Gay kiss-in still causing controversy
As LGBTF considers legal options, Mercer tells them no more kissing

I don't sit here and tell you that everything that the security officers did was right. I wouldn't sit here and just throw that kind of paint over a situation. I won't say it was wrong either.

-Bryan Marshall, Director of College Safety

By Matthew White
Senior Reporter

Mercer administrators continue to respond to the events of February 18, when the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Friends (LGBTF) club clashed with security during an SGA-approved kiss-in event. The event, which took place at 12:25 PM, in the Student Center, followed in a tradition of non-violent awareness-raising actions and was intended to spark discussion of gay issues both on and off campus.

During the event, gay couples kissed as LGBTF members blew whistles and shouted affirmations.

The first kiss sparked an immediate response from students congre-gated in the cafeteria. Many cheered and applauded, while others made disapproving remarks or left the room.

Security officers arrived and informed the kiss-in participants that they were blocking access to the cafeteria and that the whistles sounded like a fire alarm. As reported in the Voice's exclusive online article, "LBGTF and security clash over kiss-in," the LGBTF-stopped blowing their whistles and moved out of the way, then continued kissing.

At this point, several eye-witnesses observed that security guards began pulling the kissing couples apart.

Francesca Scirocco, President of LGBTF and kiss-in participant, described how she was physically separated from her girlfriend by Security Officer Anthony Mancino.

"He didn't say 'excuse me, please move.' Nothing. He basically just started pulling us apart. When I saw him touch [my girlfriend], I told him he better not touch her or me. He said, 'I can do what I want, watch me,' and started pulling us apart again.

A heated debate between security personnel and LGBTF members ensued (audio recordings available online at www.mccvoice.org).

The kiss-in itself lasted ten to fifteen minutes, but the argument went on for about twice that long. The three security officers involved were Officers Anthony Mancino, Thomas Rice and John Scheid. Also present were Mercer's new school counselor Dr. Valerie Campbell and Thomas Rice.

In another meeting LGBTF club members met with Mercer administrators including Executive Dean of Student Affairs Dr. Diane Campbell and Director of College Safety Byron Marshall.

At this meeting, administrators presented ideas for making the campus a safer place for students of the LGBT community. These ideas included having LGBT students escorted to their cars by security guards and allowing students to park in closer faculty lots at certain hours of the evening.

Another idea presented by the LGBTF members was to increase sensitivity training for school faculty, staff and administrators.

During the meeting Dean Campbell said: "I always thought that Mercer was a very gay-friendly campus. I always thought that, and that’s because of the people who have always been here. And I have not seen or heard or had any issues in a very long time, no grievances, no security reports, none of that. So that’s why, when you say the awareness needs to be raised, I was thinking this is a very aware campus. And we’ve been through several exercises in order to make it that way.”

While representatives of the LGBTF say they were gratified by the ad-
Starting this summer, Mercer is raising tuition by $8 per credit which works out to about a $240 per year increase for full-time students. On the surface this may not seem like much, but the hike which at the same time as Governor Christie slashes education funding to close a gaping state budget deficit of $11 billion.

“I hadn’t heard about [the tuition hike],” said second-year Nursing major Anida Masuod, “but I have scholarships and grants that are paying for my tuition so it doesn’t affect me financially.”

Depending on what type of grants Masuod has, her funding may not be as safe as she thinks. Governor Christie’s budget makes deep cuts to several key grant programs including the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) that funds low-income student and Tuition Assistance Grants (TAG) which are used by nearly one in every three full-time New Jersey students according to the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority.

Rachel Young, a first-year Education major, said of the increase, “[$8 per credit] is a lot. Good thing I have a scholarship. It doesn’t really affect me because I am in the NJSTARS program.”

Although Young may be safe, she is one of the lucky ones. However, the popular NJSTARS program, which provides total tuition remission to community college for high school students in New Jersey who graduate in the top 15 percent of their class, is being eliminated in the Christie budget. Students like Young will continue to be funded, provided they maintain the needed GPA and course load, but there will be no more NJSTARS.

Not all students are as sanguine about the tuition hike as Young and Masuod. Sara Hicks, a second-year Nursing major, said of the increase, “Are you shittin’ me? That’s exactly why I’m not going to this school next semester.”

Hicks says she hopes to transfer to a four-year school next year. When questioned about the fact that tuition at any four-year school would be much higher than it is at Mercer, Hicks said that the costs were offset by the fact that four-year colleges offered more services, such as a health center.

Under the Christie budget, Hicks may end up staying at Mercer, however, as funding for four-year state colleges could drop as much as 17 percent.

In justifying Mercer’s tuition and fee increase request at the board meeting as well as at a public informational meeting on Feb. 15, Mercer President Patricia Donohue said that there is a $350 thousand shortfall in the current operating budget for this year. In addition, the state budget crisis may be expected to result in 10 percent less state funding for next year as compared with this year, or an approximately $1 million cut.

Coupled with a possible cut in the Mercer county contribution, Donohue says the increase in tuition and fees was needed in order to close the $1.5 million gap, which does not include increases in operating costs for next year.

Donohue also noted that the increase in operating costs for next year, which include health insurance premium increases and negotiated salary contract increases, will be accompanied by cuts in personnel and by delaying expenditures for purchases.

When asked if cuts in personnel would include teaching positions, Donohue said that they would. According to Donohue, five positions were cut in January, including three vacant faculty positions and two staff positions. There are now two open faculty positions which will not be filled.

When asked if the reduction in faculty would result in fewer classes or sections being offered, Donohue said that there were no plans to reduce course offerings and adjunct faculty would fill the gaps.

Enrollment at Mercer has increased by 9 percent this fall and is projected to increase another 3 percent next fall. Donohue said the school addressed the surge in enrollment by adding more afternoon, weekend and online classes, and by increasing the numbers of adjunct faculty.

According to Mercer’s institutional data, adjunct faculty now teach 60 percent of classes at Mercer.

Asked how the increase in use of adjunct staff affects the college, Dean of Liberal Arts Robin Schore said, “We rely far too much on adjuncts. It’s a national trend [but] it changes the atmosphere of the college,... it’s sad to see full-time faculty numbers drop.”

Schore goes on to say of adjunct faculty, “While they are often very good [teachers], they are not as available and shouldn’t be expected to be.”

Adjunct faculty generally have other jobs and are only on campus briefly each week. They do not have responsibility for, nor are they paid for, advising students or campus organizations, or participating in campus activities.

