

THE WASHTENAW VOICE

April 7, 2014
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The student publication of Washtenaw Community College
Ann Arbor, Michigan

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President Barack Obama speaks at the Intramural Building during a visit to the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor on Wednesday. KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE

Obama returns to A2, returns to students



A crowd of 1,400 gathered at the U-M Intramural Sports Building to hear President Obama speak about minimum wage. KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE

“It would have positive and negative implications. Going back to Econ 101, you know if you raise the minimum wage, you’re going to increase unemployment, naturally.”

ALEX WERNERT, 22
Ann Arbor, U-M economics student

“I can see how if you raised the minimum wage, people are gonna care more. They’re gonna be happier. They’re gonna want to go out and spend more money.”

CHANDLER BILLES, 22
Ann Arbor, U-M film student

By NATALIE WRIGHT
Managing Editor
AND MARIA RIGOU
Editor
AND JON PRICE
Staff Writer

Since his campaign days, President Barack Obama has spoken to young people. And since he introduced the Affordable Care Act, he’s been continuing to call on young people for their support non-stop.

Now, after the Affordable Care Act deadline is past, and its goal was met, Obama has made it clear that he is still prioritizing the youngest generation of voters.

During his visit to the University of Michigan last week, Obama addressed an audience of more than a thousand U-M students and other special guests, speaking to them with an air of cool approachability. But before addressing wide-ranging issues from minimum wage, partisan politics, immigration reform and student loans to economic and social inequalities, Obama spoke to the students about his failed “March Madness” bracket – and his lunch at Zingerman’s Deli.

The students seemed to appreciate his candor, laughing at all the right moments.

“In the middle of it, someone next to me called him a sweetheart,” Chandler Billes, a 22-year-old U-M film student said. “It was such a perfect way to put it. He was so candid and casual.”

Alison Lum, a U-M history student agreed.

“He knew what to say” to this crowd, Lum, 22, said, acknowledging that his talk was not only geared toward the audience as college students, but as Ann Arborites.

WHY ANN ARBOR?

In 2012, Obama became the first sitting president to visit U-M’s campus twice, after first speaking at 2010’s graduation commencement ceremony. Last week’s event marked his third visit to the campus and U-M President Mary Sue Coleman said that the school is very proud of its relationship with Obama.

“I think we hold the record for any sitting president going to any school. So he must really like it here,” she said. “I know our students are really excited, and I love that.”

“And we have lots of Michigan grads in the White House,” she added.

U-M business student Jarred Bassett said that, though he understands that Obama comes to Ann Arbor because it is “one of the most educated cities in the United States,” the venue didn’t make sense considering the topic of the speech.

“I think it is interesting that he comes here, to a college town,” Bassett, 21, said, “where none of the students and very few people here really ever have to worry about living on minimum wage.”

But Sarah Blume, a 19-year-old U-M international studies and film student, said she understands why he chose the city and the university.

“I think we have a very vibrant academic community,” Blume said. “I think that students here are responsive, and, also, I think the surrounding area itself is very socioeconomically diverse.”

WHY ZINGERMAN’S?

Obama has frequented Ann Arbor enough times that he knows “the right thing to do when you’re in Ann Arbor” is to stop by local favorite, Zingerman’s, he said.

He said he picked the deli for two reasons.

“The first is, the Reuben is killer,” he said (laughs from the audience). “The second reason, though, is Zingerman’s is a business that treats its workers well and rewards honest work with honest wages.”

“And that’s worth celebrating.” Zingerman’s owner Paul Saginaw is known for lobbying in Washington D.C. for federal minimum wage increases.

“Paul’s message is simple,” Obama said. “Higher wages and higher profits are not mutually exclusive.”

“I decided several months ago that the federal government should follow their lead.”

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

In January, President Obama announced in his State of the Union address that raising the minimum wage would become a major priority for his administration. Soon after, he signed an executive order requiring that all federal contractors must pay a minimum wage of \$10.10 an hour.


