Mercer mourns perished students, school community tries to make sense of the loss

By Chris Villano and Victoria Pace Reporters

In a single tragic week Mercer lost two of its own in separate stabbing inci-
dents. On April 19th, James Kerney Campus student Carla Diaz was
found in a pool of blood beside her SUV on Cayler Avenue in Trenton. Ac-
cording to Assistant Pro-
cutor James Scott, she
had been stabbed more
than 40 times. The father of her son, Donte Coefield, 23, has been charged with
her murder.

Five days af-
after Dian’s death, tragedy
struck again. Two Mercer
nursing students, Heather
Markel and Shane Kin-
ney, who had broken off
dating relationship, but
remained friends, were
making a routine carpool-
ing stop at the Market-
Fair mall when Kinney inexcipably pulled out a
butterfly knife and began
slashing at Markel’s head,
arms and chest.

Markel managed
to escape into the busy
Barnes & Noble book
store to get help, but Kin-
ney then turned the knife
on himself. Both were tak-
en to the surgical trauma
unit at Capital Health Sys-
tem’s Helene Fuld campus in Trenton, but Dian’s didn’t survive. Markel was re-
leased in satisfactory con-
tion three days later.

Said Mercer Presi-
dent, Dr. Patricia Donohue,
“At Mercer we are a family.
This was particularly tragic
and it saddened all of us.”

In addition to feel-
sion, many Mercer
students, faculty and staff
members are wondering
why this happened and what
can be done to pre-
ven similar tragedy from
ever touching the life of
another community mem-
ber.

Following the sec-
ond attack, Mercer used
it’s new student e-mail and
M-Alert system to contact
students to let them know
what had occurred and that
school counselors
were available for them
to talk to.

M-Alert and the
new student e-mail ac-
counts are two safety

New law will ease transfer between two and four year colleges in NJ

By Susana Sanchez The College Voice

Transfer from community colleges to four-year public
stitutions in New Jer-
sy might soon become
easier and more afford-
able.

A new law known as the
Lampitt Bill was
signed by Gov. Corzine
last September. The bill
states that starting in fall
2008, an A.A. or A.S. de-
ger degrees earned at any
of New Jersey’s community
 colleges will fully transfer
and be treated as the first
two years of a B.A. or B.S.
 program at all New Jersey
public four-year institu-
tions. Students will still
have to be accepted to
those institutions, but as
long as they are accepted
they can be sure that their
associate’s degree will rep-
resent two full years of col-
ge. They will enter the
four-year school as a
junior and have to do
the kind of elaborate guess
work about what cours-
es will transfer that has
plagued Mercer students
for decades.

When told about the
new law, Mercer stu-
dents’ responses vary.
Dave Hoyt, a Liberal Arts
major, says, “It seems
a good idea if you are going
to a public college, but it
doesn’t really help you if
you’re going to a private
school.” In contrast, Pame-
la Brzezynski, Chemistry
major and planning to at-
tend Rutgers, says, “I think
the law is good because
students will have to take
all your credits.”

In order for the
Lampitt Bill’s goals to
work, the vice presidents
of the public four-year
schools have mandated
that the 19 New Jersey
community college’s
General Education
courses become uniform. That way they know a
student from Mercer has
the same Gen Ed skills as
a student from Ocean or
Brookdale or any other
county college. To make
this happen, a com-
mitee with members
from all of New Jersey’s
19 community colleges
was appointed to decide
what courses should and
shouldn’t count as Gen
Ed. Every community
college is revising its Gen
Ed course list. To become
Gen Ed compliant, mi-
nor course requirement
changes are necessary
for most schools, includ-
ing Mercer.

NeverthelessMer-
cer’s two representatives
to this committee, History
Professor Linda Scherr
and Professor Scherr,
are enthusiastic about this
law. Prof. Scherr says, “I’m
very excited. This is a great
opportunity for our stu-
dents.” Dean McCormick
added, “This law is good,
it gives credibility to com-
munity colleges courses and
our students.”