In an article entitled “Effects of Part-Time Faculty Employment on Community College Graduation Rates” published in the Journal of Higher Education's November/December 2006 issue, Daniel Jacoby describes research showing that graduation rates for community colleges in the United States are “adversely affected when institutions rely heavily upon part-time faculty instructors.”

Jacoby goes on to add, “Negative effects may be partially offset if the use of part-time faculty increases the net faculty resource available per student. However, the evidence suggests that this offset is insufficient to reverse negative effects upon graduation rates.”

In recent months Mercer’s administration has made widely publicized remarks establishing priorities to increase retention of students and success in advising. In light of the reliance on adjunct faculty, these goals may be particularly difficult to achieve.

When asked about Mercer’s reliance on adjunct faculty, who are currently paid $830 per credit hour, President Donohue said that while college accreditation bodies used to set a guideline ceiling of 50 percent adjunct faculty for accreditation, that standard has not been applied to community colleges in recent years.

Gov. Christie’s, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, says that when enrollment spikes, adding adjunct faculty is the only way to quickly meet the demand for more course sections. He notes that using more adjuncts also avoids the budget commitment of adding full-time faculty who might not be needed when enrollment declines.

Bottom line for students: 2010 means higher tuition, less assistance and more classes taught by part-time faculty.
Mercer Security officer Kevin Larkin Jr., son of Mercer County Sheriff Kevin C. Larkin, was terminated last week. The personal action followed two incident reports filed by LGBT students against Larkin Jr.

There has been no official confirmation from administration that the complaints led to Larkin Jr.'s firing, but the Voice can confirm that on March 23 Joseph Burke, Transexual Directors of Compliance and Human Resources, did inform one complainant, Joseph “Bobo” Burke, that “action was taken” against Larkin Jr.

The complaints were officially lodged by Burke, a transgender student, and Fantasia Hoagland, a lesbian student, on March 11, following incidents in which Larkin Jr. “talked to [them] in any way he wanted to.”

The first incident occurred in early February when Larkin Jr. allegedly said to Burke, “[a] dog serves more purpose than you,” when Burke, who is afraid of dogs, said aloud that an unattended service animal was roaming the hallways.

“We were standing in front of the cafeteria...and I saw a dog running down the hallway...and I’m just like, ‘there’s a dog,’ and [Larkin] was just like, ‘what do you want me to do, it serves way more purpose than you in this school anyway,’” said Burke.

Instead of arguing with Larkin Jr., Burke said that with the help of his friends, Fantasia Hoagland and Alexis Baker, who were present at the time, he decided to file a complaint with Mercer Security. “Bobo was going to go off, but he didn’t,” says Hoagland.

When asked how the comment made him feel, Burke said, “Damn, am I really supposed to be in school? Do I really serve a purpose? It had me thinking...I’m only human, I only can take so much. Words do hurt, whether it’s coming from someone I don’t know.”

In the second incident, which occurred on March 10, Larkin Jr. threatened Hoagland with a “$100 ticket” for parking along a curb in Student Parking Lot West 2 Hoagland says that Larkin Jr. added, “why can’t you be like everybody else and park your car in the parking lot.”

Hoagland says that she “was mad. It’s just the way he said it. Everybody else is parking their car, but you’re sitting here talking to me the way you’re talking to me.”

When asked why it took so long for him to come forward, Burke said, “I waited because I felt nobody was going to do anything. They would look at me [and think, of Larkin Jr.,] ‘okay, he’s one of my workers. I’m not gonna fire him over some thing you said.”

Burke says he was triggered to report his complaint after repeatedly hearing that Larkin Jr. was belittling other students, including Hoagland, who he calls his “daughter” and his “sister.”

**Kiss-in turmoil continues**

By Matthew White
Senior Reporter

Cont. from pg 1

ministration’s propositions to make the campus safer, they were frustrated by the fact that the administration would not investigate the events that occurred at the kiss-in itself. The LGBTF wanted to explain their grievances about the behavior of the security guards present and expected a formal apology. Marshall then explained that harassment reports could be filed about these specific incidents, however the meeting as a whole did not contain a discussion about security’s behavior.

Towards the end of the meeting, Marshall said, “I read a letter in The Trentonian. I’ve also went back over each incident and talked to all the parties that are named and known to me; they happen to be staff and administration. No one went from any student or any participant who has come forward. That being said, I know the incident was disruptive, as I was here when it happened. I don’t sit here and tell you that everything that the security officers did was right. I wouldn’t sit here and just throw that kind of paint over a situation. I won’t say it was wrong either.

According to Scirocco, when asked how the LGBTF could file grievances, Dean Campbell told them that based on the volume of complaints, the LGBTF would have to make a list of students who would like to file grievances. As of March 21 the LGBTF has not yet filed an official grievance.

The LGBTF club has, however, been in contact with both the American Civil Liberties Union’s New Jersey chapter and with Lambda Legal Defense.

Scirocco says one important goal of any legal action would be to have another kiss-in with the school recognizing it as an important effort to raise awareness and exercise both civil and free speech rights rather than it being labeled disruptive or inappropriate. Scirocco hopes there will be progress toward this goal before she transfers to Montclair State University at the end of the semester.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS TOPIC OR ANY OTHER CONTENT IN THE VOICE visit WWW.MCCCVOICE.ORG**
A source of hope for those struggling with self-injury
To Write Love on Her Arms is an organization that helps cutters recover

By Lisa Olson
Reporter

Whether intricately drawn or simply written, the word “love” was scrawled across the forearm of many students on November 13, the goal being to bring awareness to the issue of suicidal thoughts, self-mutilation and addiction, and its sufferers. The support movement is led by the non-profit known as “To Write Love On Her Arms” (TWLOHA).

TWLOHA was started by a group of Christian friends, headed by founder Jamie Tworkowski. In February 2006 Tworkowski and his friends united in an attempt to help their friend, Renee, a 19-year-old who abused drugs, had constant thoughts of suicide and cut her arms with razorblades to help ease her internal pain. Tworkowski and his friends provided support to Renee and later founded TWLOHA to help others like Renee.

According to the organization’s website, the vision of TWLOHA is “[provide] hope and find help for people struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury and suicide. TWLOHA exists to encourage, inform, inspire and also to invest directly into treatment and recovery.”

Tworkowski has received much praise in his efforts to fulfill that vision. This past year Rolling Stone magazine featured an article on Tworkowski, calling him a “surfer turned savion.” MTV showed their praise by awarding the founder a Good Woodie, which MTV defines as an award given to “the artists whose commitment to a social cause has effected the greatest change this year.”