Since, he said, four states have raised their minimum wages.

“It would lift millions out of poverty,” Obama said. “It wouldn’t require




U-M students wrapped around the Intramural Sports Building on the corner of Hoover Avenue and State Street waiting to see President Obama speak. KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE






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PEOPLE COME HERE BECAUSE THEY'RE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING. It's not about packing up the car and going to a different town. For them it's about discovery. What they find is a challenge—something unexpected—that opens up new frontiers. Go West. Discover. Explore. This is one of America's great universities. A lot of people who have become successful—skilled, happy, wealthy and influential—started by heading West. Western Michigan University. It's your turn to **GRAB THE REINS.**

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Traverse City Weekend Getaway

Only \$115
June 13th-15th
7a.m. (6/13) – 5pm (6/15)
Traverse City, Michigan

Included in price: Two-nights lodging, motorcoach transportation, 2 dinners and 1 breakfast, Sleeping Bear Dunes Hike, and adventures at Pirate's Cove!

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Sign up for the SDA hub and you'll be the first to know when tickets go on sale!

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Earth Day Celebration

Learn many ways to be green, save energy, and have a positive impact on the environment!

Date: April 10th

Time: 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Location: Student Center Community Room

Price: FREE!

Tiger's Baseball Tickets

Only \$26!
May 8th

11:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Comerica Park

Grab your peanuts and Cracker Jack's! It's time for a ball game. Join Student Activities for a fun day of Tiger's baseball. Ticket includes outfield box seats and transportation!

Purchase your tickets at the Cashier's Office!

Tour de Cure

Saturday, June 7th

Help WCC raise money to fight diabetes by educating the community and join our team!

Join here: <http://tinyurl.com/WCCTourDeCure2014>

Upcoming Sports Opportunities!

Women's Club Softball: Interested in joining the WCC Women's Club Softball Team? Stop by WCC Sports (SC116), call the office at 734-973-3720, or email elemm@wccnet.edu for details. No experience needed and participation is completely FREE!

Interested in a Competitive Dance Team? We're looking for WCC students that are interested in becoming a part of a competitive dance team at WCC. If you are interested, please drop by the Sports Office in SC 116 to let us know! We're gauging interest with the hope of starting a team in the fall!

Interested in Upcoming Intramural Sports? Stop by the WCC Sports Office to grab an intramural sports schedule which includes: golf, flag football, basketball, softball, kickball, ultimate Frisbee and more!

If you have any questions, comments or concerns please contact the WCC Sports Office by calling 734-973-3720 or emailing elemm@wccnet.edu. You can also come into the office and see us and sign up in SC 116.

Tuition rates rise, remain frozen for early registrants

By MARIA RIGOU
Editor

Washtenaw Community College’s board of trustees voted unanimously to increase rates by 2.25 percent for the 2014-15 academic year – and they also agreed to freeze tuition rates at current levels for the Fall 2014 semester if students register and make payment arrangements by July 31.

New tuition rates will increase by \$2 per credit hour for in-district, work-in-district and property-in-district students, from \$91 to \$93; from \$146 to \$149 for out-of-district students and from \$193 to \$197 for out-of-state students.

Before the rate increase, WCC was below the state average, which was \$95.

“We have historically ... trended at a tuition rate below the averages,” Chief Financial Officer Bill Johnson said. “It shows that the college ... has taken to heart its goal to provide excellent education at low costs.”

Board Treasurer Pam Horiznsny said that she hopes that the freeze sends a message that students “are really important to us and that we understand the financial commitment that they are making to their education and

the burden that it creates.

“The freeze is a great idea, and I hope that many students can take advantage of it,” she said. “With the size of the tuition increase, which I think is very fair and relatively small, the overall impact is really very manageable, given that we are trying to maintain a very fiscally responsible operating budget.”

Students might not understand what the tuition rate freeze means, and many have regarded it with skepticism.

