Construction on library and student center begins

By Mikey Scoffield
With Yannan Hu and Zaira Dabhumabaoa
Reporters

Mercer’s Student Center and Library are being renovated and a new structure known as the “One Stop Student Center” is being built. The new structure will link the two existing buildings and will enable students to register for classes, apply for financial aid, and get advisement all in one place.

The project, 10 years in the making, is funded through Chapter 12, meaning 50 percent is paid by state and 50 percent by county. Mercer’s Chief Business and Financial Officer, Jacob Eapen, says, “The construction alone costs $9.4 million and contingency, furniture, engineering and architecture fees equal $10.8-11 million.”

The project was designed by the Spiezle Architectural group Inc. and is being carried out by the Tormee Construction Company. Work began in July and will be completed over several semesters. Although there has been no announcement of an exact end date, the goal is to finish within a single year. Said Library Director, Pamela Price, “Construction scale, contractors, weather, the sub delivery network, and many other factors contribute to a precise date. We anticipate late spring 2009 semester, but dates are not carved in stone.”

The ongoing construction has necessitated the relocation of several key services including student computer labs, the Library and the Learning Center. The Library has moved into a trailer next to the Administration Building (AD). Several other programs have been moved into FA 129. For now, the Student Services Department and College Bookstore remain in the same place. (See relocation map on page 7 for details.)

With the closing of the Library a number of classrooms are out of service, causing a classroom crunch. Classes are being held at unusual times, such as the 12-lpm slot usually reserved for student activities, and in unusual locations. The Journalism class, for example, is meeting in an aviation classroom that houses a large propeller and a wind tunnel.

The greatest impact of the renovations from a student perspective is meeting in an aviation classroom that houses a large propeller and a wind tunnel.
The Democratic and Republican National Conventions of 2008 were primarily remembered as the first time an African-American had been nominated to run our country and the first time a woman has been elected as a running mate.

The conventions have several purposes. First, delegates (group members representing an organization) choose and nominate presidential and vice presidential candidates for the upcoming election. Second, the nominees and various speakers work to unify their political party and clarify their party’s platform or primary goals.

The Democratic convention took place at the Mile High Stadium in Denver Colorado August 25-28. The Democrats have focused their campaign around the idea of change, specifically changing the party that has been in power for the last eight years.

Joe Biden and Hillary Clinton were among the speakers at the convention. Hillary Clinton’s daughter Chelsea introduced her. Hillary said she is a proud supporter of her father. It was Speaker Pelosi’s daughter who introduced her. Pelosi is a speaker of great respect. She is a woman of great wisdom and courage.

The Democratic convention focused on the issues of the middle class. The speakers called for change and action. The speeches were filled with passion and emotion. The candidates talked about the need for unity and cooperation. The convention was a gathering of hope and optimism.

The Republican convention took place at the Xcel Energy Center September 14 in St. Paul Minnesota but were postponed due to hurricane Gustav. Laura Bush and Cindy McCain kicked off the GOP convention, briefly taking the stage to raise money for the victims of Gustav. Cindy McCain said “This is a time when we take off our Republican hats and put on our American hats.”

The highlight of the Republican convention was the speech by John McCain’s surprise pick for running mate, Sarah Palin. She united the Republican Party with her speech about family, mentioning her own children specifically. Her youngest son, Trig, is four months old and had Downs Syndrome and she pledged to parents special needs children that they will have a “friend and advocate in the White House.”

Her other son, Track, is 19 and she talked about how on September 11 he would be deployed to Iraq with the Army in-fantry. When Republican nominee Senator John McCain’s arrived to give his acceptance speech the crowd chanted for a good two minutes, first his name, then “USA” while the red and white stripes of the American Flag waved on the giant screen behind him.

Not long into his speech, a protestor was televising in the balcony holding a sign that read “McCain votes against vets” on the other. The disturbance was ignored by the speaker. McCain said, “We believe in a government that doesn’t make your choices for you, but works to make sure you have more choices to make for yourself.” He also spoke of his time as a prisoner of war in Vietnam. He ended his speech saying “We’re Americans, and we never give up. We never quit. We never hide from history. We make history.”

A week after all the pageantry of the conventions has come to a close, the economy is suffering major blows and the two nominees are tied in the polls. With just a few weeks to go before the election, the campaigns are working furiously to round up supports, particularly in swing states, including Pennsylvania, Ohio and Florida.

The next big event of the campaign cycle will be the political debates in which McCain and Obama will answer questions and face off on topics of key concern to voters.

President George W. Bush was forced out of office by the Thai judiciary. Thai Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej is forced out of office by the Thai judiciary. The political mood among Mercer students appears to be intense, but not necessarily upbeat. In a survey of 30 Mercer students, 19 said they will definitely vote, of those 16 will be voting for Obama, 1 for McCain and 5 declined to answer.

war is the top concern for Mercer students, followed by oil, the economy, and equal rights for women and homosexuals.

Look for more election coverage in the October 13 issue of the Voice or visit us online at www.mercervoicenews.org.
PASS Program boosts graduation rate for underprivileged students

By Susana Sanchez
The College Voice

To keep students in school, Mercer has created a resource known as PASS which stands for Program for Academic Services and Success. Karen Orozco, a Mercer freshman, says "I was really concerned about my transition from Trenton High School to Mercer. Luckily, I got help from PASS, which has kept me pursuing my goals."