What sets TWLOHA apart from other recovery groups is its focus on giving people very direct ways to express support. In addition to having people write “love” on their bodies, TWLOHA has set up blogs on social networking sites like Facebook and Myspace. They encourage story-sharing.

 “[The online blogs] are used as sort of a newspaper or magazine, if you will, to give updates and information on their movement,” says second-year Rider student Ben Burton. Burton is an active supporter of TWLOHA who attended the recent Rolling Stone photo shoot. When asked about his experience with TWLOHA and his feelings on being close to Tworkowski during the shoot, he said, “it’s not about me... Whether it be a meeting or photo shoot it’s all about the message and that’s something that I noticed while there and really hit home for me.” The photo shoot was held in New York City and consisted of Tworkowski and some “friends” posing, wearing signature TWLOHA hoodies.

The movement has gathered support from indie rock bands like Switchfoot, Anberlin and Jimmy Eat World. Band members have shown their support by wearing TWLOHA hoodies and t-shirts while performing on stage and directing fans to check out the movement’s website.

TWLOHA aims to inspire and uplift people who need help. Although TWLOHA was started with a Christian influence, the movement is open to people of all faiths, races and beliefs. TWLOHA also lends support to family and friends of suicide victims. The organization welcomes volunteers, donations and thoughts of encouragement.

To Write Love On Her Arms is an organization founded by Jamie Tworkowski to support those struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury and suicide.

Slam Café International presents Gandhi’s Poetry Spot

Raul Cortes Jr., a regular at GPS and the host of a local open-mic night himself, said, “It is always a positive venue with a crowd that has open arms and I think it is remarkable that artists come from as far as Texas just to perform there.” He goes on to say, “You never know what to expect and that’s what makes it so entertaining.”

GPS runs every other week from 8:30 PM until all those who have signed up have participated. Beyond poetry, GPS offers conscious rap, blues, soul, beat boxing and hip-hop performances, and a band is always present to provide back up or live accompaniment to an act.

The café offers a menu consisting of a variety of dishes inspired by flavors from around the world. Some house specialties include: curry chicken or goat, orange glazed chicken and meatloaf.

As attendance at GPS increases, Gandhi praises the poets: “Without the artists and people who come in as well as the café, having this poetry spot would not have been possible. For their contribution I am forever thankful.”

Gandhi says he hopes to one day become owner of his own poetry club. In the meantime, GPS continues to draw crowds at Café International. The next open mic at GPS will be held May 7. For more information check out the Gandhi’s Poetry Spot link on mccvoicc. org.
Faculty Profile
Prof. Lucas Kelly

“People have an idea of what art is and it usually involves this blessed group of people that have been gifted this magic that no one else can learn. I don’t believe that; [art is] a learned skill,” says Lucas Kelly, art professor at Mercer. Kelly carries this concept into his approach to teaching: “When my students say, ‘I can’t do it, I’m not an artist,’ I tell them, ‘Of course you’re not. That’s why you’re in an art class.’”

Kelly spent almost 9 months in the Center for Art and Culture in Aix-en-Provence, France in a graduate-style program which allowed him to work and be critiqued on a regular basis. Outside of the educational portion of his time spent in France, what struck him most about his general exposure to French culture was the European “attention to quality of life.” After his experience in France, Kelly incorporated this attention to quality of life into many of his pieces. He says, “[I] started making work that tried to slow things down and pay attention to things that are usually missed,” referencing as an example an installation that highlighted a single floorboard and a plaque reading, “This moment means everything.”

Back in the States, Kelly’s work has been displayed in numerous exhibits every year since 2000, everywhere from New York City to Seattle, Washington, out of which the most well-known venue was the PS1 (MoMA) Institute of Contemporary Art. “I thought I was going to blow up and I didn’t,” says Kelly regarding his participation in PS1’s “The Painted World” exhibit in 2005-2006. The exhibit was curated by Bob Nickas and included works by Steven Parrino. “[Parrino’s] one of my faves and I was psyched to be in a show with him,” says Kelly.

Kelly’s sculpture, “Space Cowboy,” debuted at the Bill Maynes “Off The Top” art show in 2003 and gained the attention not only of pop star and Kelly’s roommate at the time, Ben Jelen, who broke the piece in an attempt to sit on it, but also of a homeless man who got in a verbal altercation with the piece during a Travel Channel interview with Kelly. The show was a “kind of Rutgers past, present and future,” says Kelly. Among the artists whose work was featured was Roy Lichtenstein.

One of Kelly’s goals as an educator at Mercer is to change the common “provincial” perception of art. He says, “there is an idea of what art is, what it looks like, what an artist is…most of my students’ notions of art are aged by at least fifty years, that’s just not the case anymore.” Kyle Stevenson, a colleague of Kelly’s, confirms this approach, saying, “Lucas’ strengths are definitely with contemporary critical theory; he’s got a great eye.”

Another goal of Kelly’s is to tear down the myth “that only dead people get famous.” “The notion that you can’t live off your work [as an artist] is a travesty,” says Kelly.

His classroom atmosphere is both fun and serious. He jokes around with his students but makes sure they’re working hard. “Hands and mouths, hands and mouths, they should be moving at the same time,” Kelly tells two students who are chatting in his Two-Dimensional Design class. For one of these students, Jonas Verheyen, a third-year Photography major, 2-D Design is his second class with Kelly. “He pushes you to go above and beyond,” says Verheyen. “[He] makes you feel like you should put your all into it,” Verheyen adds.

Chris Moore, a former student of Kelly’s, says, “[Kelly] goes beyond the academic level, and honors students’ work outside of the classroom. He loves seeing personal art work so much; he really wants us to grow as people and artists outside of school. Lucas is always willing to go well beyond the boundaries of just what is taught in the classroom. He loves the students’ talent on a one-to-one basis.”

Professor Lucas Kelly has a sculpture showing at the upcoming NJ Arts Annual at the State Museum from May 8 to November 14. He also plans to rent a larger studio than his current one and start working more on sculpture, which he identifies as his strength.

Kelly’s tattoo sleeve was designed by Jesse Nucifora of Revolver Tattoos in New Brunswick. Kelly gave her some ideas to work with but also “gave her free reign to free style.”

CROWS: “I think of crows as peasant birds, vagrants, the bird that’s looked down upon but travels in packs…like me and my friends.”

ROSES: “I’m the youngest of five, and the [five] roses go from a bud all the way to one that’s dying and falling apart.”