“(I think that freezing tuition) is a good idea – but not a good idea,” Vanessa Baptiste, 26, a business administration major from Ypsilanti said. “You get confused; you don’t know what to register for (that early).”

But others will embrace the freeze. “It’s a good idea,” Nyisha Marks, a 19-year-old nursing major from Ypsilanti, said. “Might as well register early and be one of the individuals that doesn’t have to pay the extra \$2.”

The board also approved a new, separate international student tuition rate that is aligned to the resources required to support WCC’s international student population.

The new rate is \$225, compared to \$193 that international students

paid before, as they were considered as out-of-state students. The average tuition rate for international students in the state was \$223 in February. These numbers might change as colleges start to increase rates for the 2014-15 academic year.

Distance-learning courses will also see an increase in the cost per credit hour, from \$94 to \$103.

The college has had “about a 300 percent increase in (distance-learning) credit hours from 2008 to 2013,” Johnson said. “(We are going to increase) that rate a few more dollars than we would otherwise do, just to get the alignment of the resources with enrollment.”

According to the Michigan Community College Association, on average, 44.7 percent of revenue sources come from tuition and fees. State aid is also tied to tuition rate increases, as colleges risk losing their funding if rates increase by more than a specified percentage.

In accordance to Gov. Rick Snyder’s executive budget recommendation, in order for the college to receive state funding, community colleges will be required to limit any tuition increases to 3.2 percent or less, double the rate of inflation.



Ruth Hatcher taught English at WCC for 30 years and served as president of the faculty union before retiring in 2010. Now, she is planning to run for the board of trustees in November. NATALIE WRIGHT | WASHTENAW VOICE

Retired teacher eyes board seat

Hatcher hopes to restore balance by asking: ‘What do the faculty and students want?’

By NATALIE WRIGHT
Managing Editor

Ruth Hatcher is planning to file papers to run for the board of trustees – just as soon as she’s done remodeling her kitchen.

The torn-up room has created a literal obstacle to her beginning the campaign process in the form of three layers of furniture.

“I can see the forms to file. They’re in that room,” she said, “but I can’t get to it.”

On November’s ballot, Hatcher will likely be up against three incumbents who are up for reelection – Anne Williams, Mark Freeman and Patrick McLean – as well as a few other candidates, about whom there are only rumors so far.

Hatcher, 66, who taught English at Washtenaw Community College for 30 years and represented the faculty as president of the union for “years and years” before she retired in 2010, is likely to be very student- and faculty-oriented if elected as a trustee, Maryam Barrie, faculty union president and close friend of Hatcher, said.

Hatcher’s love of students and of WCC is apparent in her reluctance to actually leave the classroom. In her first year of “retirement,” she worked as a part-time instructor, teaching one class per semester.

Since then, she’s been working at the Writing Center, which she likes, she said, because she still gets to work with students but doesn’t have to deal with grading papers, which she no longer has the patience for.

Despite her husband’s pleas for her to “retire already!” Hatcher can’t seem to find it in herself to leave WCC.

many students does Rose (Bellanca, WCC’s president) see?” Hatcher said. “There’s an expertise there that’s helpful, not adversarial, but insightful and helpful.

“There’s a perception that faculty are lazy or don’t know anything, I don’t know what it is. But they can help.”

Hatcher is a wise and positive problem-solver, said Barrie, who refers to herself as a “Ruth devotee.”

“She’s got a really good bullshit detector,” Barrie said. “And her first response to anything is ‘What’s the other side of the problem?’”

Barrie also remembers Hatcher constantly asking “What problem are we trying to solve?” when dealing with a conflict.

“So when change happens, or when there’s a discrepancy about ‘Who did what?’ or ‘Who said what?’ it’s a way to get everybody on the same page and to get us to work together,” Barrie said.