Although under the
law all credits should transfer,
Lauren Jones, the Direc-
tor of Transfer and Career
Services, encourages stu-
dents to continue to “Use the NJ transfer web site to
closely match their class-
s at Mercer with those at the
college they plan to attend, learning how
their credits will transfer.” She also advises students
to consult with a transfer
ounselor while attend-
ing Mercer.
NOWHERE TO GO FOR BANDAGES, ASPIRIN, FLU SHOTS... A look at the costs and benefits of providing health care at two-year colleges

By Alexandra Hough and Susana Sanchez

Katie Forlano fell, badly injuring her right knee while participating in the Spring Day festivities on campus on May 1st. With nowhere to take her for care on campus, her friend Zachary Zeichner, created a makeshift ice pack using his chef’s apron to secure it around her knee. Zeichner was perplexed by the situation saying, “The first thing I did was run and get a security guard. They came right away, but they said there’s nothing they can do. They told me they couldn’t even call an ambulance because she’s under 18. In the end I called the ambulance myself.” The ambulance took Forlano to the hospital where her knee was X-rayed, diagnosed as a severe sprain and placed in a brace that she will wear for several weeks.

Forlano’s case is not that unusual. Mercer does not have a nurse’s office or health center on campus. The price of health care is skyrocketing and education funds are being cut on campus. The price of health care is sky-high. “The wellness center’s main purpose would be education,” Martin says. “For example, health professionals would conduct seminars about blood pressure, how it is kept at a low and what kind of food increases it. Also, seminars about blood pressure, how it is kept at a low and what kind of food increases it. Also, seminars in nutrition, smoking cessation, and alcohol abuse could be held.”

Student Katie Forlano awaits for an ambulance after injuring her knee at Spring Day, May 1, 2008.

Further, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation specifically offers grants to institutions and organizations that provide health care to what they call “vulnerable populations,” which include the low income populations that are served by community colleges like Mercer. In particular, they tend to give money within the state of New Jersey. Further, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation goes beyond many other non-profit organizations in that it offers continuing support rather than simply seed money for start-up costs. This type of financing would be crucial for such an endeavor.

Although room in the budget and the high cost of the center seems to be the most significant reason on why we do not have one, there are sources that might help Mercer finance one. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation offers grants to institutions and organizations that provide health care to what they call “vulnerable populations,” which include the low income populations that are served by community colleges like Mercer. In particular, they tend to give money within the state of New Jersey. Further, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation goes beyond many other non-profit organizations in that it offers continuing support rather than simply seed money for start-up costs. This type of financing would be crucial for such an endeavor.

Before any decisions are made as to whether Mercer will one day have a health or wellness center, Dean Martin will conduct a survey to assess the needs. She will report her findings in a proposal that can later be presented to the board. This may be the first step in providing health services to the community.
SWIRLIN’ IN THE WIND: public speaking students achieve lift-off

By Shaheed Morris
and Ashley Hamon
Reporters

On April 24, Eric Kunsman, a former Mercer faculty member who now teaches at Rochester Institute of Technology, gave a Distinguished Lecture on his photography of the Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia. The lecture, which also covered Professor Kunsman’s work during his college days and his work with his photography studio, BookSmartStudio, showcased a wide range of photographic styles and techniques.

The lecture, which lasted one hour, was held in CM110, one of the lecture hall style classrooms here at Mercer. At the starting time, the room was around half full, with the majority of those in attendance being Mercer students. Stragglers and latecomers increased the head count to about 2/3 capacity by the time the lecture got under way.

Professor Kunsman, a youthful 20-something with a casual sense of humor, is well regarded within the photography community for his work with an 8X10 camera, a technology that is scarcely used today. It was quickly apparent why his photography is well regarded, as it was some of the most captivating work this reporter had ever seen. Especially moving was Professor Kunsman’s work in New Orleans pre-Katrina, where his on the street, in the community angle gave a vivid reminder of the fascinating culture that was damaged on that tragic August day.

What seemed from it’s odd title “Thou Art... Will Give” as if it might be a dry subject was made totally enjoyable by Professor Kunsman’s charismatic humor that was well placed throughout the lecture. However, the chilly temperature in the room may have played a factor in the rapid dispersal of attendees at the lecture’s completion.

Said one attendee who wished to remain anonymous, “I don’t know anything about Professor Kunsman’s work, but I have an interest in photography and read about this event on Mercer’s web site.”

Though the lecture was interesting and engaging, a little more background about the Distinguished Lecture series’ origins and purpose might have been helpful to the students.

Prison photography presentation at Mercer

By Ross Nanceidt
Reporter

On April 21, Eric Kunsman, a former Mercer faculty member who now teaches at Rochester Institute of Technology, gave a Distinguished Lecture on his photography of the Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia. The lecture, which also covered Professor Kunsman’s work during his college days and his work with his photography studio, BookSmartStudio, showcased a wide range of photographic styles and techniques.