BANNER: The banner reads, “Won’t quit, won’t break” – a lyric taken from the chorus of “West Coast” by local band Roadside Graves. The “West Coast” line holds meaning to Kelly and his friends as they are all artists (all but Kelly are musicians) and “it’s a career that kicks your knees out…It’s nice to feel that there’s hope.”

DEAD TREE: This started off as a vague idea but when Kelly mentioned it to Nucifora her eyes lit up and she said “Dead tree?! I love dead trees!” – a lyric taken from the chorus of “West Coast” by local band Roadside Graves. The “West Coast” line holds meaning to Kelly and his friends as they are all artists (all but Kelly are musicians) and “it’s a career that kicks your knees out…It’s nice to feel that there’s hope.”

store #3 vacat
Mamma Flora's Trattoria in Ewing
Excellent food meets community service

By Kevin Genovario

Mamma Flora's Trattoria, a locally owned Italian restaurant provides an exceptional dining experience for residents in Ewing, New Jersey and the surrounding areas while supporting its local community. Located off Olden Avenue, Mamma Flora's serves generous portions matched with reasonable prices.

Like the typical local Italian restaurant, Mamma Flora's is very family oriented. But, instead of dry Italian music, a wide variety of popular music can be heard over the low murmur of its diners. The walls are lined with mirrors, giving the illusion that the restaurant is bigger than it actually is and is decorated with murals and paintings of New York City, bringing the city's Little Italy to a small town.

Customer service is superb. From the moment of entrance it is clear that their customers are the main priority. I was seated at a small table, but at its first availability was asked if I would rather prefer a booth.

Throughout my dining experience my waiter was very friendly, engaging in casual conversation and even joking with me about the New York Yankee t-shirt that I was wearing (which went well with the theme of the restaurant). Service was speedy and punctual and a huge positive was that my drink glass was never empty.

The food is simply mouth-watering. Available on the menu is ordinary Italian food such as vodka rigatoni, chicken alfredo, pizza, etc. However, if you are feeling like you want to try something different and maybe like treating yourself, Mamma Flora's offers entrées comparable to an upscale restaurant. On the list to choose from includes chicken or veal portofino, marsala, diavolo and much more. “I got the chicken francese. It was a lot, but it was good!” remarked Tyrone Michaels, 26, a diner at the restaurant.

What makes Mamma Flora's Trattoria stand out from most Italian restaurants is its support for local events and establishments. Although the restaurant attracts a variety of customers, young and old, it was a surprise to see how many college students were present.

Ewing is home to The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) which many of the customers attended. Mamma Flora's made an agreement with TCNJ to help fundraise for the sophomore class. For every group of students that dined at the restaurant with a valid TCNJ ID, 15% of the check was donated to the sophomore class of 2012. “We try and help in any way we can,” remarked restaurant manager, Gary Gula. “If that means giving back to the students and having a little fun, so be it!”

Surrounded by fellow TCNJ students sat Emma Harri-son, 19. “I like supporting local businesses and a lot of people have recommended Mamma Flora's to me. It has a great reputation with great food and service.” Mamma Flora's adds to the convenience for college students because in addition to good sit in service, they also deliver free.

Mamma Flora's Trattoria doesn't stop at school fundraisers. They also provide free entertainment to the community. Posted on a wall are flyers advertising live music on select days. Dennis G. Rogers, a professor of music and director of percussion studies at the University of Missouri at Kansas City, School of Music, comes to Mamma Flora's to perform live once a month with no cover charge.

Mamma Flora's Trattoria is a restaurant that immerses itself within the community and strives for excellence. The food comes as delicious as it looks and the proportions are big enough to almost always bring some home in a doggy bag to share with the family or as late night snack after a long day of studying. No matter what the diner is in the mood for, Mamma Flora's cannot go wrong.

Security Guard Larkin terminated following two student complaints

By Dmitry Gurvits

Cont. from pg. 2

Incident that occurred on March 10 was his tipping point, he says. “I’m hearing too much stuff about him, I’m hearing too much. Something going on, and ain’t nobody saying anything,” said Burke. Burke added, “Fantasia’s like my little sister, and when she started telling me about her story it upset me. This is us going back to when she started telling me about his thing at this thing again. And he’s not gonna talk to her like that, sorry. I had to do what I had to do.”

“I have a real thing with authority, but I tried to handle it the adult way at the time and it actually went through,” said Burke when he was told that Larkin Jr. was indeed fired follow- ing Burke’s complaint. Burke added, “I kind of feel better now.”

Bryan Marshall, Director of College Safety, indicated that, in this case, the incident reporting mechanism functioned as it was designed to. “The people actually produced themselves...right to Chief [John] Raimondi...I said, ‘Chief, just investig- ate;’ he did, he took the information down, we investigated it, we back checked it.” Marshall added, “We’ve fully investigated [the incident], turned the matter over to HR, and there was action taken against that employee...it was severe action.”
The CMA (College Media Advisers') spring convention in New York City is an annual pilgrimage for hundreds of student journalists from two- and four-year colleges across the nation. Every March, student reporters and their media advisers gather to attend workshops and panels on topics from Covering Campus Crime to finding employment in the Convergence Media world.

This year a six-person cohort of College Voice staffers not only attended CMA but also gave an interactive workshop designed to help participants cultivate strong interviewing and reporting skills. The well-attended session included a role-playing activity followed by a lead-writing seminar including critique provided by College Voice adviser Prof. Holly Mathews. Due to the success of the event, CMA's spring convention organizer Michael Koretzky of Florida Atlantic University has asked that the panel be given again next year.

The College Voice's senior photography staffer CJ Harker took a series of photos of the event, several of which will be submitted to this year's CMA photo competition. More photos can be viewed online at www.mcccvoice.org and in the photo collage presented here.

By Dmitry Gurvits
The College Voice

While at CMA, The College Voice conducted an interview with incoming CMA spring convention director Michael Koretzky, media adviser at Florida Atlantic University. The following are excerpts from that interview:

VOICE: What changes are in store for CMA 2011?
MK: I hope to add something called CMA Lounge...[It will have] couches and tables and chairs...and most importantly Wi-Fi. Maybe if you are at a convention of urologists you don't need Wi-Fi, but if you're a convention of media people, it is as necessary as oxygen...The other thing we are going to do is have less convention...This convention there are about 300 sessions. We will cut that down to somewhere between 200 and 250...We are going to figure out which sessions hit the mark on both information and presentation and kinda let the others fade away.

