year environment where they can complete those pursuits. I also am glad that the community college allows me to work with students who often have not been successful in the past, or who have been told for financial or other reasons that college is not for them, or who are returning after other professional experiences and are nervous about starting back to school. It is exciting to watch students discover an academic passion and succeed even when they had been told they could not."

Both history and teaching are Dr. Shurts' passions, so I asked her about what made her want to teach history particularly. She told me that her family was always taking trips to places like Gettysburg and Jamestown,

which she thinks is really important to getting students involved and excited about history early. In addition, Shurts' family always watched documentaries and historical movies, so she describes all of these history-related things became a "family affair." She said, "My brothers are History Majors, and my sister is a Latin teacher. It was sort of in our family to begin with."

Dr. Shurts continued saying that if she could put her discipline into a word, she would use the word it would be "storytelling." She explained to me, "So you're telling the story of other people's lives, so it's got psychology, it's got sociology, it's got art, it's got music and it's got science. History touches on so many different disciplines, it makes use of so many different disciplines and it influences so many disciplines. Everything has a history, and you can tell the story of everything. So, to me,

it's the most fascinating thing to study because it's the story of who we are, the story of all of the things we've accomplished and all the disciplines that we pursue."

Next, I asked Dr. Shurts what her favorite thing is about being a professor, and she didn't even hesitate in her answer of the students. She expanded upon her answer, "It is being able to share something that I am really passionate about that really excites me with someone else. What I really love is watching students who don't care or really think that they despise this particular field become passionate and excited and find something that interests them that they want to pursue, want to ask questions about and by the end of it, talk about becoming History Majors because something has translated to them somehow. That's sort of my goal."

Well, she accomplished her goal with me. I walked into her classroom my first semester of Bergen Community College just wanting to check-off my history requirements. However, by the end of the semester, I found myself intrigued by the storytelling aspect of history, wanting to learn and to know more about the discipline.

When I asked if she has any goals for the future, Dr. Shurts told me that she is working on a book right now, and that her only goal right now is to get that out and finished. "I'm looking forward to finishing this textbook for Oxford, which is a collection of resources that helps teach students to do the work of history and see how historians craft our discipline and how it is relevant to other fields and to our lives today rather than just read a text and answer questions. I like the idea of being able to share my ideas about how to teach history beyond BCC by putting these materials out for students across the country," Dr. Shurts said.

Dr. Shurts' passions for what she does exudes when she teaches. She is one of the most genuine people I have ever met and really cares about her students. Shurts takes her students' potentials, believes in them and helps them to reach their goals, even if it's not in history.



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Holiday Checklist

ALYSSA BORGES
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

We've finally made it to the end of the year, which is known as the most wonderful time of the year. Holiday music on the radio, Christmas films playing every night on television and holiday decorations lighting up the streets.

However, there is so much more to the wonderful holiday season, like the other various ways to celebrate it.

Starting on November 18th through January 1st, Holiday in the Park will make its debut at Six Flags Great Adventure. This includes millions of glittering lights, dazzling holiday entertainment, delicious seasonal treats, Santa's village and many popular rides magically transforming the summer thrill destination into a winter wonderland according to the Six Flags website. There will also be festive, holiday foods and snacks at the park, as well as perfect gifts to purchase for some holiday shopping.

Although it may be getting colder outside, there are still ways to enjoy doing outdoor activities. One of them is snow tubing.

Camelback Mountain in Tannersville, P.A. offers three-hour snow tubing sessions in the Pocono Mountains for \$25 during the midweek non-holiday period and \$35 during the weekend and holiday periods.

There will also be Galactic Snow Tubing according to their website, "Camelback Resort is excited to launch 'Galactic Snow Tubing' for the 2017/18 winter season!"

Already the biggest snow tubing park in the USA, now includes an after dark "Galactic" LED light show. With



// flickr.com

up to 42 lightning, fast snow tubing lanes and Basecamp One Lodge, you and your crew are sure to have an out of this world experience.

Without a shadow of a doubt, New York City is definitely the place to visit during the holidays. In November during Thanksgiving, they will host their annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade that include some performers, as well as amazing floats. The performers this year are Smokey Robinson, Common, Cam, Andra Day, 98 Degrees, Sabrina Carpenter, Bebe Rexha, Kat Graham, and The Radio City Rockettes to mention a few.

The worldwide symbol of the holidays in New York City is the The Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree.

The tree was lit for the first time this year on Wednesday, November 29, with live performances from 7-9pm, at Rockefeller Plaza, between West 48th and West 51st Streets and Fifth and Sixth Avenues. Gwen Stefani performed as well as Brett Eldredge, Leslie Odom Jr., Jennifer Nettles and The Tenors.