Like Orozco, many students across the nation endure economic and academic hardships that prevent them from graduating. In fact, the statistics are alarming. A report by The Education Trust says that "Approximately one million new students start out in four-year colleges every year. Six years later, barely six in 10 will emerge with a baccalaureate degree. Among low-income and minority freshmen, the numbers are closer to five in 10."

PASS offers students academic counseling, tutorial services, mentoring, cultural/educational enrichment, college tours, career exploration, and grants/scholarships, among other services. The program is designed to help students who have potential and are motivated to succeed, but do not have the money or come from underfunded high schools. Orozco was part of PASS Summer Academy, a program designed to ease the transition between high school and college. She says, "They paid for my class and books, and they also helped me paying fall." The financial aid helped her stay in school because her limited funds were not enough to afford college.

"Approximately one million new students start out in four-year colleges every year. Six years later, barely six in 10 will emerge with a baccalaureate degree."
- The Education Trust

The support students get from PASS goes beyond the financial and academic arenas. Orozco says, "At PASS Summer Academy I not only got comfortable at Mercer, but I had fun. We went to see a play, in the Heights, and to Madame Tussaud's wax museum in New York."

Orozco stresses a particular requirement for all PASS students, and that is interest. She says, "I've been working hard because the academic counselors have great expectations for me. My counselor says he will be doing me when I stop trying, which encourages me to stay on track." Orozco is a reflection of PASS successful retention rates. The two major programs that support PASS, Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) and Student Support Services (SSS), have helped students stay in school longer and do better than the institutional and national averages.

English Professor and PASS director, Dr. Khalida Haqq, has worked hard to keep PASS effective. She developed a grant to hire students to work as peers mentors for PASS students. Dr. Haqq knows this program from the inside out, she says, "The reason I love what I do is because I was a EOF student and I am giving back to my community, and I am proud of my students because they start so far behind the starting line and they finish par with other students." EOF is a state funded program, and SSS is a federally funded program. Students who qualify have to meet the strict income eligibility criteria. According to Dr. Haqq "About 450 students apply to PASS each year; however, funds limit the number we can accept."

With financial difficulties at the federal and state level, the future of successful academic assistance programs like PASS relies.

By Mabel Duran-Sanchez
Reporter

Monday September 1, 2008, as the new moon appeared, the Muslim holy month of Ramadan began. It was 4:15am, and over one billion people around the world, approximately five to eight million in the United States, and 200,000 alone in New Jersey, woke up just before sunrise to eat and drink as much as they could to last for the rest of the day. Then they went on their normal daily routines. This ritual continues for a month, and each day they cannot eat again until the sun goes down.

You may be wondering, how Mercer's Muslim students manage to go without eating all day while attending all their classes. After all, it is difficult to pass by all the vending machines and not buy anything if you're hungry between classes. Plus, there is always a smell of food coming from the cafeteria! Khudija Pervez, a sophomore at Mercer, says "you just get used to it." Sara Gardee, another Mercer sophomore, says that "there's also food all over the house," so even when a Muslim is at home, temptation is there and "you have to get used to it."

She' y ma a Khalifa, a sophomore, says that she likes being in school during Ramadan because it makes time go faster and in class "I am concentered on my class and not on my hunger." Pervez, Khalifa, and Gardee are united by their Muslim faith but they come from starkly different backgrounds. Pervez is Pakistani and came to the United States at age two. Khalifa and Gardee were both born in Trenton but are of Egyptian and South African descent respectively. Although fasting is a reԛuirment of Ramadan once you reach puberty, all three women began fasting between the ages of eight and ten. Pervez made it clear that the requirement must be fulfilled "when you are ready to commit."

Pervez and Khalifa were asked the same questions both noted that the September 11, 2001 much as the action. As a child, Gardee actually wanted to start fasting before her parents allowed her to, she said, "you really want to do it as a kid because every-one else in your family is doing it."

Sara Gardee may be familiar to many students because she is one of the only students at Mercer to wear a burka.

When asked about the most common stereotype people have about Muslims Gardee responds "women being con-trolled. I can't speak for a billion people but I don't feel controlled."

When Pervez and Khalifa were asked the same ques-tions, both noted that the September 11, 2001...
Mercer’s 3rd annual Indo-American festival loses attendees to Bollywood extravaganza

By Daisuke Katsutama

Mercer’s 3rd annual Indo-American festival loses attendees to Bollywood extravaganza.

The good news is there’s no shortage of ways for Indo-Americans to celebrate their culture and heritage. On the weekend of August 30 and 31, the third annual Indo-American Festival was held in Mercer County Park but attendance was down this year. The festival had to compete with the Zee Carnival, a massive Indo-American event at the Meadowlands.

“It wasn’t the same this year,” said Gpal Qaddus a local biology teacher who has attended the fair in Mercer County Park every year since its inception in 2005. Ms. Qaddus said that the fair was “lacking in attendees this year as well as the fun.”