VOICE: Anything else you would change?
MK: I even want to change the students. I would like to construct a convention that has community colleges, some weeklies and some of the bigger papers...When I looked around I saw precious few daily newspapers.

VOICE: What worked well that you won't change?
MK: There are a number of presenters that are really good. Frank LoMonte, Executive Director of the Student Press Law Center – the guy gave like 15 sessions...but all of them are good.

VOICE: What about next year's keynote speakers?
MK: We don't pay them, so it is really tough to get a keynote...I will do my best to get someone of color or someone without a penis.

VOICE: If you had to describe CMA 2010 and CMA 2011 each in just one word what would it be?
MK: Pleasant...and...twisted.
As “Megan’s Law” turns 15, are we any safer?

New Jersey is currently out of compliance named after slain Hamilton girl, Megan Kanka.

It was a warm afternoon in late July, 1994, when a seven-year-old girl named Megan Kanka was beheaded across the street by her neighbor, a 33-year-old man named Jesse Timmendequas. He asked her if she wanted to see his new puppy. Once she was inside his house, he raped her and slammed her head into a dresser, strangled her to death with a belt, then put two plastic bags over her head to prevent blood from getting on the carpet andraped her again. Finally he shoved her body into a toy box and dumped it next to a portable toilet in Mercer County Park.

The murder-rape of Megan Kanka inspired local and national outrage that ultimately lead to the creation of “Megan’s Law.” The law requires that a database of registered sex offenders be maintained and that when a dangerous sex offender moves into a community, its residents be informed. In 1996, then President Bill Clinton passed a federal law that required every state to follow New Jersey’s lead. Fifteen years later, New Jersey, like many states, is out of compliance with its own law. The problems are many: maintaining the sex offender registry and notification system is expensive, trying to find locations for sex offenders to live is increasingly difficult, many psychologists who specialize in sexual behavior believe that many sexual offenders are not able to change, and the premise of the law—that informing people of danger will help them keep safe—has been criticized by legal experts and law enforcement officials alike.

MEGAN KANKA
A seven-year-old girl from Hamilton, NJ who was raped and murdered by her neighbor in 1994. Her parents fought to have a law passed that would inform communities of sex offenders living among them. “Megan’s Law” was passed within months of her murder and was later adopted by numerous other states.

WHAT HAPPENED TO MEGAN?

By Daniela Rocha
And the Staff of The College Voice

It was a warm afternoon in late July, 1994, when a seven-year-old girl named Megan Kanka was beheaded across the street by her neighbor, a 33-year-old man named Jesse Timmendequas. He asked her if she wanted to see his new puppy. Once she was inside his house, he raped her and slammed her head into a dresser, strangled her to death with a belt, then put two plastic bags over her head to prevent blood from getting on the carpet and raped her again. Finally he shoved her body into a toy box and dumped it next to a portable toilet in Mercer County Park.

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MEGAN KANKA
A seven-year-old girl from Hamilton, NJ who was raped and murdered by her neighbor in 1994. Her parents fought to have a law passed that would inform communities of sex offenders living among them. “Megan’s Law” was passed within months of her murder and was later adopted by numerous other states.

HOW DOES THE LAW WORK?

“Megan’s Law” sorts sex offenders into three different tiers. After psychological evaluation, a judge assigns offenders into a tier. Tier one determines that the sex offender is at low risk to re-offend, tier two determines that they are at moderate risk to society and tier three include those individuals who are assessed as being a high risk to society.

The information available on the registry website www.state.nj.us/njsp/sexoffend.html includes a photo, the name of the sex offender, any aliases the offender has used, descriptions of marks such as tattoos and scars, description of the vehicle used by the offender and its license plate number, the offender’s current address and the nature of offense including victim’s age at time of incident, and what tier the offender is in.

Tia Moore, Megan’s mother, in a recent interview with the VOICE stated that the picture is a great element of the registry. “Parents can sit down with their children and show them the picture of who the offender is, to better help protect their children,” Kanka says.

On the New Jersey registry website, however, some are out of date by as much as two years. This can be a problem for sex offenders who lose or gain weight, change their hair style, or otherwise modify their appearance.

The registry lists offenders who have committed a sex related crime against an adult, molested a child or been found not guilty for reason of insanity. However, the registry does not list every person who has ever committed a sexual crime, including some juvenile offenders.

Once individuals are classified, the prosecutor’s office starts the notification process based on the tier risk assessment. In the case of moderate to high-risk offenders, the prosecutor’s office notifies the public by posting information on the state’s Internet registry. In addition, law enforcement officials go door to door and post flyers to let people know that a sex offender is moving into their area.

CAN THE LAW BE ENFORCED?

Even if Governor Christie was able to find the funds to bring New Jersey back into compliance with “Megan’s Law,” a growing body of evidence suggests it is difficult for the police to ensure total enforcement of the law.

The logistical complications of enacting sex offender notification and registry laws have been highlighted in recent weeks through a series of incidents in California which operates through a series of incidents which makes it overwhelmingly difficult to be on parole and to find out where they are going.

“Jessica’s Law” was passed after the murder of Jessica Ridgeway, a seven-year-old girl from Colorado who was raped and murdered by a 26-year-old neighbor, in 2004. Jessica’s Law made it possible for sex offenders to be removed or punished Donnelly.

Shih’s article notes that, "For Mr. Donnelly’s housing decision to be considered a violation of state law, ‘there has to be a punishment attached,’” according to Nancy O’Malley, the Alameda County district attorney. She went on to say that if Jessica’s Law was not assigned a punishment.

Shih quotes Police Chief John Hunt as saying: “I was amazed. You have this law that was overwhelmingly voted in and determined to be constitutional, and then you find out there’s no bite to it. It’s all bark and no bite.”

In some situations, Donnelly’s actions could amount to a parole violation and land him back in jail, but as the Rutgers University 2008 study points out, “Only 32 percent of sex offenders were paroled whereas 68 percent were exonerated, leaving the prison with no post-incarceration supervision requirements other than those imposed by Megan’s Law.” When offenders are on parole they must register and keep their address information up to date, but in many states there is no punishment for offenders who simply move into restricted areas. “Megan’s Law is primarily concerned with providing information, not punishment.”

A recent report conducted by Administrative Offices of the Court shows that as of June 2009 in the state of New Jersey, 5,102 individuals failed to register with local police.

Maureen Kanka says she thinks there needs to be better education of judges and better enforcement of the law. “Too many times I hear that an offender will fail to register, and once they catch them they will slap him on the hand,” Kanka says.
As “Megan’s Law” turns 15, are we any safer?