While at Rockefeller Center you might also want to visit the classic NYC ice skating rink and if it's not too crowded, skate as well. Bryant Park is another alternative for ice skating in the city.

During New Year's Eve, New York City is still the top spot and host for the event. It may be crazy packed near the New Year's Eve Ball in Times Square, but it may also be an unforgettable experience being in the city in general to celebrate the new year.

Labyrinth Contest Winner: *Reverie* by Michael John Mele

Thank you to everyone who submitted to this contest, and congratulations to our winner, Michael John Mele.

Any inquiries about or submissions to the upcoming edition of the Labyrinth We hope all who submitted to this contest will also submit to our spring print edition.

Charlie Leppert, Labyrinth Editor-in-Chief

Reverie

is the imagination
like horses who believe the gallop
is followed by the whip.
There is no freedom
our thoughts and judgments
are of minds all alike.
We people looking down on people

the rain falls down on us.

I see nothing honorable
in myself
living working being in this place,
not pride
not production,
not in strangers
not in family.
Tense we are
living

dying in this place.
The muscles grip the bones
the blood in the head rushes
and overflows,
migraines heating up our bodies
and making us sick.
Stuck in this masquerade
I can't take the routines any longer,
the work is boring
like listening to traffic outside
day after day
the horizon burns

our done
and
undone
tasks

vanish any trace of the shriek cry of

yesterday

awakening

asleep

Labyrinth 2018

The Labyrinth, Bergen Community College's student literary magazine, is seeking poetry, short fiction, one-act plays, creative essays, and artwork for its Spring 2018 issue. In addition to publication, accepted works will automatically be considered for the Ninth Annual Creative Writing and Visual Arts Contest, sponsored by *The Labyrinth* in association with the Bergen Community College creative writing program, Bergenstages, and the BCC Art Department.

<p>Prizes: \$100 Best Fiction \$100 Best Poetry \$100 Best One-Act Play \$100 Best Creative Essay \$100 Best Visual Art \$100 Best Photography</p>	<p>Deadline: March 1, 2018 Submit in ONE Word document to: thelabyrinth@bergen.edu Subject line: [Author's last name] [Title of Work] Questions: Call Professor Mary Crosby (201) 879-8931. See below for submission guidelines:</p>
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Guidelines: - Contest and publication in *The Labyrinth* limited to students of BCC enrolled in academic years 2016 and 2017, including part-time and Learning-in-Retirement students. - All work submitted must be original and previously unpublished. By submitting to *The Labyrinth*, the contributor verifies that the work is definitively his or her own work and has never been publicly presented in any format, including print, personal blog, internet sharing site, or social media website. - Only electronic submissions will be accepted. Please format text documents to be readable by Microsoft Word. Artwork and photography should be submitted electronically in JPEG or PDF format, minimum 300 DPI. - Word length: fiction and essay 5000 words maximum; poetry, 35 lines maximum; play, approximately 10 minutes performance time. - Artwork in any 2-dimensional medium will be considered, although contestants should be aware that works will be printed in black and white and only those which are most suitable to a small-magazine format will be accepted. - Each work should be submitted separately; do not group works into one email. Maximum number of submissions per individual: 3 in each prose category, 5 poems. Multiple submissions in fiction, poetry, drama, and essay are permitted. Artwork submissions, maximum 5 in each category. - All text submissions must be typed. Prose must be double-spaced. Plays must be in standard dramatic manuscript form. - All work must include the contributor's name, student ID number, full address, telephone number, and email on each page. Contributors are advised to thoroughly edit and proofread work before submission. Artists and photographers, please title each submission.

The Labyrinth is waiting for you!
Check us out on Facebook: @BCLabyrinth

Review: *A Bad Moms Christmas*

KEMRICK PETREE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As Christmas arrives, we see the theme of the holidays start to break out, and many people are starting to get involved. Entertainment has everyone getting ready for the holiday spirit by releasing many holiday films.

One in particular is *Bad Moms Christmas*, which features actresses Mila Kunis, Kristen Bell, Kathryn Hahn, Christine Baranski, Cheryl Hines and Susan Sarandon.

The film follows three best friends: Amy (Mila Kunis), Kiki (Kristen Bell) and Carla (Kathryn Hahn), who are getting ready to celebrate the Christmas season with their families. However, there's a huge twist that takes a turn for the worse when the girls' mothers make a surprise visit. This then turns this family, loving holiday into one of pure mishaps and confusion.

The three women will have to endure the struggles of dealing with the holidays and prepping for the family, while at the same time trying to enjoy themselves.