The fair usually spreads over one section of the park and includes more than 40 stalls for shopping and cooking and exhibitions of cultural dancing and music. This year saw fewer stalls, however, over 1300 people excluding the shop owners and entertainers were in attendance.

There are an estimated 300,000 Indo-Americans in New Jersey, according to the most recent U.S. census reports. New Jersey has the third largest population after California and New York of any state in the country. Edison, New Jersey has the highest percentage of Indians (17.5%) of any municipality in the U.S.

Event organizers hope to keep the festival alive next year, but some have suggested the weekend be changed to avoid competing with Zee which drew an estimated 20,000 attendees.

Recipe for Indian Dish: Chicken Tikka Masala

INGREDIENTS
1 cup yogurt
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons ground cumin
2 teaspoons ground coriander
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 cup yogurt
4 teaspoons salt, or to taste
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
1/4 cup heavy cream
4 long skewers

DIRECTIONS
1. In a large bowl, combine yogurt, lemon juice, 2 teaspoons cumin, ground coriander, cayenne, black pepper, cayenne pepper, 2 teaspoons ground coriander, ground cumin, cayenne pepper, 2 teaspoons ground coriander, lemon juice and 4 teaspoons salt. Stir in chicken, cover, and refrigerate for 1 hour.
2. Preheat a grill for high heat.
3. Lightly oil the grill grate. Thread chicken onto skewers, and discard marinade. Grill until juices run clear, about 5 minutes on each side.
4. Melt butter in a large heavy skillet over medium heat. Saute garlic and jalapeño for 1 minute. Season with 2 teaspoons cumin, paprika, and 1 teaspoon salt. Stir in tomato sauce and cream. Simmer on low heat until sauce thickens, about 20 minutes. Add grilled chicken.

For more recipes and directions to local ethnic grocery stores visit the College Voice Online www.mercervoice.org

Mercer rents space from Trenton’s alternative high school

By Daisuke Katsutama

Under New Jersey law, no public school can be more than three floors high. However, Trenton’s newly built alternative high school, also known as the Daylight Twilight High School or DTHS, is five stories high. The extra space will not go to waste; Mercer will be renting the remaining two floors and using them as a way to extend the downtown James Kerney Campus.

The union between Mercer and DTHS was originally conceived 8 years ago by Mercer’s James Kerney Campus Provost, Dr. Beverly Richey. The idea was to create a campus environment right in the heart of Trenton in order to help foster a productive high school experience as well as provide an immersive and visible stepping stone towards college.

The new campus extension is located within easy walking distance of the Kerney campus and is close to both the library and the YWCA.

Several Mercer programs will be housed at DTHS. One program is Talent Search, a federally funded initiative that helps high school and middle school students who desire to continue academic studies into college achieve those goals. Mercer’s Career Training Institute is another program that will move to DTHS. The Career Training Institute focuses on job-oriented occupational preparation that enables students to shift careers or prepare for new careers through a 30 week training program.

Mercer’s president, Dr. Patricia Donohue, says that location of the facilities will serve to “create a corridor.” She intends to “broaden our outreach to Trenton in order to give the opportunity of a college education to a greater number of prospective students.”

The alternative high school serves students who might otherwise not complete high school, including those who have had a break in their education.

The site for the new Daylight Twilight High School is a 25,000-square-foot property at the corner of North Montgomery and East Hanover Street and a contiguous 9,000-square-foot parcel fronting on State Street. The ribbon cutting ceremony was held on June 12, 2008.
WWFM Mercer’s classical network expands to Hi-Def Jazz in Trenton

By Melissa Drift

For 26 years, WWFM, the radio station located on Mercer’s West Windsor Campus, has been a mainstay for classical music fans in this area, a small but loyal niche audience. WWFM should not be confused with WMCC, now known as Viking 107.7, which is also located on the Mercer Campus and is a much smaller station, where the radio majors put into practice what they learn. The stations are different, but both are soon to expand their parameters through HD (high definition) radio.

On September 1st, WWFM officially launched their new HD channel, Jazz On 2, Trenton’s Jazz Station, which will be located on the James Kearny Campus. WWFM’s General Manager, Peter Fretwell, says, “Trenton has a heritage of jazz that’s just incredible. Putting [the station] there just makes sense.”

There will be 12 hours of daily programming, with a focus on education and the local jazz scene. The shows are being hosted by volunteers using music from their own personal collections. They will feature New Jersey jazz musicians, teachers and jazz fans. Mercer Communications professor Alvyn Haywood, who is hosting Jazz School HD on the station says, “I think the original art form known as jazz could be one way of campaigning music to retain students in public schools” Program Director Winifred Howard underscores the connection between music and education saying, “We want to help students to appreciate music and to take it beyond high school and college.”

Jazz On 2 is now broadcasting the syndicated jazz feed of WDUQ of Pittsburgh on 89.1 HD2. It can also be heard on Mercer County channel 26. The station plans to start broad-casting the new local shows at the end of this month. Meanwhile, the student-run station, Viking 107, is not currently broadcasting on HD, but soon will be. Professor Mitch Canter, faculty advisor for Viking 107 says, “We plan to test the needed equipment by the end of November with the goal of going live with the HD3 broadcasting at the beginning of the spring semester.”