One of Hatcher’s goals, if elected to the board, is to emulate one of her mentors, Richard Bailey, who served on the board from 1975 through the early 2000s and who Hatcher remembers as “very influential and very wise.”

Hatcher said she remembers Bailey constantly asking “What do the faculty think?” or “What do the students think?”

“And if there were faculty or students sitting in the room, he’d ask them. He’d interrupt the meeting and say, ‘What do you think about that?’” she said. “And that doesn’t happen anymore.

“I would just like to ask that question and keep that sense of ‘We’re all working together.’ I’m not saying it’s not there; I just don’t hear it at the board meetings.”

But, Hatcher said, though many may think she’s looking to join the board to champion the faculty’s cause and give them a seat at the table, that’s not her motivation. She’s been planning to run since she retired four years ago, and this was just her first chance, she said.

“It’s not as though it’s a response to that (the recent conflict between the faculty and administration) at all,” she said.

“Everybody thinks I’m a rabble rouser, but I’m not,” she said. “I just want to help and contribute. As a union leader, I always learned that faculty would always complain about something, but there’s always another side to that story.

“So you don’t rush to action based on one side.”

And Hatcher admits that another reason she wants to run is because, frankly, she’s nosey.

“I don’t know what happens behind the scenes,” she said. “I don’t know what they talk about ... I want to know what’s going on.”

But whatever problems Hatcher might find herself dealing with if she’s elected to the board, she’s sure to face them in a rational and positive way, Barrie said.

“She’s always wanting to focus on the positive and wanting to be somebody who doesn’t have a hysterical or reactionary response to issues when they come up,” Barrie said.

When it comes to her kitchen, however, she seems to be letting her emotions get the better of her.

“It’s very frustrating!” she said.

“But they’re there, and I’m ready. So as soon as the kitchen’s done, I’ll file!”

A garden in the orchard

WCC to plant a new community garden on campus

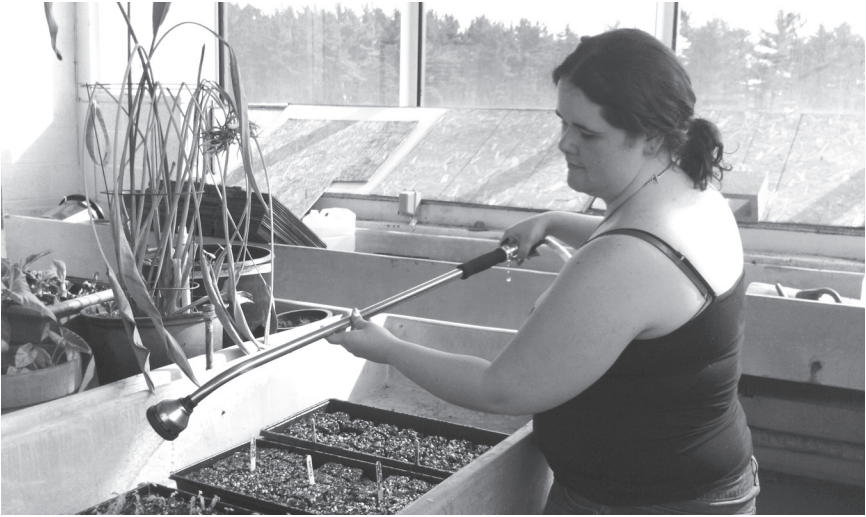
By JAMES SAOUD
Staff Writer

Unbeknownst to many students at Washtenaw Community College, a greenhouse resides at the very top of the LA building.

Soon, however, a far more noticeable addition will be added to the campus. At the end of this summer, a community garden will go in near Facilities Management on the west side of campus.

On Monday, March 31, students and instructors met at the top of the LA building to talk about the new community garden, the green house and the “Garden Project.”