Amy's parents, Ruth (Christine Baranski) and Hank (Peter Gallagher) take Amy off the wall, and not only because of the fact that her mother is a total control freak. Amy must show her that she can handle Christmas on her own.

Kiki has her own bizarre mother-daughter relationship. Her mother, Sandy (Cheryl Hines), likes to be really close with her daughter, and it can be seen in a strange way.

She tries to show her mom that she has to step back a little bit without having her hurt her mother's heart. The scenario gets a little too weird when she cuts her hair like Kiki's, and even watches her and her husband get



Mila Kunis, star of the movie. // Wikimedia Commons

intimate in the bedroom.

Carla is a spitting image of her mother, Isis (Susan Sarandon) from her wild and erotic personality, to her loving and shy, motherly traits. Once Carla meets a new man Ty Swindle (Justin Hartley) from her job, the two hit off right away, and Isis enjoys Ty, as well at the bar.

This movie was pure comedy at its finest, from the jokes to the actuality that happens within homes, the producers definitely had taken their time with this one. The actresses that were the main characters had me in tears from the beginning to the end.

I have never watched a movie where the whole female cast swear like sailors, and I couldn't help but laugh. The difficulty to enjoy this film was hard, especially when you watch it on Amazon Firestick, and the quality is horrible.

Winter Film Preview: What to Expect



// Wikimedia Commons

TREVOR GIOIA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

With winter fast approaching and award season coming up, what movies should be on your radar? Word of warning, this winter's movie preview will go into 2018, so get hyped.

December of 2017 is the last month of this year, and here is what to expect. On December 8, sports fans get a film about the interesting figure skater Tonya Harding. I, Tonya looks like it took inspiration from the fourth wall, reminiscent of moments from *Goodfellas*. The film is about Tonya Harding (Margot Robbie) and personal ordeals she went through.

"May the force be with you" on December 15, *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* comes out with *Star Wars* fans foaming at the mouth for answers to the series' most burning questions. *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* is about young rebel warrior Rey, who trains with Luke Skywalker while the rest of galaxy is dealing with the destruction of New Republic. This film is directed by Rian Johnson and has all returning and a few new cast members. I already got my tickets for this grand adventure.

If you're looking for something more Oscar-worthy, than *The Post* is right to film for you. *The Post* is about the Pentagon Papers in the 1970s and the newspaper publishing said papers. *The Post* is directed by Steven Spielberg and stars Meryl Streep, Tom Hanks and

an all-star cast.

January is a slow month, but one interesting piece is coming out on January 5th, *Insidious: The Last Key* deals with Dr. Elise Rainier's family home. This is the final chapter of *Insidious* hopefully. This is because of award season in January and February, it would start a dry spell.

February comes back with bigger releases such as the final *Fifty Shades of Grey* film - if you're into that.

On February 16, the first African-American superhero comes to screen *Black Panther*. *Black Panther* is about T'Challa (Chadwick Boseman) returning to Wakanda in terminology. This *Marvel* film is directed by Ryan Coogler and stars a great all-star cast, so definitely see this film on a big screen.

A possible film in February is the new *Cloverfield* movie. The *Cloverfield* movie could be about space station disparaging where no one truly knows. Well, that's my preview of winter movies to watch, have a good holiday break!



// Wikimedia Commons, Vimeo.com

Thor Ragnarok: Weird, Wacky and Wonderful



// Wikimedia Commons

TREVOR GIOIA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

If you said to me that a Thor movie was going to be the most like a comic book, I wouldn't have believed you. Oh man, *Thor: Ragnarok* proved me wrong, and I love it.

Thor: Ragnarok is the third Thor movie and knocks it out of the park compared to the other two Thor movies. This film is about Thor, who loses his hammer to the new Queen Asgard Hela (Kate Blanchett), and arriving on planet Sakaar, finds the grandmaster (Jeff Goldblum) enjoying gladiator fights with the Hulk (Mark Ruffalo).

Thor: Ragnarok comes from New Zealand director Taika Waititi, who made a few small films such as, *Boy*, *Eagle and Shark*, *Hunt for the Wilder*

People and What We Do In The Shadows.

Thor: Ragnarok is surprisingly short, but that plays into one of its strengths. The other strength is how good the actors' chemistry is between each other. This can best be seen in the "get help" scene which is a hilarious and great relationship moment. The majority of the movie, plays into that "witty banter," which is similar to the original *Star Wars* trilogy.

The characters of *Thor: Ragnarok* are different, but feels welcomed. The "Revenagers" team is made of *Thor* (Chris Hemsworth), *Valkyrie* (Tessa Tomson), *Loki* (Tom Hiddleston), and *The Hulk/Dr. Bruce Banner* (Mark

Ruffalo).