Digital (High Definition) radio allows a single radio station to split its signal into 3 channels, which are like 3 separate stations. You need an HD radio or tuner to receive them. In a survey of student listener-ship at Mercer, representing a diverse cross section of the student body, many respondents confused HD radio with satellite radio. The two are not the same. WWFM General Manager Peter Fretwell said he’s not too concerned about the confusion. “Satellite was a flash in the pan; it was transitional radio,” he said.

Mercer Aviation program remains up in the air

By Caroline Fling

As the Voice reported in April 2008, Mercer’s board of trustees is considering ending the college’s nearly 30 year old aviation program. For now the program has been granted a stay of execution.

Mercer’s president, Dr. Patricia Donohue, said in an interview, “We’ll have a decision by early spring.” Until then, Mercer will still accept freshmen students into the program, with the guarantee of having the program exist until they graduate or transfer out.

The aviation program runs a $400,000 loss every year. Maintaining, fueling and housing the fleet of planes is part of what drives the cost of the program so high.

Other programs at Mercer also cost the school money, such as the nursing program, but most of these programs graduate a substantial number of students each year. By contrast, the aviation program graduated just three people this past year. Research shows the reason so few students graduate is because they complete their course work but still have many hours of flight time needed before they can get their certifications; most students transfer rather than graduating.

Students from all over New Jersey come to Mercer for the aviation program. Many are drawn by its excellent reputation, and by the tuition and fees which are pennies on the dollar compared to aviation programs at four-year schools like Embry-Riddle. Aviation students commute from as far away as Atlantic City, Sayerville, and Old Bridge.

There have been appeals to donors in the aviation industry to try to raise funds to keep the program aloft. Dr. Donohue says, however, “There have been no gifts to the college yet.”
The Learning Center is in a new location but still has free drop-in tutoring

By Jacqueline Pachuta

A recent survey of 30 students on campus found that most students know academic tutoring is offered on campus, but few students -2 out of 30- appeared to be taking advantage of it.

The Learning Center, which, due to renovations, is currently located in Fine Arts (FA) 129, provides tutoring on a drop-in basis for students who want to get higher grades in their classes. All that is needed is a valid student I.D. No student is ever turned away.

According to Barbara Urban, Head of the Learning Center, “The Learning Center isn’t geared toward a particular group.” The tutors can assist anyone, regardless of age or whether one has a disability or not.

According to Arlene Simson, the Director of Academic Support Services, “Last Spring semester, we provided [more than] 8,000 hours of tutoring.” The number is impressive, but many students still do not use the facility and many students fail classes or suffer lower grades because they do not get extra support.

Math classes are the ones students most often request tutoring for, but help is offered in a variety of subjects that include reading, writing, mathematics, chemistry, biology, physics and computer science.

The Center is open from 10 A.M. to 8 P.M. Monday through Thursday and from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. on Saturday.

Chris Thomasick, a fourth-year student majoring in Information Systems, says “I wish I had used the Learning Center. It would have saved me the time and money of re-taking a math class.”

Students work with a tutor at the Reading and Composition Table in the Learning Center, FA 129.

By Susana Sanchez

John Braun, Mercer biol- ogy major, has been inter- ested in animal and plant preservation, since an early age, but it was not until this summer that he gained first hand ex- perience with animal and plant wildlife by doing a 10 week internship with Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey.

“Handling birds like osprey and bald eagles is a real honor and something few people get to do.” - John Braun

Braun did his internship as part of an honors research class available to biology and chemistry students at Mercer. As part of his class, John will present his research to the Mer- cer community on Octo- ber 14 at noon in the AD building.

Conserve Wild- life, the group Braun worked with, is a non- profit organization located in Trenton. Their goal is to preserve wildlife through research and conservation practices, education and the develop- ment of management plans.

Braun’s intern- ship required him to do a variety of activities from data entry to building bird boxes to banding birds, which is a method of keeping track of birds by placing a small, harmless numbered band around one of their legs.

Braun notes that “If a [banded] bird is re- captured or found dead or injured, its range of travel, length of life, rate of growth, and health can be tracked by the infor- mation associated with the band number.”

Under the guid- ance of Habitat program manager, Ben Wurst, Braun went on a canoe trip looking for osprey nests at Island Beach State Park.

Braun was somewhat nervous about banding the osprey because, as he said, “When doing the banding, if done incor- rectly, the bird’s leg could be injured or the band can cause problems for the bird affecting its ability to survive during everyday life. So, getting it on just right is very important.”

During his inter- ship Braun encoun- tered turtles, rattlesnakes and numerous other spe- cies in addition to the osprey.

He says, “I always thought I had a pretty good knowledge of the varieties of species that inhabit our state but after working with the Con- serve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey for just a week I have learned that our wildlife population is much broader and di- verse than what I have ob- served.”

Biology and Chemistry students with a strong academic record who are interested in con- ducting research projects and internships off cam- pus should contact Pro- fessors Diane Hilker or Helen Tanzini or talk to their current instructors.

John Braun holds a newly banded baby osprey. The band will provide information on the bird throughout its lifetime.