“The Garden Project is an opportunity for students to learn about organic gardening, healthy eating, have a way to reduce stress and to collaborate,” said Kimberly Groce, who chairs the project. “What I want to be able to



Kady Maser waters plants in the greenroom atop the LA building at WCC. JAMES SAOUD | WASHTENAW VOICE

do is to give away food, healthy food, to students, teach them how to grow, not only to teach them to grow, but to show them how easy it is to do at home.”

The Garden Club at WCC is trying to get more volunteers to participate in the community garden on campus. Groce, who is also a counselor on campus, has dedicated her free time to the project.

“The produce could be given to disadvantaged students. It could be sold or given to the on-campus culinary arts department,” biology instructor Emily Thompson said. “They are clearing ground for her (Groce). It’s going to be a one-acre site.”

Groce describes learning to eat healthy as a “piece that is missing,”

which is why students who put time in at the garden will get to walk away with a harvest basket.

“There are multiple reasons why it’s important. Not only are you building a sense of community, you’re learning how to take care of yourself in a way a lot of people have forgotten,” said Kady Maser, 25, of Ann Arbor, president of the Garden Club and a biology major. “A lot of people don’t know where their food comes from anymore.”

For students who are convinced their food comes from the dollar menu at a fast-food restaurant, volunteering for WCC’s community garden might be a first step toward a healthier lifestyle.



Green day: Students packed the Community Room to celebrate Earth Day last year. Work from a graphic design class taught by Ingrid Ankerson was on display to inform the public on earth safety and other environmental issues. FILE PHOTO | WASHTENAW VOICE

WCC will celebrate Earth Day

By JAMES SAOUD
Staff Writer

As the warmer weather approaches and the snow begins to melt, this time of year is often filled with people getting off their couches and back outside to celebrate their planet. And on Earth Day, Washtenaw Community College will join in celebrating nature.

On April 10 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the first floor of the Student Center will be overrun with 20-plus participants representing Earth Day.

Some participants in the Earth Day event will include the Leslie Science Center and Washtenaw Community College’s own environmental committee.

“We want to kind of make people aware of how we interact with our environment,” WCC Manager of Energy and System Integration Bill Ghrist said. “Each and every human that occupies the planet should be a steward, if

you will, of the planet.”

The college has a history of being environmentally friendly. WCC has participated in the annual Earth Day event for more than five years and has also signed off on a “climate action plan,” which started four years ago under President Larry Whitworth and was recently re-signed by President Rose Bellanca.

“The climate action plan is the blue print, if you will,” Ghrist said. “The president signed on to the American Collegiate of Schools and Universities to pledge toward working to a zero-greenhouse-gas output from a school.”

Whether it be through sustainable use of materials, energy efficiency improvements or encouraging public transportation, Ghrist’s focus rests on meeting the school’s goal.

Ghrist encourages all students to join in on the events of Earth Day so they have the chance to see how WCC betters the lives of people at the college and betters the planet.

A NEW SERIES OF FRACKING LECTURES

The Committee to Ban Fracking in Michigan will be at Washtenaw Community College on Thursday, April 10 at 7 p.m. to give a free lecture about the health impacts of fracking and gas drilling.

According to a press release handed out by the committee,

evidence shows that ongoing fracking and oil development is effecting the health of entire communities.

The lecture, “Health Impacts of Shale Gas Development,” will be presented by the committee’s campaign director Dr. Larysa Dyrszka in Room 101 in the Morris Lawrence building. The lecture will be the first in a series held by the committee.

EDITORIAL

Some students ‘frozen’ out of tuition decision

Washtenaw Community College’s board of trustees voted to raise tuition by 2.25 percent starting next fall but is giving students the chance to pay current rates to those who make payment arrangements by July 31.

This is the second consecutive year the board decided to freeze tuition. According to trustee Stephen Gill, the intention of the board is to increase tuition rates as little as possible, but stay within the framework that the state of Michigan has defined.

In Gov. Rick Snyder’s executive budget recommendation, which Gill doubts will be signed into law, in order to receive educational state funding, colleges have to limit their tuition rate increases to a maximum of 3.2 percent – and WCC is doing it.