This team of actors brought such great moments of comedy and heart to the movie. Now for the villains of *Thor: Ragnarok*, Hela was a great foil for Thor to face and had a few "oh crap" moments in the film. The best character in the whole film is the giant rock creature called Korg (Taiki Waititi), who gave the most laugh-out-loud moments.

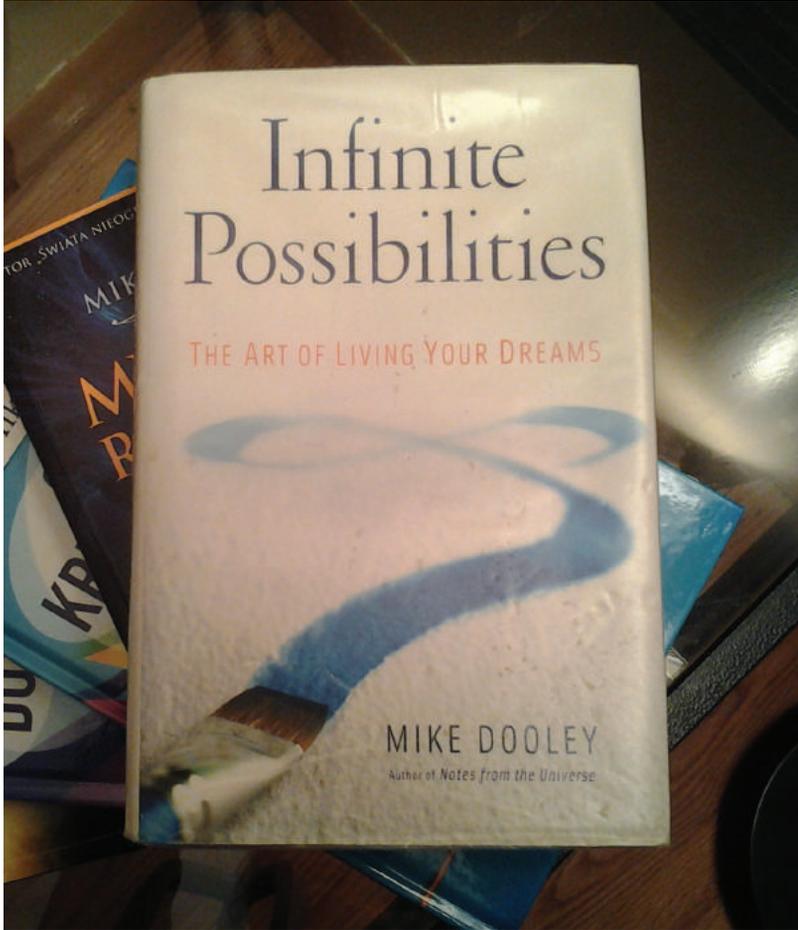
The style of *Thor: Ragnarok* is quite unique in that it feels like a comic book with the vibrant colors on planet Sakaar. This film is weird, wacky and wonderful which is all rolled into a film with a classic rock feel throughout.

As awesome 1980's high fantasy

film in vain of *Excalibur*, with a synth score that makes it into an awesome, weird time at the movies, I feel that each background was made to look right out of a comic book.

The weakness in this is that the tone sets too much like a comic book. *Thor: Ragnarok*, being very fun and comic book type could turn some people off. In my honest opinion, it's a great Thor film and Taika Waititi knocks average film into something more. If do you stay for the mid-credits for *Thor: Ragnarok*, you will get a hint of what's to come in May when the *Avengers* face Thanos. So for that, I give *Thor: Ragnarok* a 5 out of 5.

The Book That Will Change Your Life



// Katarzyna Zurawska

KATARZYNA ZURAWSKA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

“To be yourself and to love yourself, you must listen to yourself and realize that you are the ultimate authority on you-- the chief executive officer of your life.”

Infinite Possibilities is one of Mike Dooley's books which develops the subconscious and pushes the reader to rethink his or her life. The book offers an uncommon interpretation of the world and how everything around us works.

The book is arranged in an accessible way; there are twelve chapters and each of them has a few or more parts. Readers have many opportunities to stop reading and take a break without losing the plot.

These chapters are very helpful when we do not have the whole day to sit in an armchair and read a book. Mostly, we read during our lunch breaks or on our way to school and work. A small part in every chapter is more convened for readers.

Each part discusses different behavior, beliefs or our reactions on some situations in our lives. Therefore, each end of the part gives us that time to think through the author's message.

Infinite Possibilities is a guide for happiness, which bets with the universe rules of the world. It says everyone is a part of the universe and creates it. The book describes how we should behave to make our lives better. Also, it says everything has some reason.