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Prison photography presentation at Mercer

By Shaheed Morris
and Ashley Hamon
Reporters

Despite the fact that gusting wind toppled the tent that sheltered the speakers during Mercer’s second annual Swirl Festival on April 21, the show went on. The students showcasing their public speaking skills waited only long enough for student emcee/host Akwasi Genfi to set the tent up again before continuing undeterred.

Communications professors selected the best student speakers from their classes to participate in this year’s event. Students choose their own topics based on their life experiences.

The Swirl Festival was created a year ago to be used as a means of helping students overcome the anxiety that comes with speaking in public.

Taynwell Salter got a lot of laughs for his comical delivery of his speech on bad breath. He recalled, “I decided to speak about bad breath because my sixth grade teacher touched me, not only with her teaching, but with her breath.”

Lavardo Pennerman, 18, used a thundering tone to give his speech on stereotyping. He recalled the comments he received from people because he, an African American, was being adopted by a Caucasian family when he was 15. One person, he recalled, once said to him, “You’re the whitest-black person I’ve ever met.”

During the Swirl Festival, guitarist Rob played a song, “Speak Out.” Approximately 75 students, faculty, and staff attended. Faculty members Kafihi Paluscio and Tracey McCarthy coordinated the event.

Hosts Andrea Pane and Genfi had little preparation for the event. “The event was better than last year,” said Genfi. “I hosted the event last year and had no idea of this year’s event. The event organizer ran into me in the hall and said ‘I need you to host the event, which is about to start in ten minutes from now.’ But Genfi was unperturbed.

At the end of the program, several school administrators were called upon to give off-the-cuff speeches on topics of general interest. The line up included John Simone, director of athletics and Assistant Dean of Student Services; Kitty Getlik, managing director of Kelsey Theatre; Barry Levy, coordinator of the television program and Judy Ehresman, Dean of Arts and Communications.

“The event was a success,” Paluscio said. “I hope that students will feel more comfortable about speaking in class after observing the best of the best student speakers perform.”
Darkness lurks in the heart: Mercer’s Macbeth is a sinister delight

By Christine Yursha and Ricardo Olivas Reporters

Mercer’s spell-binding production of Macbeth made its debut on April 11th at the Kelsey Theatre. The student cast was directed and choreographed by Jody Peterson, the Department Coordinator of Theatre and Dance at the college. The students took a lot of risks to achieve Person’s vision, but the overall result was a captivating success.

The play centers on the murder of the King of Scotland by his cousin Macbeth and the repercussions that follow him and lead to his own death.

The two main characters, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, begin as seemingly good people who are ultimately corrupted by the forces of evil. The idea that anyone can become corrupt and that all of us have the potential for evil is one that this production dwells on.

As a way of indicating the potential darkness in every soul, each actor takes a turn at playing the title role. To accomplish this, Macbeth is symbolized by his armor which is handed from student to student and each overlapping lines the line he or she is speaking with the other Macbeth during the handoff. It may sound confusing, but the shifts occurred seamlessly throughout the performance.

One particularly provocative handoff results in a stage kiss being shared by male students. Younger members of the audience, perhaps too absorbed by the acting to care or maybe just used to such things from years of watching television shows like Will & Grace and Six Feet Under did not seem to care, but some older viewers appeared taken aback and one lady actually got up and left in disgust.

The production of Macbeth included a few modern twists to lighten the mood. In one scene Lady Macbeth uses her computer to check her incoming mail which received a huge laugh from the audience. Such modern twists made the heavy drama of the play take a lighter tone. However most of the comedic touches ended in the first act which developed the main characters and set up a thrilling second act. The scenes focused on building the tension before the climactic ending. Highlighted by Lady Macbeth’s famous sleepwalking scene and the last battle where Macbeth meets his demise, the play had a captivating finale.

The three weird sisters with their famous “Double, double, toil and trouble” chant were played by three dancers in torn spandex suits that gave the impression of having been clawed. Their appearances were indicated by clouds of smoke and the entire effect was impressive.

The performance of the actors was much better that what can be found in a lot of movies today. The eerie music really created a sense of unease. The lighting and special effects were handled by a group of students in the Entertainment Technology Program and were supervised by Professor Bob Ferrano, who runs the program. “It was a very complex process. Production began in December and we worked long hours everyday” said Ferrano. It was his efforts and the students that made all the difference in the appearance and mood of the play. The costumes, hairstyles and makeup were nothing short of perfection, the costumes were hand made. All of these elements made Macbeth memorable. Creativity was evident throughout. In short, the production of Macbeth at the Kelsey Theatre can be described as unforgettable.