When analyzing tuition rate increases, the administration and the board looks to the budget to then conclude what is the number of dollars needed to maintain certain programs and services for students. As resources become more expensive, so does education. But with the college receiving the maximum amount of funding from the state, why does it have to put the increased cost of resources onto students’ backs?

The Voice has been asking around, and most students surveyed think that while the idea to freeze tuition is a great one (because it gives students the chance to pay a “discounted” rate for their education), the board or the administration is not giving them time enough to register for their classes.

Some students decide to enroll when and if they have the money for tuition available, so putting a deadline on the freeze – while encouraging for some students who actually have the money right now and know that they will be coming back – limits the number of students who could register in the fall.

And even if the increase is really low (at \$2 per credit hour), for some students this could mean gas for a month or groceries for a week.

According to the Michigan Community College Association, colleges across the state are mostly funded by students, with roughly 44 percent of revenues coming from tuition and fees, so certainly tuition rates do affect the college’s funding.

We are not saying that the college should not increase tuition rates, because it is a reality that resources are getting more expensive, and that funding is decreasing from other sources, but we are saying that students would like more options or even an extended deadline to be able to register.

Washtenaw is widely recognized for having “quality education at low costs,” and we think that the administration and the board are certainly thinking about this when they make some decisions.

But perhaps extending the deadline for an extra month will allow students to make better decisions about their education and future and maybe stay at Washtenaw.

“Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.”

– THEODORE ROOSEVELT

A NATIONAL PACEMAKER AWARD NEWSPAPER

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Student publications are important in establishing and maintaining an atmosphere of free and responsible discussion and in bringing matters of concern and importance to the attention of the campus community. Editorial responsibility for *The Voice* lies with the students, who will strive for balance, fairness and integrity in their coverage of issues and events while employing the best habits and practices of free inquiry and expression.

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A copy of each edition of *The Washtenaw Voice* is free to everyone. Additional copies are available at *The Voice* newsroom, TI 106, for 25 cents each.

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Always Listening

Do you think freezing tuition rates for those who make payment arrangements is good for students?

How do you feel about tuition rate increases?

“I guess it depends on what purpose it serves. I’m for it if it helps WCC’s funding because I know colleges are hurting right now.”

GRACE FISHER, 20, Ann Arbor, pre-med

“I feel like that the college needs money, and they will take it from students. I have no preference either way.”

CARLOS VASQUEZ, 19, Ann Arbor, human services

“It’s a bummer that tuitions increase, I mean, but WCC’s tuition is so much lower already ... that I guess that even just a small increase won’t hurt my budget.”

CLAIRE KAPUSANSKY, 18, Dexter, biology

“It helps out a little bit that there is a freeze in tuition. I just wonder if this freeze also helps students who pay in cash, like me. But that rates are frozen is good.”

CHRIS GEE, 21, Belleville, business

“I think I was kind of expecting tuition rates to increase ... It’s nice to know that there is a freeze on tuition so that students can take advantage of it.”

BRETT KILIAN, 18, Milan, engineering

“I don’t know why they are (increasing tuition). I’d rather see the cost stay as low as possible. People come here because it’s affordable.”

SARA SCOTT, 19, Brighton, psychology

Just to be clear, we report the news



NATALIE WRIGHT

People on this campus sometimes seem to have misconceptions about what we do.

Last year, when the administration and the faculty were in a divisive, public argument, *The Voice* reported on it. And that coverage garnered a lot of praise from the faculty and a lot of criticism from the administration.

Washtenaw Community College President Rose Bellanca told us a few weeks ago that she thought the coverage last year was very one-sided, but that’s because, as we’ve written before, only one side was talking to us.

She, and probably the rest of the administration, felt that our paper took up the faculty’s cause. To be clear – we didn’t. We simply reported on the faculty taking up their own cause.