Only we create experiences and situations that are either good or bad. Certain situations can appear only if we are ready to face the consequences, even if we feel it overwhelmed us. But after all we discover that this experience shows us things in new light.

Infinite Possibilities is an easy-to-read book, which focuses on improving reader's self-consciousness and how to learn positive thinking. The main thought accompanying the entire book is “thoughts become things,” so we have to be careful what we wish for.

The History of Hanukkah

PURNASREE SAHA
FEATURES EDITOR

In November and December, Jewish people celebrate the holiday known as Hanukkah, or Chanukah. According to history.com, “Hanukkah” celebrates the dedication of the rebuilt temple in the sixth century BCE on the 25th of Kislev on the Hebrew calendar.

During the celebrations today, a menorah lights up and entertainment includes food, games, and gifts. According to jewishgiftplace.com, “for most Jews, the centerpiece of Hanukkah is the menorah, a nine-branched candelabrum.

A dreidel, a four sided spinning top with a Hebrew letter on each face, is a traditional toy most Jews play during Hanukkah.

On each of eight holiday nights, after the sun is down, another candle is lit representing the miracle that inspired the holiday. A ninth candle, the Shamash or helper candle, usually in the center of the menorah, is used to light the others. Menorahs are made in either glass, aluminum, pottery, wood,

and various metals.

Traditionally, before people light the menorah, the whole family must be present and a blessing is recited. The candles should burn for at least half an hour. Family members sing and pray together and often the menorah is placed in the window to be seen by passers by.

Jews cook traditional foods in oil during Hanukkah and this includes potato pancakes, “latkes,” and jam-filled donuts. Jewish grocery stores or restaurants often provide free samples of latkes during the week of Hanukkah.

This year Hanukkah begins on the evening of December 12th and ends on the evening of December 20th.

Like Hanukkah, the Hindu festival, Diwali, also called the festival of light, spans about eight days with lights and candles in windows, gifts, and special foods such as samosas, potato pastries, which like latkes, are fried in oil. People of different religions can relate to each other's traditions that share common elements.



// pxhere.com

Ready For It?: The Comeback of the Singer with the Bad Reputation

JULIANA OLEKSY
NEWS EDITOR

Forget every single preconception you have about Taylor Swift's music, because “the old Taylor is dead.” After time out of the spotlight, this singer has fully shed her girl next door image for a more mature album.

This comeback album is more authentic than her other albums, and she is not “playing the victim” anymore. Instead, her songs are edgier and are filled with metaphorical lyrics of admittance to being imperfect and facing her past mistakes.

An example of this is “I Did Something Bad” and “Getaway Car;” both speculated to be about Calvin Harris and Tom Hiddleston. Taylor still has her diss tracks of “This is Why We Can't Have Nice Things” and the satirical song “Look What You Made Me Do” for Kanye West and his wife Kim Kardashian.

The techno-pop album's songs mesh together with the common element of her bad reputation. There's a fan theory floating around the internet that Taylor's album is split in half, signified by the use of ellipses in the song titles of “...Ready for It?” and “So It Goes...”

I would have to say that this is a valid theory because the second half of



// Wikimedia Commons

the album is more intimate.

“...Ready for It?” starts the album off with a bang with Taylor Swift rapping, which she is able to pull off well. The rapping theme continues with “End Game” featuring Future and Ed Sheeran. Although the rap verses of Sheeran and Future are prominent in the song, Taylor is not overshadowed and still holds her own in the song.

During her year out of the spotlight, Taylor has fallen in love with her current boyfriend, Joe Alwyn. Up

until now, the romance has been kept undercover, but Taylor has beautifully penned her romantic journey into the majority of this album.

The main point that I picked up while listening to this album is that Taylor really wants her relationship to last. Another is how much Joe knows her and likes her for who she is, not what the media has to say about her. She is genuinely in love, and you can feel it through the emotion in her voice and lyrics.

My personal favorite songs would be “Call It What You Want” and “New Year's Day.” They're both singer-songwriter songs, with lyrics that make you want to fall deeply in love. The catchiest songs would be “Getaway Car” and “This is Why We Can't Have Nice Things,” which have been in my head since I purchased the album.

Taylor may have a bad reputation, but her Reputation has had a comeback. Here's to hoping to be able to get concert tickets!

Former BCC Head Coach Dies at 80



Guillen was head coach for nine years. // bergenccbulldogs.com

CHRISTOPHER MOLINA
SPORTS EDITOR

Salvador Guillen, who was the former head coach of Bergen's men's and women's tennis and soccer teams, and a tennis adjunct professor, has died.

Many at the Bergen Athletics Department are saddened by the news. Coach Guillen helped BCC to reach two region men's tennis championships in 2005 and 2013, where he earned Region XIX Men's Tennis Coach of the Year.