3Penny: a frustrating performance

By Abraham Silwany Reporter

Pierrot Productions presentation of The Threepenny Opera flowed well and it wasn’t difficult to keep up with the plot but the execution and overall feel of the opera made it difficult to enjoy.

The play started off with a nice little number from Tom Chiola, who played three parts. Chiola’s singing was enjoyable but the orchestra was anemic at best. The music lurked in the background, making it difficult to get any enjoyment from the opera when the actors opened their mouths to sing.

Additionally troublesome were the bits of dialogue and action between musical numbers.

There were a couple of characters, particularly one of the members of Macheath’s gang, who would often overdo their English accents over the point where it was hard to understand what they were saying. It ended up feeling like they were giving a parody of their own material.

Perhaps because the number of these interludes one began to feel detached from the performers until it was hard to care about what was going on in the moment.

The play by Bertolt Brecht and score by Kurt Weill are notoriously dark and some audiences might find the moral implications of the material difficult to stomach, but it wasn’t the content of the play that compromised the performance.

The real problem was that the tricky material wasn’t made engaging on several levels. The acting was weak. The sets were drab. The music was sulky even by Weill’s standards.

Kelsey Theatre is small, so that could have been why the director chose to keep the items on set to a minimum, but the sets provided so little to look at that one couldn’t help thinking up possible alternative designs.

Even for someone who went in really wanting to enjoy the play the little things added up.

By the end of the first act the elements that had been enjoyable had become borderline annoying. By the end, as the audience waited to see whether the anti-hero gangster, Mack the Knife, would be hung or given a last minute stay of execution and be reunited with his girl, it had all come to seem irrelevant. People were checking their watches and looking for their coats and bags.

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Local fundraising event promotes autism awareness

Before Ryan Sinkleris was in pre-school, he seemed to be brilliant. Ryan could quote his favorite television shows verbatim, he loved routines, he performed many tasks with ease. But when the time came for social interaction with other children in pre-school, something seemed off to both his parents and teachers.

Like one in 94 individuals in New Jersey, Ryan was diagnosed with autism. As a non-verbal learning disorder, autism and its “cousin” Asperger’s Syndrome, create a barrier between the real world and the autistic person’s mind. Autism affects three key areas: communication, social skills and the ability to conduct creative thinking. Usually diagnosed in childhood, the disorder persists into adulthood and while there are treatment strategies, there is no known cure.

Although there are different levels of social and communication ability among those with autism, most children on what is known as the “autism spectrum” must be taught such seemingly simple things as what a smile means or how a conversation is supposed to stop and start. Despite these deficits, people with autism often have surprising focus and skills in other areas.

Ryan, who was diagnosed in October 2006, now has therapy sessions two times a week. He also participates in two social skills groups where he learns eye contact and how to make “small talk.” More recently, Ryan has been a player for the Miracle League, a baseball program for children with special needs at the Sawmill YMCA.

Andy Sinkleris is an English teacher at Steinert High School in Hamilton, NJ. His twelfth grade GT English class is holding a 5K Run/Walk to raise money for Autism Speaks, an organization dedicated to raising awareness of the effects of autism on individuals, families, and society. The event will be held June 7th at Veteran’s Park in Hamilton.

Sinkleris says, “The 12th grade students at Steinert are very motivated to this cause due to the fact that they’ve met my son, Ryan, and they see the challenges that he faces. I have also shared with them the difficult journey parents face in finding out exactly what is wrong with their child.”

Student event coordinator, Nicole Engler, for the Autism 5K says, “It’s amazing how many people you find out are dealing with [autism].”

Sinkleris encourages any parent who is struggling and thinks their child may have autism to seek help. “As soon as you say its autism,” Sinkleris says, “all of these doors open for you. There’s so much help out there.”

Sinkleris adds, “Autism Speaks provides services for families in this situation and that is why my students chose to support it.”

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DON’T LET SPRING ALLERGIES KEEP YOU INDOORS

If you are 12 years of age or older and have Spring allergies (Trees & Grasses) you may consider participating in a Spring Allergy Study.

QUALIFIED PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE AT NO CHARGE
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1-800-325-2202
24 Vreeland Drive, Skillman, NJ 08558
www.princetonclinicalresearch.com

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Pictures of the Week
By Chris Turitsi and Abraham Silwany
Reporters

“Do not take this professor unless you are prepared to kill yourself due to boredom” writes one disgruntled student. “I don’t think this professor graduated High School” writes another. Although all of the critiques are not as mean spirited, these are the kind of criticisms that even the top paid professors at the nation’s Ivy League universities receive on the popular ratings web site called ratemyprofessors.com.