This year, the faculty seems to feel we’ve abandoned that cause. That’s insulting.

They abandoned their cause – at least publicly. They stopped making news, so we stopped reporting on it.

We hear a lot of whispers that the faculty is frustrated with us for not reporting on “real news.”

So this week, I thought I would do a story, sort of “A year-later” look at the conflict that reached a boiling point this time last spring.

At the board of trustees meeting on March 25, Maryam Barrie, president of the faculty union, gave a speech explaining how the faculty feels shut out of decisions. Her comments were a strong showing at her first board meeting as president. So

I had a base for my story, but I needed to talk to more faculty.

After phone calls to at least 30 faculty members, everyone I could think of who might talk to us, I had nothing to work with.

Those who had been vocal about their grievances last year, such as David Wooten and Jennifer Baker, have shied away from speaking publicly about the matter.

I tried just calling around to random faculty members, and none would talk.

Maryam Barrie has been vocal since she was elected, but one voice isn’t enough, even if it’s an elected leader’s, especially when she’s brand-new to the position and being somewhat careful about what she says.

One specific problem that the faculty and administration had recently was a foreign language initiative with Ypsilanti High School, which, according to Barrie, was in planning for almost a year before the involved instructors were made aware of it.

Once they were clued in, they pointed out some glaring flaws, Barrie said, which eventually were fixed. But a lot of time could have been saved had they been consulted in the first place, she added.

What a perfect story to follow up on these communication issues, I thought.

And Barrie pointed me to Michelle Garey, the Foreign Language department chair.

Unfortunately, Garey did not want to talk about it.

This is the crux of the problem. Frustrations are still building, but no one will talk about it.

I did get a great response from performing arts instructor Michael Naylor, who said he believes that both the administration and the faculty are trying their best, but are focusing on the wrong things.

So, if the faculty is pissed off about anything, which many are perfectly willing to say they are “off the record,” it’s difficult for our paper to report on it.

The only thing anyone seems

willing to make a statement about is the recently released Student Opinion Questionnaires.

I get it – we upset a lot of people by pushing for them to get released. But guess who’s really happy about it? The students. And that was the point.

Our job is to be fair – to give voice to both sides of a conflict like this as well as we can.

If you want your voice heard, talk to us. Use us, but know that we are not here to be your voice. We are a platform for you to be your own voice.

We don’t take sides. We don’t speak for anyone other than the students, because that’s who we are – students. And, once again, I want to reiterate, this institution exists for the betterment of the students. All we can do is report on how successfully the college as a whole handles that responsibility. Everything else is secondary.

If the faculty is exhausted and wants to give up, then we have nothing to write.

If the faculty decides that they’re sick of laying low and that it’s time to, once again, stand up, take action and make their voices heard, we will report on it, and we will do so fairly.

With Ruth Hatcher, former faculty union president, running for a position on the board of trustees, the faculty may soon have a bigger voice in the leadership of this college. If the faculty wants to put up a slate of candidates to run for the board, we will report on it and maybe even endorse some of the candidates. But we cannot, and we will not, sit here and try to be the voice of a group that has lost its own voice.

Walter Cronkite once said, “Our job is only to hold up the mirror – to tell and show the public what has happened.”

I think about this quote daily. It’s the best summary of a journalist’s duties I’ve ever heard. Our job is to show the truth as accurately as we can. We are learning how to do that, and, personally, I think we do a damn good job.

For when the unthinkable happens



AUDRA MEAGHER

Like many people, I never truly believed something would happen to me that would require serious medical treatment.

I just never thought about what could happen to me.

Until I went in for an eye exam.

This was something I had noticed a couple years prior, but I didn’t have insurance or the money to do something about. I had no peripheral vision in my right eye. My only thought was that my eye was getting worse. And for someone preparing for a career in film, this was troubling.

The doctor at the generic eye-care office informed me my eye was fine, but he recommended having an ophthalmologist (a medical doctor specializing in eye and vision care) use more sophisticated equipment to determine the cause of vision loss in my eye.