During his tenure, he coached ten All-American including several trips to the NJCAA Men's Tennis National tournament, where his team won 3rd place in 2013 and 4th place in 2014. He has also led the intramural program at BCC for over 10 years.

Coach Guillen began his coaching career at Bergen as an assistant coach in men's soccer in 1994. Later, he became head coach from 2002 to 2010. Aside from coaching soccer, he began coaching the men's tennis team in

2004.

Only after the 2015 season did he finish coaching for 12 years. He coached men's tennis and in 2013 he received a "10 Years of Service" award.

During his time as a coach for Bergen, he was a major impact as a coach and as a mentor. One of those impacted by him was former BCC men's soccer coach, Coach Freddy Herrera, who led men's soccer to win their first back-to-back region titles in 2015 and 2016.

"I played for him; I learned from him. I'm a soccer coach thanks to him, and he taught me to believe in myself! Thank you professor, and God be with you," Herrera said.

Many here at Bergen are privileged enough to have shared their time with Coach Guillen and the comfort in knowing of the positive impact he made on the students-athletes he coached for the last two decades remains unforgettable.

Brooklyn Nets Midseason Review

RYAN BLAKE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Brooklyn Nets made a blockbuster trade in the summer, acquiring D'angelo Russell and Timofey Mozgov from the Los Angeles Lakers for Brook Lopez. For the 28th pick, the Lakers drafted Kyle Kuzma and he's been an absolute beast for them.

Russell has been a star player for the Nets, averaging 20.9 points per game, along with 4.7 rebounds and 5.7 assists. Only players like Chris Paul, LeBron James, Michael Jordan and Tracy McGrady have had similar stat lines at the age 22 or younger.

Russell is one of the best young players in the league; he's equipped with elite passing vision and has a tremendous feel for the game. Not the fastest guy in the league, but has a very quick first step, a good finisher around the basket and has one of the best mid range pull-up jumpers in the league.

The negatives of his game is he turns the ball over a little too much, and he isn't shooting a great percentage from three, but that's because he's one of the few playmakers on his team, so there's not another guy that can drive, suck in the defense and kick it out to Russell for an easy shot. But Russell has exceeded expectations and he's only going to get better.

Now let's talk about the Nets as a team. They're currently sitting in 13th place in the Eastern Conference with a record of 5-8. Their Head Coach, Kenny Atkinson, is from the Spurs so he's a very smart guy; he has the Nets leading the league in pace - which means they shoot the most shots per game, more than any other team in the league.

They have an analytical approach to how they play; they shoot a ton of threes, which is how pretty much everyone is playing now. The Nets shoot 32.5 threes a game ranked 4th in the NBA.



// Wikimedia Commons

They are 4th in the NBA in points per game at 110.6. At the looks of it, you're probably thinking to yourself, "Wow, how are they only 5-8 with one of the best offenses in the league?" Well, their offense isn't so efficient.

They are 28th in the league at 3 point shooting percentage at 32.9%. When their threes aren't hitting, their offense goes in tailspin because they don't have a lot of playmakers that can get their own shot off the dribble.

Their defense is also a big problem. They rank 28th in the league at opposing teams points per game, and they give up 114 each game. Their main defensive issue is their lack of big men; they have Timofey Mozgov who isn't the best, and Jarrett Allen, who is a rookie, and has shown some flashes but is still young and doesn't get much playing time.

They also have Tyler Zeller who is decent, but he also doesn't play much. So they usually roll out Quincy Acy, Trevor Booker or Rondae Hollis Jefferson at the 5 who are all under 6' 8". Without a rim protector, other offenses can get whatever they want against the Nets' defense.

Here some positives about the Nets; they play hard, have some really good role players like Spencer Dinwiddie, Allen Crabbe, Joe Harris and Rondae Hollis Jefferson, who really improved his jumpshot and his overall game. Demmarre Carroll has also been pretty solid and Trevor Booker has been the team's best big guy.

If they continue to play hard and stay healthy, they'll hopefully end up with around 34 wins.

Rising and Falling of the Top Four

KEMRICK PETREE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

With the college football season rounding up, the playoffs shaking up and the bowl projections, fans are going insane.

Entering this weekend in the AP Top 5 Poll are followed by teams from the Big Five Conferences. The Bulldogs jumped to the No. 1 spot after beating South Carolina last weekend 24-10 and with an impressive earlier win over Notre Dame on September 9.

Taking on the Bulldogs this weekend was the Auburn Tigers. The Tigers came ranked in at No. 10, and had just come off of a big win against Texas A&M last week.