By Mable Duran-Sanchez

Cont. from page 3

attacks provoked the most stereotypes about Mus- lims. “Many people think of us as bloodthirsty,” Khalifa responded.

Despite the ster- eotypes all three women stress that they have never felt discriminated against at Mercer and that, in fact, they have a diverse group of friends.

In addition to the fast of Ramadan, there are other elements to the cel- ebration.

During Rama- dan, donating and giving to the poor is particularly encouraged. Part of the fasting pro- cess, according to Khal- ifa, is to put everything into “perspective.” She explains that fasting pro- vides insights to the feel- ings of individuals who are less privileged.

On the other hand, after the fast is bro- ken, once the sun sets each day, feasts and celebra- tions begin. Many families come together for the fast-breaking meals each night during the holy month. They exchange gifts and pray together.

And Gardee believes that hydrating before the fast is the most important thing.

He explained that she simply makes up the prayers she has missed during the day, before go- ing to bed.

According to Per- veez, Ramadan is “a time to show your commit- ment,” as well as “a time to thank God.” Ramadan not only consists of fasting but also of abstaining from all other bodily de- mands or desires, such as drinking, cigarette smok- ing, and sexual relations.

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Gardee believes that hydrating before the fast is the most important thing.

Gardee considers the most essential beauty of Ramadan to be the spirituality and unity that comes with it. She said, “Ramadan is a pain, but it’s nice because we are all in this together.”
Renovations promise more and better spaces for students and staff

By Mikey Scofield
With Yanran Hu and Zarina Dzhumabaeva
Reporters

Cont. from page 1

from a student perspective, has to do with the library. The library computer labs where many stud-
ents write and print their papers, are now housed in LA 232 and hours for that room have not consistently
matched the hours the library was usually open.

“The whole project is going to be very challenging. But, overall, it’s going very smoothly. People are under-
standing.”
- Jacob Eapen

The library trailer also does not provide as much quiet study space as the old library. Said one student, Yingbo Zhu, a Business Ad-
ministration major, “I just study and use my computer in the school’s eatery now, because the trailer li-
brary is too small to work in.”

Most feedback about the project has been positive, and students and faculty have been co-
operative. Said Savita Bambhrolia, Director of Admissions and Outreach, “We’re absolutely very ex-
cited about the New One-Stop Student Center. It’s going to be a beautiful and stu-
dent-friendly place.” Executive Dean of Students, Dr. Diane Campbell, notes that, “The staff is coop-
erative because they want to [help it] get done.”

Library staff-
ners, who have had to do the most adapting
thus far, seem to be the most up-beat
about the construc-
tion. Pamela Prince
notes that when the
original library build-
ing was designed in
the 1960’s, the needs of a library were quite
different. Said Price,

"The renovations are definitively helping us to move forward, providing us with our 21st-century
needs.” When asked
about the difficulties of relocating Price
said, “[We have a] positive attitude in planning and orga-
izing, for the move. It was a coordinated
effort. [the Mercer Administration has been] cooperative to identify resources
that are a priority. The depth of planning the
operation was a success, and we couldn’t be more pleased.”

At present, only five percent of
the library’s catalogue is located in the li-
brary trailer, but Mercer County offers the E-brary (Electronic Library). The E-brary, is an online resource
that provides students with access to more than 30,000 materials in their entirety on ev-
er subject covered at

Phase 1 - Library, Learning Center, Testing Center and Lobby
First Floor Library: July, 2008 – March, 2009
Second Floor Library: July 2008 – December, 2008

Phase 2 - First Floor Student Center
Student Center SGA Offices: January – April, 2009
SGA moves to Multi-purpose room in Student Center once that space is renovated.

Phase 3 - Second Floor Student Center
Admissions, Registration and Financial Aid temporarily move into new bookstore on the 2nd floor of the Library.
PASS and Conference suites moves from Fine Arts 129: January – May 2009

Phase 4 - Second Floor Student Center
Second Floor Library: July 2008 – December, 2008
First Floor Library: July, 2008 – March, 2009
Library. PASS moves to FA 129: January – May 2009

 Despite the difficulties the construc-
tion poses to campus function, the purpose of the reno-
vations are to ben-
efit students and the Mercer community, Says Dean Campbell, “[The goal of the ren-
ovations] is to better serve our students. Accessibility is an is-

Students will benefit from the com-
pleted project with better academic facil-
ities, newer technol-
y, and with safer, standardized building space. There will be a new short-term park-
ing lot, a new Aca-
demic Testing Center, and additional space where students can simply hang out.

Mercer’s ad-
ministration is work-
ing to inform students and staff, and keep the campus functioning smoothly. Informa-
tion is posted promi-
nently on the Mercer homepage on the web, and posters with construc-
tion information have been put up around campus.

The National Football League (NFL) kicked off the 2008 season on Thursday, September 4, at Giants Stadium. The highly anticipated first meeting featured two teams that know each other quite well. The defending Super Bowl champions New York Giants versus long time division rival Washington Redskins.

The teams split their 2007 season, but much had changed since then. The Giants took the field in their opener without four key components from their practice, defensive defense Michael Strahan retired, starting safety Gibril Wilson signed with the Buffalo Bills. Moreover, General Manager Jerry Reese traded fan favorite Jeremy Shockey to the New Orleans Saints for two selections in next year's draft.