Ratemyprofessors.com allows college students to find out what others have had to say about their professors before they take a class with them. Professors are ranked on a 1 to 5 scale by their previous students in categories such as easiness, helpfulness, clarity, overall quality, rater interest, and even hotness. Students can also give user comments based on the positive or negative experience they had with that professor.

A survey of 30 Mercer students both male and female of all ages showed that roughly half had heard of and used the ratemyprofessors.com web site. Of the 30 students surveyed, 38 percent had used the site. However, not every student in every class taught by a professor posts on the web site. So if a particular student has a positive or negative experience and posts many times, that can skew the overall evaluation of the professor. Ratings of professors and courses are personal and sometimes can be emotional.

Recently, ratemyprofessors.com has given professors the chance to respond to student criticisms by posting video taped rebuttals to some of the more unpleasant comments left by past students. Perhaps some of the more unpleasant comments left by past students. Perhaps not surprisingly some of these responses were not so pleasant either.

So what do faculty members think of the site? Though none would give their names on the record, many Mercer faculty members admitted to checking their own ratings and even the ratings of colleagues. One professor who spoke on condition of anonymity said “Of course we check. But the hotness rating is pretty silly, and you have to take the whole thing with a grain of salt. Only students who love you or hate you ever seem to post.”

Professor Donna Munde, the Communications Program Coordinator said, “If it’s true that anyone can post a comment on a professor then I feel it works as a ‘democratic’ site. However, not every student in every class taught by a professor posts on the web site. So if a particular student has a positive or negative experience and posts many times, that can skew the overall evaluation of the professor. Ratings of professors and courses are personal and sometimes can be emotional.”

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Mourning students lost to violence

By Chris Villano and Victoria Pace

Two of the College Voice editors will graduate this spring. Alex Hough, 17, and Jason Stives, 20, will be going on to four-year universities next fall to study journalism. Hough will be transferring to Suffolk University while Stives will transfer to Rutgers University.

Hough, currently a senior at Steinert High School and part of the Jump Start program at Mercer, has not only worked as Editor-in-Chief at the Voice but has also interned at the Community News Service and her articles have been seen in all the county newspapers. Hough has also been accepted for an internship at The New York Times.

Of her year at the Voice Hough says, "I’ve learned responsibility and deadlines. The paper has prepared me to go out into the real world and work at a daily newspaper. There is so much more to reporting than what you learn in a classroom. You need to go out and do the reporting and editing to get the right experience.”

Stives who has written a series of music reviews and popular editors has served as Viewpoints Editor for the Voice this past year. He says he found his passion for writing at a young age when he also discovered a passion for music. "My dream job would be to write for Rolling Stone magazine," Stives said. His favorite musicians include the Beatles, John Mayer, and the Birds.

At his time at the Voice Hough says he is most proud of his editorial column and that he will miss his fellow editors because they had a great time working together.

College Voice faculty adviser Holly-Katharine Mathews had high praise for this year's editing team, noting that the paper had been dormant for several years and that the student editors managed to bring it life despite numerous challenges.

About Hough, Mathews said, "I have asked her to do everything from spending hours cleaning out a derelict newspaper office to conducting last-minute interviews with the college president in order to get a story done on deadline, and never once has she responded with anything other than a cheerful ‘Yes! No problem; consider it done!’”

Mathews notes that Stives was consistently the most eager editor to receive criticism of his work. “I will really miss Jason’s bright and good attitude around the newsroom. He always raised the level of quality of our website and debate on every topic and had a way of keeping everyone on track while also being highly respectful of everyone’s different talents.”

Of their pair’s departure Mathews said, “I know it’s time for them to head out into the world beyond Mercer. They’re ready to fly.”

Photo by Steven Murphy

PARTINGS

After 27 years, the founder of Mercer's Education Program and Chair of the Social Science Department, Professor Marianne Reynolds is retiring.

Before 2001, Mercer did not offer a degree in education. Dr. Reynolds not only developed the current education programs but under her guidance the number of education major students has grown from 96 in 2001 to 451 in 2007.

Assistant Professor Elizabeth DeGiorgio says, "Dr. Reynolds is leaving behind: a rigorous education program, which is better or at the same level as an education program at four-year institutions, a partnership between Mercer and elementary and secondary public schools and four-year colleges, and other ongoing projects." 