Auburn's quarterback, Jarrett Stidham, gave the Tigers a lot of help through the air; throwing 16 for 23 with 214 yards and three touchdowns. Auburn then went on to win 40-17 and will be knocking Georgia out of the playoff picture, but might still fall short as well.

Georgia fell down to No. 7 bumping the Tigers up to No. 6, which puts them in a great advantage for the playoffs.

Coming in ranked No. 2 was Alabama, who are undefeated still after coming off a win against LSU, but fell off the No. 1 spot after voter thought Georgia deserved it more.

The Crimson Tide had to travel to Davis Wade Stadium to take on the Mississippi State Bulldogs. The Bulldogs came out strong in the first quarter with an 11-yard run by Aeris Williams for his first touchdown of his two, Alabama retaking the No. 1 spot puts them back ahead at 10-0, which knocked Mississippi State down to 7-3.

As for Notre Dame, they unfortunately had a rough game against the Miami Hurricanes at their home field. Notre Dame came in ranked at

No. 3 after a win against Wake Forest, winning 48-37 which helped tally up some points for them.

Even though coming into this game 8-2, the Fighting Irish weren't worried about the Hurricanes, who were undefeated at 8-0 and ranked No. 7. Miami scored in the first quarter, off a 7-yard touchdown caught by Braxton Berrios from Quarterback Malik Rosier.

The passing game for Notre Dame on the other hand was a rough one, the Hurricanes intercepted three of the Fighting Irish's passes.

Late in the first, quarter Safety Jaquan Johnson intercepted a pass from

Notre Dame Quarterback Brandon Wimbush. Later that drive in two plays, Rosier scored on a 16-yard touchdown run, which added to their three total rushing touchdowns.

Miami Running backs, Travis Homer and DeeJay Dallas carried a lot of the load. Homer rushed for 146 yards on 18 carries, and Dallas rushed for 53 yards on 12 carries and a touchdown.

The Hurricanes' defense dominated the Fighting Irish with an interception being returned for a touchdown by cornerback Trajan Brandy at the end of the first half, leaving the score 27-0. They held Notre Dame to only 109 rushing yards and Running Back and

Heisman-watch candidate Josh Adams to only 40 yards. Notre Dame came into this game ranked No.5 in team rushing yards with 303 yards per game.

It wasn't until the third quarter when Notre Dame scored off a pass to Alize Jones from Brandon Wimbush, who went 10 for 21 of 119 yards. Miami went on to win by dominating Notre Dame 41-8, which helped keep their undefeated season going.

The Hurricanes went on to move up five spots to No. 2, which knocked Notre Dame down six spots on the poll to No. 9.

The No. 5 ranked Oklahoma Sooners and Heisman-watch candidate Quarterback Baker Mayfield, had the challenge of hosting No.6 TCU. Oklahoma came out with the win by beating the Horned Frogs 38-20. Mayfield went 18 of 27 for 333 yards and three touchdowns. The Sooners moved up two spots to No. 3 taking over Notre Dame's spot, while TCU dropped down to No. 11.

Clemson was able to keep their No. 4 spot on the polls by holding off Florida State Seminoles, who came into this game 3-5. The Tigers were able to have control over the game, with the weight being pushed by the running game. Their 228 rushing yards helped them gain four touchdowns, and holding the Seminoles to 229 total yards, opposed to Clemson's 378 total yards.

The playoff bracket as of Nov. 12 has Alabama at No.1 Miami, No.2 Oklahoma, No.3 and Clemson No. 4. Alabama will travel to Auburn to take on Nov. 25, while Clemson will be travel to South Carolina Nov. 25. Miami will travel to Pitt Nov. 24, while Oklahoma will be hosting West Virginia on Nov. 25 to take on the Mountaineers.



Clemson's home field. // Wikimedia Commons



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The Torch

SPORTS



Bergen Basketball Has Talent to Turn Season Around

CHRISTOPHER MOLINA
SPORTS EDITOR

Beginning the college basketball season is challenging for every team, which is something that BCC men's basketball understands fully.

After coming off a win at the start of the season against Johnson college, The men's basketball team suffered a four-straight losing streak, which had Head Coach Donald Osbourne train his players hard in order to fix the problems the team needs to overcome.

"We had some tough losses, where [we] did not play well on one of those games. We were over-matched [and] they were great games [but] the problem is that we were fouling too much [and] giving them more opportunities to get free foul shots on the foul line," said coach Osbourne.

In spite of the ongoing loses, the team was able to break that losing streak by a win over Ulster County Community College on Thursday the



Yohanly Ortiz // BergenCCBulldogs.com

November 16th with a score of 83-77. This helped the team turn the tide, knowing that it's too early in the season to fail. That win showed that they had overcome those problems they had prior, which made the head coach very pleased.