New Jersey is currently out of compliance with its own landmark sex offender law, named after slain Hamilton girl, Megan Kanka. Why did this happen?

Mrs. Kanka, still some offenders “gain control” pattern, “but that it may help an offender’s sexual arousal in 2008 revealed that “Megan’s Law” has worked.” Rocha goes on to say that “In reality, after a time people who go about liv- ing their lives, and will behave or respond in a variety of ways. But laws should be structured to set a social policy or solve a societal problem. Laws can’t solve individual problems, and policies shouldn’t be based on anecdote.”

Mary Kanka insists that O’Brien got it wrong and she is certain that “Megan’s Law” has saved lives. She says, “I have received e-mails over the years from people whose children have been affiliated with sex offenders and before the legislation was passed they had no idea that there was a prob- lem with them.”

Mary’s view that having access to informa- tion may change the way citi- zens behave is supported by substantial evidence. Victoria Beck, Ph.D. led a group of re- searchers who published a series of articles in The Jour- nal of Psychiatric & Law that showed when a community is notified of a sexual offender’s presence in their neighbor- hood, their fear of victimization increases as does their likelihood of taking some self-protective measures, such as buying a dog or firearm or staying home. The same research indicates these behaviors have no im- pact on whether or not of- fenders re-offend.

A research study in Washington state that exam- ined the behavior of sexual offenders released prior to the enactment of registry and notification laws, and those released after the laws went into effect also showed no difference in recidivism rates, but did find that new offenses were down because once they had been commit- ted.

Sgt. William P. Baite- do who is currently in charge of the “Megan’s Law” unit of the West Windsor Town- ship police says that the law is valuable to law enforcers, because “We know who the offenders are and where they are located.” Knowing who to talk to when a child goes missing or is found dead, however, does not appear to be the original intent of “Me- gan’s Law” and may not be what community members expect it to offer.

Beyond questions of whether “Megan’s Law” protects citi- zens or not, there is no doubt that it is expensive to carry out. Furthermore, the costs of compliance far outweigh the penalties for being out of compliance.

According to Jus- ticePolicy.org and a recent press release by David T. Schleidt Law Offices, “New Jersey’s first-year outlay of $14,088,206 would vastly ex- ceed the $16,071 it stands to lose [in federal funds] if it fails to implement current sex of- fender registry and notifica- tion laws.”

A 2008 study con- ducted by Rutgers University and The New Jersey Depart- ment of Corrections, through a grant from the National Institute of Justice, found that “the cost for Megan’s Law implementation during the calendar year 2006 was esti- mated to be $1,557,978 [per county], whereas implemen- tation costs during calendar year 2007 totaled $3,973,932 for responding counties. This change represents a 155 per- cent increase in ongoing ex- penses from calendar year 2006 to calendar year 2007.”

The report concluded that the sudden increase was likely linked to the new use of Glob- al Positioning Satellites for the most dangerous offend- ers and the increased costs of surveillance.

Currently New Jersey is facing an $11 billion deficit on a $33 billion budget and Governor Christie is making it up the difference without in- creasing taxes, a position he campaigned on. The result has been a long list of budget cuts. College tuition as- sistance has been slashed, while prescription drug fees for se- niors has been doubled. In such an economic climate, it is perhaps not surprising that the state would choose to re- main out of compliance with costly sex offender laws.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS?

JESSE TIMMENDEQUAS

was sentenced to death in for the 1994 murder and rape of seven-year-old Megan Kanka. In 2007 New Jersey abolished the death penalty. Timmendequas is now in prison for life without the possibility of parole. He has not given an interview in 15 years and denied an interview request from The Voice.

CAN THEY GET OFF THE LIST?

The fact that “Megan’s Law” turns 15 this year is particu- larly significant because one of the provisions of the law allows offenders to petition to have their name removed after 15 years of release.

Local Public Defense Attorney Michael Buncher said in an interview with The College Voice that so far he has worked with ten regis- tered sex offenders who have fought to have their names removed from the sex offender lists. Three of his clients have been denied, but six have been successful. One of Buncher’s cases is still pending.

Only certain people qualify to have their names removed. The most common registra- tion is sexual molestation, sexual assault and offenses to more than one victim or more than one offense, automatically qualifies an offender for be-

IS KNOWING ENOUGH?

“The premise of passing ‘Me- gan’s Law’ was bringing aware- ness to families about po- tential danger living in their community,” said Megan’s mother, Maureen Kanka, in a recent interview with The Col- lege VOICE. Mrs. Kanka, still a Hamilton resident, main- tains that if she had known that Timmendequas and two other convicted sex offenders were living in her street, she would have been able to warn her daughter and protect her from harm. But is knowing enough?

In an article entitled “Would ‘Megan’s Law’ Have Saved Megan?” published in the New Jersey Law Journal on July 8, 1996, senior reporter Tim O’Brien writes that “In fact, interviewing a police report make clear that neigh- bors living within at least eight houses of the Cifelli house [where Timmendequas lived] were aware that [Josep Cefelli] was a convicted sex of- fender. Those interviewed also all knew specifics of the charges against him.”

O’Brien goes on to suggest that even the Kankas may have known about Cifelli, if not about Cefelli’s housemate, Timmendequas. O’Brien also quotes four neighbors who say they believe that the Kankas — of 32 Barbara Lee Drive in Hamilton, N.J. — also knew that Cifelli, who lived diagonally across the street from them, was a con- victed sex offender.

O’Brien quotes David Rocha, who was an American Civil Liberties Union (NJ) staff attorney at that time, saying that “the disclosure that neigh- bors had some knowledge un- der ‘Megan’s Law’ was to be the original intent of ‘Megan’s Law’ but did find that new offenses were down because once they had been commit- ted.

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According to Richard Tewskbury in his 2005 article “Collateral Consequences of Sex Offender Registration” from the Journal of Contem- porary Criminal Justice, a significant minority of reg- istered sexual offenders, no matter what their likelihood for recidivism, suffer from social stigmatization, loss of relationships, and verbal and physical abuse.

Tewskbury also found that a majority of sex offenders reported negative consequences, such as exclu- sion from residences, threats and harassment, emotional harm to their family mem- bers, social exclusion by neighbors, and loss of em- ployment.

Two less plausible reasons for the “fallacy of the law, which seems to be premised on the idea that they will commit an of- fense, and hiding the offenders out, or you hide from the public and over their behavior.