Dr. Reynolds’s teaching has encouraged her students. Jorunn Evju, Education major, says, "Dr. Reynolds has high expectations of her students, which made me work hard not only in her class but in all my other classes as well. She gave me a good foundation to build on in my future education." Dina H. Ochoa, Education major says, "Prof. Reynolds is very knowledgeable and has a personality that inspires her students to keep pursuing their dreams.

Excelling teacher has been Professor Reynolds’s priority. She says that her most memorable experience as a professor of education has been "To visit the classrooms of my former students and see what wonderful teachers they have become.”

Faculty members also hold Dr. Reynolds in high esteem. Assistant Professor of History Linda Scherr says, "She is an excellent teacher, has advocated for students nationwide, is a fantastic colleague and a great inspiration for me as a teacher. We’ll miss her.” Dr. Robin Shore, Dean of Liberal Arts Department says that sentiment saying, “Dr. Reynolds is exceptional, competent, has great academic leadership and organizational skills, and is a wonderful person to work with. We’ll miss her.”

Besides teaching, Professor Reynolds has distinguished herself in other areas. She has given workshops and presentations in it. She may state on topics from developmental reading instruction to teaching strategies. She has written several articles for professional education journals and published five college textbooks for developmental readers.

After retiring, Professor Reynolds will take a year off and consider an international teaching position.
Bamboozling a Jersey Crowd

By Jason Stives
The College Voice

For people who love going to the Van's Warped Tour, the wait for the summer to roll around is unbearable. Thankfully as summer gets nearer there is a substitute in the form of the annual Bamboozle Music Festival held in the concrete jungle that is the Giants Stadium parking lot. Like every year, the promoters made sure to stack the two-day event with every popular band under the sun to ensure the MTV audience's attendance. Mixed together with numerous punk, hard-core, and emo bands were the big guns in the forms of Panic at the Disco, Jimmy Eat World, Paramore, and Coheed and Cambria who gave the East Rutherford crowd there as headliners to end each ten-hour day. Other noted bands of the day included pop punk darlings Motion City Soundtrack, Boston's hard-core sons the Devil Wears Prada, and even rap icon Snoop Dogg, who closed out the first day of the festival which is dampened down a bit by cold temperatures and rain. While I've only wanted a few over the two-day stint, over a hundred bands played on ten different stages.

However, not all the fun was for the kids as long Island rockers the Sleeping with the band were able to coax former Skid Row front man Perry to front man into performing three songs with the band to the delight of anyone over thirty and to the confusion of anyone born after 1980. Couple this with the special guest set of Poison front man Bret Michaels, who tore through some of his classic hits, and you can say that The Bamboozle's purpose was to appeal to the masses both young and older.

While all the bands on the two day bill seemed to give it there all to the 30,000 plus concert goers, certain bands stood out as real animals that got the crowds they performed to all railed up. Hit the Lights, a pop punk quartet from Ohio, sent the Jersey crowd into a frenzy that included crowded surfers, moshers, and an air mattress riding the crowd which the group's lead singer dove onto at the end of their set. Unbeknownst to me, I was only talking to that stage diving lead singer just thirty minutes prior to the set waiting in line for the bathroom. Just goes to show that even at a music festival everyone hangs with everyone.

Music was the main focus of the weekend, the concert promoters were able to keep the kids from being cranky all weekend by providing them with food stands consisting of gyros, cheese steaks, pizza, and Carvel ice cream. Thankfully no attendees were reported to have a stomachache. Along with food, the concert catered to amusements park-goers with rides like a Ferris wheel, the gravitron, and even a batting cage, which offered Boston Red Sox fans memorabilia to a crowd consisting of New York and New Jersey residents. I bet the Yankees are sore they didn't get any publicity.

Experiences varied from person to person but one thing was certain, rain or shine, hot or cold, the people who attended bamboozle left with a smile and visions of what next year may bring.

Hidden Treasure: Mercer's art gallery is thriving

By Carmela Pecana and Anthony Galasso
The College Voice

To visit an art gallery may not be an expensive or long-distance trip after all. At Mercer art shows are mostly free and the gallery is open to visitors on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays during day and evening hours. The gallery is located on the second floor of the Communications building.

The current exhibit is called "Garden State Remix" and it features the work of Mercer students in a variety of media. Tricia Fagan, director and curator of the art gallery explains the concept of the exhibit saying, "The Garden State Project has been an annual collaboration between some of the visual arts professors and some of their students for the past four years. Everyone volunteers their time for this project. Each year they have a different theme. This year the theme was "REMIX."