"In the last game we did not foul as much. Our defense was tremendous last game, [and] we held the team down from 95 points to 77," said coach Osbourne.

And with that tremendous defense, the rest of the team is looking to build from that and continue through the rest of the season.

With every practice and game, Coach Osbourne expects a lot from his players in hopes to continue the stride of success on the court.

"What we're going to do is what we do every game: throw the whole kitchen sink at that and see what happens," said Coach Osbourne.

Bergen Cross Country Finishes Strong



Women's Cross Country at Nationals. // BergenCCBulldogs.com

CHRISTOPHER MOLINA
SPORTS EDITOR

The Bergen Bulldogs performed well at National's. The men's and women's team gave it their all Saturday beating out many runners despite for the women's team not having a full team due to injuries.

The Bulldogs finished in 11th place with an average time of 29:37.36 out of 29 teams who competed in the 2017 NJCAA National Cross Country meet that was hosted by Holyoke CC in Massachusetts.

In Nationals, sophomore Justine Conca finished the meet in 13th place out of 135 runners, with an estimated time of 20:18.6, and at regions she received 1st place in Division III two years in a row which made everyone on her team very proud.

"She had a rough year with injuries; she possibly has a stress fracture on her foot. So for her to still do that, it's phenomenal how that girl pushes herself," said Head Coach Deana Dedovitch.

Coming in 13th place helped earned Conca an All American Honorable Mention.

Taking in 104th place was Katiana Mendoza with a time of 25:41.2, and Elinor Hershkovitz finished in 114th place with a time of 26:56.1.

But that success wasn't a surprise for many considering the performance played out by the Bergen's Women's Cross Country team, who finished in second place in both the Region XIX Championship and Conference Championship. And much of that success came from the top five finishers

were, Justine Conca, Katiana Mendoza, Maria Pia, Paredes Cordova, Janisa Mendez and Elinor Hershkovitz.

"Due to their excitement of competing in a big meet like nationals, everyone was really excited, there like dedicated, they came to practices they came to meets, so overall perform at a good level," said Malhar Vyas

Leading the men's team was sophomore, Malhar Vyas, who led his team by finishing in 58th place out of 203 runners, with an estimated time of 29:04.9, a finish that he is very pleased about.

"It's like a reward to come to that place, so yeah I'm really pleased with that result," said Vyas.

He was followed by other three of his runners; like Christopher Loughman who finished 70th place with a 29:24.8, Thomas Lotito finished 71st with a time of 29:28.0 and coming in 72nd was Richard Wisse with a time of 29:37.7. Sophomore, Nikko Reyes, finalized the team scoring by finishing in 102nd place with a time of 30:31.4.

Ending the meet for the Bulldogs was freshman, Edwin Asitimbay who placed 113th, and sophomore, Andy Jaipersaud in 135th place.

With the end of the 2017 Cross Country season, many from the Athletic Department send their congrats to the Bulldogs for a successful season and best wishes to their sophomores Christopher Loughman, Andy Jaipersaud, Nikko Reyes, Malhar Vyas, Justine Conca and Katiana Mendoza in their future endeavors.

"I'm really gonna miss my team and my coaches, [and] overall running cross country for Bergen," said Vyas.

Inside Men's Basketball 2017 Season



Tariq Cheatom // BergenCCBulldogs.com

CHRISTOPHER MOLINA
SPORTS EDITOR

The men's basketball team under first year head coach Donald Osbourne has been a roller coaster. At first starting off with a win over Bronx Community College with a score of 103 to 53 in beginning of the season, but later their season fell into a swoop after losing four straight games. Fortunately the teams bounced back with a win against Ulster County Community College with a score of 84 to 71. Not only it was break through from their losing streak but it was even a bigger win form the bulldogs over a team that came in with a 5-1 record.

Considering it's only a month into the season, the team that has a long way to go before the season ends in late February. The reasons for the team's four straight losing record was from fouling something that head coach Osbourne made clear about. "we had some tough losses where we did not

play well in one of those games, we were over matched, they were great games, the problem was we were fouling too much giving more opportunities to free foul shots from the foul line" said head coach Osbourne. But with every mistake comes with a lesson to be learned. Which helped lead up to their victory over Ulster County Community College. "In the last game we did not foul as much, we only committed 19 fouls as opposed to 27 to 30 that we used to committing," said Osbourne. And with those corrections, the team hopes to continue that streak through the rest of the season. "We held them all in check, we held them to 18 point under their average per game, so it was pretty good" said Osbourne. Head coach Osbourne also credited the win from the number of fans who showed their support. This helped Bring in alot of intensity to the game.

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