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The Rutgers University and New Jersey Department of Corrections study published in 2006 revealed that “Megan’s Law” did nothing to reduce rates of recidivism among sex offenders, but the report noted that “New Jersey, as a whole, has experienced a consistent downward trend of sexual offender rates.”

The average sen- tence served by sex offend- ers is five years. Forty-six percent of those released are re-arrested (9 percent are re- arrested for a sex crime) and the average length of time to re-arrest is one year.

Louis B. Schlesinger, a professor of psychology at John Jay College of Crien- tally in New York City, told The College Voice in a recent phone interview that, “the law does not change an offender’s sexual arousal pattern,” but that it may help some offenders “gain control

WILL SEX OFFENDER DO IT AGAIN?

over their behavior.

The report concluded that the sudden increase was likely linked to the new use of Glob- al Positioning Satellites for the most dangerous offend- ers and the increased costs of surveillance.

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Men's basketball makes nationals

By Brendan Belluscio

The Mercer Vikings men's basketball team is competing for the school's first men's basketball national title since 1974 in the NJCAA Division II National Championship in Danville, Illinois. The team has been chasing a national title since they last time they won back to back crowns in 1973 and 1974.

The Vikings (20-12) qualified for the sixteen team national tournament by winning the Region Tournament hosted by Lackawanna Junior College. Starting the tournament as the #3 seed, Mercer defeated Essex County Community College 78-64 in the quarterfinals at home and defeated Terra-Terry 76-68 in the semifinals to advance to the regional finals.

In the final on March 2, the Vikings upset host and top-seeded Lackawanna 76-69 behind sophomore guard Uros Kovacevic's 29 points and Paco Boussougou's 14 points and 11 rebounds. Quentin Loftin and Isaiah Andrews both contributed 13 points in to the victory.

Credit for the Vikings' turnaround goes to coach Howard Levy as well as the players. Howard Levy is in his second season coaching the team. Tom Detken and Adam Smith have served as assistant coaches. After a 1-12-1 record in 2008-2009, the former Princeton University star forward and assistant coach has turned the team around. Leading the Vikings is Sophomore Business-Administration major Uros Kovacevic, sophomore Paco Boussougou, freshman Mass-Communications major Isaiah Andrews, sophomore Liberal-Arts major Derek Williams, freshman Quincy Hendryx, and sophomore Quentin Loftin.

The team's season began long before games started with summer workouts. Multiple players credit the summer and summer workouts with bringing the team together and helping the players get through the grind of the long season.

The season did not start well for the Vikings. They started 2-7, which can be attributed to injuries to Derek Williams and Uros Kovacevic. "We've come a long way since the beginning of the season. Two of our best players were in- jured and we managed without them. After the rough start we went on an eight or nine game streak. We kept working hard and we are going to keep working hard," said Quentin Loftin.

During the losing streak, the players had the opportunity to play a game against Frederick College at the Verizon Center in Washington, D.C., home of the NBA's Washington Wizards and Georgetown University men's basketball team. Even though they lost a close game 80-74, playing in the arena left a profound impact on the players. "It was a great experience," according to Derek Williams. "It was the first time any of us played in an NCAA arena," he said. "It was cool because we spoke to a lot of Wizards players," said Uros Kovacevic. Isaiah Andrews described it as a "big deal, overwhelming." We tried to soak everything in. It really showed us the reason why we are all here.

Now that the regional tournament is over, the team faces a long layoff between March 2 and March 16 before the beginning of the national tournament. During the break, the players have been practicing hard. "We have over two weeks... we have to use this period to rest up and then work hard. We are going to be competing with the 16 best teams in the country," said Kovacevic. "With a game coming up we have to focus, get healthy, and mentally prepare," said Andrews. "We have to realize that we are all we got," said reserve sophomore guard Marcus Jimenez. "It takes five guys to talk defense. We have to get the mindset that there is no tomorrow... and do the little things," Jimenez added.

Mercer's first determined opponent will be sixth seeded Kishwaukee College (26-6) who advanced to the tournament by beating Black Hawk (Ill.) College 64-60 in the Region 4 tournament final. Kishwaukee is led by 6'6" sophomore forward Lavonte Douglas who is averaging 18.7 points and 11.7 rebounds on the season.

The team is not worried about going up against Kishwaukee's star player. According to Andrews, "We are going to deal with him no differently than anybody else. We just need to pressure the ball and continue to do what got us here." Derek Williams put it plainly. "The big guy is gonna lock him up. If Paco [Boussougou] comes to play, we are gonna lock him up."
Amrit Aburmad, a 5’6” midfielder, has been a dominant player for Mercer the past two years. As a freshman, he was named a first-team National Junior College Athletic Association All-American, while also leading his team with 19 goals. This past season he scored 13 goals and eight assists for the Vikings and was an All-Region XIX first-team selection.

John Simone, Mercer’s Athletics Director and Assistant Dean of Student Affairs describes Aburmad saying, “He is very talented and has great vision on the field. He plays with a lot of confidence.”

Asked about his recruitment experience, Aburmad said, “After my first season with Mercer we lost in semi finals of the national tournament and our team played very well, a lot of coaches saw us and I started getting offers from big schools from the east coast and the west coast.” Aburmad added “BC was very serious about me and I find it as the best place for me. They play for the ACC so you play against the best schools in the country.”

Aburmad began playing soccer at a very young age.

“My mother always told me that I was kicking balls from the second that I got to this world. When I was a young boy I was out all day outside playing from 7a.m. before school even started, then between classes and after school till the night,” says Aburmad.

Aburmad went on to play for his town’s club team and by high school he was playing on the Israeli national under-18 team. He says of that time, “I played for my club team and did good work and worked hard everyday to try and get my game better.”

Of his time at Mercer Aburmad says, “I hope that I can represent Mercer with a lot of respect. Mercer has played a big part in my enrollment to BC. A big part from my scholarship to BC belongs also to my great teammates and without them none of this would be happening.”

One of Mercer County Community College’s star soccer players has received a full scholarship to Division 1 College, where he will transfer to play Division I soccer for the Golden Eagles in the fall.

Showana Paul, who is a second-year Business major at Mercer was born in Tel Aviv, Israel and plans to change to an International Business major when he transfers to BC. Academics played a significant part Aburmad’s decision to attend Boston College. He says, “I believe that in the world that we are living in today, with all the new technology and the fast way that our world is moving, international business will best serve my goals in the future.”

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Showana Paul joined the women’s Viking’s basketball team this year after playing for Trenton Central High School, which has had one of Mercer County’s top girls’ basketball teams for the past three seasons.