Mercer student and recent gallery visitor, Zainab Khumasi described the exhibit saying, "I'm amazed at all the artwork because of all the variety and the artists' technique is pretty cool."

According to Fagan the show that has recently received the most response took place last September. It was called "Dangerous Women Two." Seven artists from the tristate area contributed work that was inspired by women of the early 20th century who embodied artistic risk taking or visionary activism. The result was a startling body of work that touched on themes of strength, power, creativity and femininity.

There are a total of six art shows presented in the gallery each year from Mercer County artists and MCCC Visual Art Students. Funding comes from the NJ State Council on the Arts and sponsorship, in part, is by the Mercer County Cultural and Heritage Commission. The first four shows which take place in March or April display artwork from professional artists and are judged for awards. Awards categories include Best in Show, Juror's Choice and up to six honorable mentions. In addition, the West Windsor Arts Council Award is also given. The Mercer County Artists show is the only show that is judged by one juror which can be a Curator, Gallery Owner, Art Critic or an Art writer.

For student exhibitions their is a two part process for work to be accepted. First the student's art teacher evaluates which pieces may be suitable and then Fagan determines it the piece will appear. One of the upcoming shows in the fall will be a black and white mixed media exhibition. Another show in consideration will also be Asian inspired art and the exploration of space.
New Pontiac G8: delicious on wheels

By Justin Cartwright

General Motors’ self-proclaimed “Excitement” division has brought a new player into the performance sedan market. Pontiac has opened up the market to the new G8, replacing the Bonneville, and the elderly Grand Prix, and will also fill the spot in the line-up that the low selling GTO occupied.

Packing a potent punch of power and style, the G8 is available in blue, red, orange, black, grey, and white, and in three trim levels: base, GT, and GXP. The GXP performance version is scheduled to be available in the fall. There is also a talk about a G8 sports-truck version. Can you say El Camino?

The base G8 gets a smooth 3.6-liter VVT (Variable Valve Timing) V6, with 260 horsepower and 248 pound-feet of torque. While the GT version gets a large 6.0 liter L76 V8, with Active Fuel Management. It produces a hefty 361 horsepower and 385 pound-feet of torque on regular gas! The GXP version is powered by the Corvette’s rumbling 6.2-liter LS3 V-8, rated at a tire-smoking 402 horsepower and 402 pound-feet of torque all while getting about 24 mpg. It will come mated to a six-speed automatic with tap shift or a Tremec six-speed manual transmission.

Pontiac says the 4000-pound G8 GT will dash to 60 mph in 5.3 seconds and run through the quarter-mile in 13.8 seconds. However, the GXP version is expected to deliver a 0-to-60 mph in just 4.6 seconds, and have a quarter-mile run of just under 13.0 seconds. That puts it well into the BMW M3 neighborhood. In fact the G8 has more interior space and more cargo room than the M3 for a fraction of the price. The base G8 starts at $27,595, but if you choose to upgrade to the GT, look to be paying around $29,995. The Pricing on the GXP has not yet been set, but expect it to be in the $35,000 price range.

Though the G8 isn’t exactly a hybrid when it comes to gas mileage, it’s got every other feature going for it.

TENNIS: Winners head to Texas

By John Bunting

The Mercer County Community College Men’s Tennis squad is returning to the national stage for the second consecutive year. Following a win at the Regional XIX Tournament, the men’s team will be heading to Plato, Texas to compete in the NJCAA Championship Tournament on May 10th through May 16th. The team won the regional to send them to nationals by capturing 5 of the final 8 matches of the day.

Marc Nichols, first singles player for Mercer, set the pace for the Vikings in the regional to send them to nationals. Nichols played singles with Drew Holzman to bring home a 6-3, 6-2 victory and Bielski played with Luis Gutierrez to win 6-2, 6-2.

Now the team has had some time to rest and think about their upcoming trip to Texas. When i asked Coach Vecchiolla how he and his team feel in general and in regards to the NJCAA Tournament he responded without hesitation “Excited, confident, and relaxed.” He went on to say “The guys have put in a lot of work during the season and they played great in the regional tournament. Now we have had a few weeks to rest and get ready for the National Tournament. But is the team now too confident and too relaxed given they had all this time off? Coach Vecchiolla thinks not. “The team knows they’ll be going up against the best competition in the country, but we’re prepared for the challenge.”

Come May 10th, we’ll see if they are.

BASEBALL: Team heads to post season, prepares to lose starters in fall

By Jason Brown and Mohamad Cheble

Another regular season is in the books for the men in green and gold. The Mercer Vikings exceeded coach Matt Wolski’s regular season goal by finishing the season with a record of 33-11.