The Giants also lost pro bowl defensive end Osi Umenyiora for the year when he tore his ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) against the New York Jets in the third preseason game. The Redskins open their season with major changes as well. Rookie head coach Jim Zorn takes over from former Redskin coach and hall of famer Joe Gibbs. The Skins also lost both their offensive coordinator, Al Saunders, and defensive coordinator Greg Williams. Sixteen year veteran wide receiver Keenan McCardell retired. The Giants quarterback Mark Brunell signed with the New Orleans Saints, and wide receiver Brandon Lloyd signed with the Chicago Bears.

The off-season drama was nothing compared to what was about to transpire in the seasons first game. Emotion was running high as the Giants offense took the field. Super Bowl XLII Most Valuable Player (MVP) Eli Manning led the Giants to a touchdown on their very first drive. He capped it off himself with a one yard touchdown run. The Redskins now had to play catch up which they were unable to do as they scored was a dwindling 280 yards and offense and scored only one touchdown. The score came with 13 seconds left in the first half on a pass from Jason Campbell to wide receiver Santana Moss. Big Blue overpowered the Redskins punishing them on national television 16-7.

The defense was not the only bright spot for the G-MEN on Thursday night. Running back Brandon Jacobs had 21 carries for 116 yards averaging 5.5 yards a carry. Receiver Plaxico Burress had 10 receptions (133 yards) which puts him atop the list for the most receptions in week one. Even though the Redskins didn't get the job done in getting his team a victory, his numbers were impressive. Burress' numbers went from 35 (54.3%) for 216 yards. Eli ran for a touchdown, threw one interception, and was sacked twice.

The Redskins stats were surely not what the team had envisioned for their first game. Quarterback Jason Campbell went 15 of 27 (55.6%) for 133 yards and one touchdown. Running Back Clinton Portis had 23 attempts for 84 yards and one carry.

Meanwhile, the Thunder come into the series as team of relatively unknown players. Gone are players such Phil Hughes, Ian Kennedy, Jeff Karstens and John Chamberlain that helped lead the Thunder to a championship a year ago and have since moved on to a high level of professional baseball with each spending at least some time in the Major Leagues. None of the Thunder were selected for the United States Olympic team in Beijing. Only one player is listed Base- ball America as a top prospect (Austin Jackson #41). The Aeros have two players (Matt LaPorta for the last two seasons) as well as the services of Major League player Travis Hafner.

The question then is, how did the 2008 Trenton Thunder win? Experience. Said one scout in attendance, "The team is about three years older than the Aeros and the Aeros in age not only makes the players more polished in terms of skills, but more mature to bet- ter determination in professional baseball. It was the same experience that helped the Trenton Thunder become pitching phenom Clay Bucholz, and eventually come back to beat Portland in game two last week 4-3. The Thunder came from behind in game three with runs in the final two innings to complete the sweep.

To defeat the Aeros and win the Eastern League crown for a second straight year, the Thunder will try to cash in on their experience.
Three months ago renowned American rapper, Lil' Wayne, released the now ubiquitous album "Tha Carter III." Hype for the album was built up after release date was pushed back several times and many songs were leaked to the public. In its first day of release the album sold 420,000 copies. Clearly, Dwayne Michael Carter Jr. aka Lil' Wayne, is a musical phenomenon.

Several things make the album work. First the producers and collaborators consist of the biggest names in rap and hip-hop such as Timbaland, Jay Z, Cipha Sounds, Swizz Beats, and Kanye West. Second, each song on the album seems to have its own unique sound, from loud bass to extreme guitar riffs. Although in many of his songs he raps about typical themes such as money, woman, and drugs, he still seems to possess an colorful, realistic type of swagger.

Lil' Wayne seems to have attracted listeners who aren't the usual rap crowd. Mercer student, Hugh Oberholtzer, when asked what he thought of the album said, "I don't listen to a lot of mainstream rap, but the man's freestyles and antics are crazy." Oberholtzer also addressed a key criticism of Wayne's work, the fact that most of the tracks are composed of vulgar language, degrading women, and his endorsement of drugs, saying, "I don't think he really cares what the media thinks is appropriate. He isn't rapping for the youth or for society's adults, he is only making music for himself and for anyone that will listen to it. The message of his is not ambiguous. He simply doesn't care." If he is rapping about his experience in drugs and people are eating it up, it's not his fault.

Although it seems as if everyone is Lil' Wayne crazy at the moment, he's not as great as he says he is. In most of his popular songs he claims, "People saying I rap like Big, Jay, and Tupac," but Wayne is still a young artist. Putting himself on a pedestal along with Tupac is unnecessarily arrogant. Carter asks, "Who am I not to follow greatness?" The real question is, who is he to follow greatness? If you take away the element of his powerful conviction to succeed, his lyrics and beats of many of his songs sound similar to any average rapper. Lil' Wayne's cocky representation could be a downfall; modesty is a powerful quality.