Paul, who is only 5’2” helped the Vikings finish the regular season with a record of 24-8. They hosted the Region XIX tournament and lost in their first-round game against Burlington 64-59.

Playing the point guard position, Paul averaged 3.2 points, 1.1 rebounds, and 1.5 assists per game this season. She shot 38.3 percent from the field and 26.3 percent from the free throw line while averaging 15.6 minutes of play per game.

Vikings Head Coach Mike Tenaglia says, “[Paul] comes with a lot of energy, a lot of determination. She’s hard working, I think if she continues to go about her practice and her business that way, I think she’s going to be a pretty good player next year.”

Tanaglia went on to describe Paul’s abilities saying, “Her speed is probably her biggest asset. She is very quick. She should be one of our better players and she should in fact have a real opportunity to start next year. Whether she has that or not depends on how much time she puts in and how much understanding she gets out of it.”

While at Trenton Central High School, Paul was coach by Reggie Murray who lead them to defeat Hamilton West High School in the championship game.

“Showana was an outstanding student athlete,” Murray says, adding, “She would stay after practices and do whatever it took to be good.”

Of her skills on the court Murray says, “She wasn’t an exceptionally great player...but there was nobody on the team that could out hustle her.”

Paul says her biggest challenge is maintaining the right attitude. “When you get a team that expects so much of you, and you may not get it all the time, and you just feel like everything is towards you, it makes you feel really low, so I just put my head down and focus,” she says. But Paul credits Coach Tenaglia with teaching her how to keep her head up high.

Paul’s says her best moment this season was when the Vikings hosted Manor College, of Jenkinson, Pennsylvania. Mercer won the January 5 game by a final score of 65-50. Although Manor is a highly confident team, Paul says, “We knew that we could beat them.” She adds that to beat a strong competitor is “the best thing.”

Paul is an Information Technology major. She hopes to become a Computer Engineer one day. Meanwhile she hopes to start for the Vikings next year.
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY SPLC
The Student Press Law Center celebrates 35 years of advocacy

By Christopher Collins
Reporter

On September 30, Adam Goldstein, a lawyer at the Student Press Law Center in Arlington, Virginia, hit a milestone. He answered his 10,000th phone call request for help since he came on the job in 2003. At least three of those calls came from The College Voice to check on matters of policy and public records access.

The Student Press Law Center, turns 35 this year. The SPLC serves high school and college level student publications with press law resources and advice. The Center is a politically neutral, non-profit organization that is funded entirely by donations from individuals, foundations, and corporations.

An issue that is constantly voiced to the SPLC is the difficulty in accessing information that is legally available to the public.

“People are constantly telling us that they can’t get timely or accurate information on crime statistics on campus,” says First Amendment lawyer, and former journalist, Frank LoMonte, Executive Director of the SPLC.

When trying to access information available under state or federal open records laws, a formal request is often necessary. The SPLC website tries to make this process simpler by providing a State Open Records Law Request Letter Generator. This tool allows student journalists to simply select their state, fill in blanks, and have an information request letter generated automatically.

LoMonte also notes that the ever-expanding use of off-campus websites, blogs and social networking sites has created some unique First Amendment and privacy challenges.

“People are more and more using Facebook and other social networking sites as a library for source material,” LoMonte says. He explains that if such content was accessed without permission, the content owner’s privacy may have been violated.

“It’s not entirely unlike someone’s own home, you must be invited in,” LoMonte says, adding, “If I gain admission through the induction of a friend, there could be an invasion of privacy.”

Part of the issue is an ethical matter. Once published online, information can reach further than any hardcopy paper ever could, and inaccurate or libelous statements can haunt someone for years.

Another area of particular concern to the SPLC is the difficulty in accessing information that is legally available to the public.

The SPLC maintains an extensive website that is a one-stop repository for press law issues such as libel, privacy, source protection and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

The organization recently released a third edition of Law of the Student Press, a comprehensive resource for school publishing. The 20 Chapter, 400+ page volume contains newly updated sections to cover fair use of online media and the effect of recent Supreme Court decisions on censorship.

For more information about the SPLC visit the SPLC link on www.mcccvoice.org.
Do you see a typo?  

We are always trying to improve our proofreading!  

If you see an error in our spelling, punctuation or grammar let us know!  

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The College VOICE is written and edited by students of Mercer County Community College and published every 3 weeks under the advisement of a faculty adviser. The material printed in The College VOICE is, by its nature, a written expression and does not necessarily represent the views of the editors, the faculty, staff, administration or the board of trustees of Mercer County Community College.

Write to the College VOICE  

Do you have something to say? The College VOICE accepts letters to the editor. Submissions should be no more than 300 words; longer submissions may be shortened. Submit materials in electronic format, and include your name and status at Mercer (major and year, faculty or staff position or alumnus). All materials submitted become the property of The College VOICE, which reserves the right to reject or edit material based on length, taste or clarity.
Dear Broke,

It depends on the people that used it before you. - The Voice
Dear Voice,

Brosa or briag? - Cap'n Underpants
Dear Cap'n, Commando - The Voice

Dear Voice,

In these tough times, what's the longest usable life of a condom? - Broke
Dear Broke, It depends on the people who used it.

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**THEME CROSSWORD: CD COLLECTION**

**ACROSS**


**DOWN**


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**ASK THE VOICE: GOOD ANSWERS TO TOUGH QUESTIONS**

**Capricorn**

Jan. 21 - Feb. 19

I see fame, fortune, and love in your future. You will exceed your goals and claim victory over your enemies. And then you will wake up.

**Aquarius**

Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

People may seem to be turning against you. Relax and try not to be paranoid. It may not even be something you did or said.

**Pisces**

Feb. 19 - Mar. 20

You will roll with the punches this month and accept the fact that sometimes life isn’t fair. How else would Tyler Perry have made $125 million last year?

**Aries**

Mar. 21 - Apr. 19

Is it the bright city lights or the quaint, rustic countryside that calls to you? If it were me, I would take the first train ticket to either place, as long as the train left Mercer County.

**Leo**

Jul. 23 - Aug. 22

The planets are aligning for you finally. All the right people are doing the right things and soon you will be offered an excellent opportunity.

---

**Sagittarius**

Nov. 22 - Dec. 21

From time to time people will test your limits, but you must stay strong and not lose your temper, your job may depend on it.

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**EQUIPMENT**

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- The Voice

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**2001: A Space Odyssey**

- The planets are aligning for you finally. All the right people are doing the right things and soon you will be offered an excellent opportunity.