Early in the season Wolski said he expected to finish at .600 or .700, which would have been a minimum of 27 wins. But the team rallied in the second half of the season to finish with a .750 winning percentage. The team is looking onward to more action in the post season.

In baseball, a team usually only goes as far as their pitching staff will take them. The Vikings’ pitching staff had a combined ERA of just 2.617. Leading the pack was Will Blackman; he went 7-3 with an ERA of 3.436. Blackman pitched 55 innings in 14 games and struck out 66 opposing players.

Followed by Greg Hough, the team’s closer and captain with an ERA of 2.019, 8 saves, and 33 strike outs in 24 games and 35 innings. Both Hough and Blackman will be leaving the team to continue for four year schools.

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Of course, pitching wasn’t the only bright spot for this year’s squad — at the plate the Vikings had a team combined batting average of .352. Third baseman Frank Mercurio led the team in RBIs with 43, and a posted a batting average of .406. Mercurio recorded 66 hits during the regular season that included four home runs and 12 doubles.

Nine players from this year’s team will not be returning for another season at Mercer. Four of them are starters and four are pitchers. When coach Wolski was asked what qualities he was looking to add to next year’s team he said, “Depth and speed.”

But for now, Wolski’s main concern is leading this season’s team to a national championship. The slugging ability of Mercurio will be an asset for the Vikings going forward, but Mercer’s coach said offensive firepower isn’t necessarily a path to victory. The team will continue to the Division II, Region XV tournament after recently winning the Region XIX tournament.

“If you have good pitching,” Wolski said, “you can always win.”

The baseball team following their Region XIX win; nine players will not be returning next season.

PHOTO | HOLLY SPECIAL

PHOTO| STEVEN MURPHY

By John Bunting

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The last straw: when it’s okay to speak your mind

Since I started this column at the beginning of the semester, I have been able to get a lot off my chest as far as what gets in my craw, to mix a metaphor or two. Many of you readers have come up to me in the hallways and told you agree, or disagree. Many of you have thanked me or e-mailed the Voice office to add your thoughts.

Today I want to turn my attention to freedom of speech and the importance of being tactful and having courage to stand up for what is right.

In our day-to-day lives we all sometimes say things that offend someone or go against that person’s beliefs; they in return may say that you can’t just say whatever you want. If you’re like me, your knee-jerk reaction may be that you can say what you want because this is America, baby, and we have freedom of speech! But freedom of speech isn’t a good enough reason to speak your mind without thinking.

In a recent class of mine, the issue of tact versus honest and free speech was brought up. We grappled with the question of when is it right to speak your mind and when is it wrong.

It’s not hard to see that certain times and places call for different levels of personal restriction where free speech is concerned. In a casual conversation with a friend things like displeasure with the government, a friend, a colleague, or even a family member can be discussed without repercussion. But the same attitude in your boss’ office may result in your being escorted off the premises with a box of papers and a protractor.

Likewise, hate speech or derogatory remarks of any kind are taboo for good cause. But what of other, subtler issues, like the misinterpreted comment or the unintentional offensive comment? The key to avoiding both is knowing your audience. People often don’t seem to know who they are talking to and may tend to make false assumptions about that person’s views or situation in life. This lack of information can get you into a lot of trouble in the real world, so it is important to choose wisely what you speak. Better yet, it’s important to take time to ask others about themselves and get to know them better.

With all that said, the fact remains that letting your voice be heard is one of the most noble and brave things someone can do. While some people blunder along making shameless remarks, many more people hesitate to speak at all for fear of the possible reaction and I hope, if my column has done anything, it has encouraged quiet kids in the back of the classroom to think about speaking up.

In the 1960’s, civil rights activists took to the streets and preached what they believed to be true and in certain instances they accomplished what they wanted. With fears of global warming, budget cuts hitting education, debt rising, the housing market collapsing, people becoming increasingly disenchanted with the war it’s hard not to be stunned by the deafening silence of so many able bodied.

Being polite doesn’t mean surrendering your principals. You MUST be willing to ruffle a few feathers from time to time. You have to tell it like it is.

Journalists like Hunter Thompson and Lester Bangs told it like it is and it did get them into trouble but people did listen eventually, and that’s what we must remember.

As I leave Mercer to venture into new territories I plan to continue taking the initiative in life and I hope that future editorial writers will pick up where I have left off. The Voice needs a voice.

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*Last day to apply for August graduation June 1

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Viewpoints

THE WAY IT IS

Jason Stives

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