The latest Batman installment, Christopher Nolan's epic sequel The Dark Knight, gained early publicity for its all-star cast. Lead actor Christian Bale returned as Gotham City's crime-fighting millionaire, Bruce Wayne. Bale starred in Nolan's first adaptation, Batman Begins. Maggie Gyllenhaal plays the role of Bruce Wayne's lost love Rachel Dawes, and girlfriend to District Attorney Harvey Dent, played by Aaron Eckhart. But the film is not about the love interest. The film is meant for those who love action and suspense, violence and heroism.

The already present hype grew exponentially after the untimely death of actor and film star Heath Ledger. In The Dark Knight, Ledger plays Batman's arch villain, the Joker. Filling Jack Nicholson's shoes was apparently quite hard on the actor. In several conferences, Ledger said the he had to throw himself into the character and sometimes the lines between character and actor became blurry. His portrayal was stunning and there is now talk of a possible posthumous Oscar nomination.

Batman has always been the realistic super hero. He cannot fly; he is not faster then a speeding bullet. He is simply a businessman who has taken the people's problems and made them his own.Batman tells the story of a regular man who chose to change his path and help the greater good, even if it took a great deal of self sacrifice. Americans who are hungry for hope, change and heroism, and who may be fed up with trying to find it among the mudslinging of this year's presidential campaign, can find what they're looking for at the movie theater. And for those who are simply looking for a chance to watch clowns rob a bank, it's got that too.

The Dark Knight is still playing at:
AMC Hamilton 24
325 Sloan Avenue,
Hamilton, NJ 08619
1:30PM, 5:05PM,
8:30PM
For more showtimes visit us online at www.mercervoice.org
Beloved Assistant Dean, Don Jones, died in June

By Mark Lombardi
Reporter

Donald D. Jones Jr., the dean of Enrollment and Student Services at Mercer’s James Kerney Campus, passed away June 2, 2008 at the age of 56, at the University Medical Center in Princeton. Jones leaves behind not only his wife, Mirtha, his four sons and several grandchildren, but also many ideas and programs he created at Mercer, including Minority Opportunity Skills Training (MOST) which was immensely successful. Jones was a beloved figure on campus and many described him as “larger than life.”

Jones’s first experience at Mercer was working in the maintenance department, riding the lawn-mower and helping out wherever he could. From that point he was motivated to attend Mercer and earn his Associate of the Arts Degree. After earning this he attended the University of the Virgin Islands and earned his Bachelor of the Arts Degree. His work ethic and desire to excel propelled him forward and he went on to attend The College of New Jersey where he earned his Master of the Arts Degree. Afterwards he came back to Mercer where his focus was always on helping students succeed.

According to James Kerney Campus Provost, Dr. Beverly Richardson, “Don counseled more students than any other counselor in my 25 years here.” Jones not only counseled students, but ministers and politicians frequently visited him for advice. Outside of his counseling work, Jones had a passion for theatre and music. For over 20 years Jones served as emcee at the James Kerney Campus’s Awards Night at the War Memorial. He also started Mercer’s first gospel choir and was planning on resurrecting it prior to his passing. He also taught math and theatre at the college; he wrote and produced plays for the Mill Hill Playhouse in Trenton.

Don Jones lived a life of passion, kindness and commitment; he exemplified the best qualities of Mercer and inspired many through his work and friendship.

Kelsey Theatre fall preview

By Alicia Jensen
Reporter

The Kelsey Theatre at Mercer, which is about to embark on a new season of productions, is located across from the gym and next to the Communications building.

When asked about Mercer’s theatre the reputation, theatre coordinator Kitty Getlick replied, “The reputation I try to have is good quality at a low price.” Tickets for students, for example, are only five dollars.

Kelsey Theatre hosts a variety of different productions that appeal to all different age groups. Children might like shows such as Mulan’s Beautiful Daughters or Disney’s High School Musical on Stage. College students might be more interested in the upcoming performance of The Rocky Horror Show. Getlick says, “Rocky Horror is going to be a lot of fun.” The show includes audience participation and there will be a special midnight showing on Halloween.

Each show consists of a diverse cast. Some productions, such as last spring’s Macbeth are put on by students in Mercer’s theater program, but most of the shows are presented by local and touring theatre troupes. Many of the actors are local or drawn from the broad talent pools of Philadelphia and New York City. Likewise, the audience for shows is typically diverse.

The Kelsey Theatre has shows just about every weekend and some weekday evenings. Getlick’s feeling about the schedule is that “Whenever the theatre’s not being used, it’s wasted.”

The Kelsey Theatre has received a number of Awards, including five Perry Awards, given by the New Jersey Association of Community Theaters, of which there are eight other members. For a list of upcoming productions visit www.kelseyatmercer.org.
CORRECTIONS

CORRECTION: In the May 12, 2008 issue article entitled Swirlin' in the Wind, the following errors were made:

The emcee of the event was a communication major named Andrea Pane, not Akwaasi Genfi. Genfi was a last minute volunteer who assisted her. Genfi asked to participate and was not asked to host the event at the last minute as was reported.

The speakers were a combination of students who had already taken the public speaking course in the past, communication majors and other new students. Some students edited course presentations, while others created new material for the event. Thus communication professors select the best students from their classes to perform as was reported.

The article noted that hosts had little preparation for the event when, in fact, the event was planned, through meetings over two months with faculty and students.

CORRECTION: In the March 31, 2008 issue article entitled Mercer County Equestrian Center a local resource a photo caption on the bottom right side of the page identified Mercer County Equestrian Center employee as Linda Mehevitz; the correct spelling of the name is Mihavetz.

VOTER REGISTRATION EVENT Tuesday October 7th, 2008
SC Cafeteria 12-1pm
Free pizza if you register to vote!

DO YOU SEE A TYPO?

We strive for journalistic integrity with every word.

If you see an error in our spelling, punctuation or grammar let us know!
E-mail us at
MercerVoice@gmail.com

Late Night Series

A FREE bimonthly two-hour open mic with special featured artists.
Enjoy an ever-changing lineup of poetry, drama, dance, comedy, film and music!

October 3, 2008: Hosted by Damian Gaeta
Featured Band: Faux Star | Folk Rock/Alternative/Pop

WHERE: MCCC - CMM122
WHEN: Series occurs 1st & 3rd Fridays of every month
DOORS OPEN AT 9:30PM FOR OPEN MIC SIGNUP
PERFORMANCES BEGIN AT 10:00PM

Correction Donations: paying for empty promises

I admit that I am guilty of not volunteering my time to community service or donating to my cause change to UNICEF, though I am moved by some commercials on TV that say you can help a needy child for a few cents a day. So what stops me and many other Americans? Most of us do not give our time and money to anything. We want to receive something in return. Even the UNICEF commercials promise that the child you sponsor will write back to you and tell you how they are doing. Humans are not entirely selfish but they tend to seek reciprocity.

In the past year, thousands of middle-class Americans have donated their money to the presidential campaigns. On the web site opensecrets.org anyone can look up money donated in a specific city. You can also see who donated to politicians and how much they contributed. I am a nosy person by nature, so I tried to see if anyone that I knew was donating money. I only knew a few, but it was the amounts of money that interested me. In Mercerville alone, over $25,000 was donated to presidential hopefuls.

The question is not whether Americans are politically active, but what their intentions are. Are Americans getting something from donating to politicians? The current presidential election between Obama and McCain is situated around the words change and hope. If a man who is involved in the NRA contributes $500 to McCain, he is hoping that McCain can change handgun laws.

It is the same situation for someone who is against the war in Iraq and donated $500 to Obama. Americans have confidence in politicians and think that by donating money their voices will be heard. In fear of not getting what they want, Americans are donating by the truckloads. People may be so disappointed with the current administration that they believe any amount of money is worth donating if it will give us a better leader.

Despite the differences between Republicans and Democrats, the common theme is that cash is flowing in the form of campaign contributions to both sides. The American people are trying to fund their hopes. Most of the time, presidential hopefuls claim that they will solve the world’s problems. History has proven that this rarely happens.

How much have they raised so far?

Barack Obama
$37,499,525 raised
John McCain
$20,355,226 raised

*According to FEC filings of 7/30/08

Selling used textbooks

Submit up to 25 words for free with valid MCCC ID!
Submit info to SC 218* or via e-mail at mercervoice@gmail.com

Free pizza if you register to vote!

Mercer County Equestrian Center a local resource

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THE WAY IT IS

Voter Registration Event Tuesday October 7th, 2008 SC Cafeteria 12-1pm
Free pizza if you register to vote!

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The stars are stacked against you at the moment. It’s time to get back in bed and wait for when the Bush administration is over. Put off all but the most essential duties.

Aquarius Jan. 20 - Feb. 18
The last time you tried something it took over your life, and this time will be the same. For better or worse, you are about to be immersed in a strange, captivated new world.

Pisces Feb. 19 - Mar. 20
Cash flow problems are a constant worry for you these days, but fear not. As the moon shifts at the end of the month your financial woes will finally come to an end. No need for overtime!

Aries Mar. 21 - Apr. 19
You’re not asking for special favors, you just want to be treated like a human being. If the people you’re dealing with don’t give you that respect it’s time to cut and run. Seriously!

Taurus Apr. 20 - May 20
Put off all but the most essential duties. The Bush administration is over.

Gemini May 21 - Jun. 20
This is a good time for foreign travel if you have the opportunity. Sometime in the next month you will be in touch with someone who is far away. Be ready to reconnect.

Cancer Jun. 21 - Jul. 22
Your willpower is suddenly surging and you find yourself able to handle more than you ever thought possible. Enjoy this ride as much as possible because it will end by November.

Leo Jul. 23 - Aug. 22
You keep trying to be polite but it’s not working. At some point you will snap and it will be for the best. Clear the air and say what you’ve been thinking for ages. It’s for the best.

Virgo Aug. 23 - Sept. 22
Don’t get discouraged! Everything you do has true impact after all.

Libra Sept. 23 - Oct. 22
Look bleak a friend will come to you in your hour of need.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
Secretly you’ve been thinking there’s no point in voting, but at the same time you’re worried about the big issues. Guess what? Your vote really counts. Make your voice heard.

Sagittarius Nov. 22 - Dec. 21
Your financial woes will end by November. sliced. Soldering mask.

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