My part-time job gave limited benefits for insurance, so I was covered, right? Read on. This is important.

I needed surgery. After having specialists from the University of Michigan look at an MRI of my cranium, doctors found a mass near my eye that had taken my vision. It was a tumor the size of an egg on my pituitary gland.

Three years later, after a series of drugs designed to reduce the size of the tumor, it was still there. Meantime, I had jumped off the insurance plan from my job and hopped on my parents’ insurance. But I’m going to be turning 26 at the end of April, and I will no longer be eligible for coverage on their plan.

Unfortunately, I still need further treatment to remove the tumor, and radiation is the safest option. The good news is that I have some decent options regarding continuing medical insurance.

I could move up my marriage date from August to get coverage on my fiancé’s insurance. But we didn’t want to make our date seem unimportant by marrying early.

Regardless of the limited benefits I had through the company I worked for, I would’ve still needed to see the U-M specialist to have the surgery and to get the once-a-month injections.

By law – thanks to the Affordable Care Act – the insurance company could not deny me coverage for my pre-existing condition when I switched insurances. If my father’s

former employer (he’s retired) didn’t offer their retirees health care, and had I not acted, my life span would be dramatically shortened.

So I went to <http://www.healthcare.gov> and I clicked on “See Plans Before I Apply.” It took me to a page that asks a few questions to help determine eligibility for help paying for health coverage. I’m not eligible, so I move forward with my search.

To my surprise, there are decent plans between \$100 and \$180 for one enrollee. For two people, it’d be \$205 to \$360. That’s just for catastrophic coverage. It covers essential health benefits, but has high deductibles.

Many people have a lot on their plate. Working a job they hate to pay for their kids to do soccer and drive in a vehicle that could crap out on them at any moment. The cost of living is outrageous, plus the cost of gas to get to that dreadful job.

Getting health insurance is really the last thing anyone wants to research and figure out which plan is right for them. Then something like a routine eye injury turns into a life-threatening issue – and a little research reveals there are options – affordable options – that wouldn’t have existed for me just a few months ago.

I know more people would have insurance if their workplace provided health care. If yours doesn’t, the Healthcare Marketplace is there for you.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

755 ‘unedited’ words from an instructor about SOQs

Since Eric Wade in his front-page opinion piece in the 3/24 issue referred to my letter, I felt a response might help to continue the discussion.

First, isn’t the question of the students as customers/educators as service providers a separate issue from SOQs being made public?

For instance, as a service provider, Kroger expects I will abide by their operating policies and procedures while there; can educators as service providers similarly expect that students will do the same in class?

In the same vein, when I see one of my students working at the local Meijer store, for instance, would it be acceptable for me to ask the student’s supervisor for a look at the student’s performance review? After all, I might not want to deal with an employee that other people might have had a problem with.

Mr. Wade says on p. 1, “I first must dispute the idea that students are not the customers. My education is a service that I pay for. When I pay my tuition, I am the customer.” He then goes on to say, “My tax dollars are an investment to my community, not a transaction of currency for goods or service.”

So, it seems that as a student, he wants to know if I and my colleagues provide good service, but as a taxpayer, he doesn’t seem to care. Interesting.

As for the question of SOQs being made public, the headline on his opinion piece – “WCC educators: Regarding SOQs, what do you have to hide?” – makes it clear where he stands. In addition, he writes, “As a student, it is absolutely essential that that students have access to SOQs to make sure they get the best for their

education dollar.”

OK, but don’t students have any responsibility in this transaction to make sure they “get the best for their education dollar?” If my SOQ is made public, and it’s good, does that mean all my students will/should get an A in the course?

He then says, “Adding students’ names to the SOQ would make them fear repercussions for a poor evaluation of an instructor, leading to inaccuracies in the evaluation.”

First, the SOQs are not distributed to instructors until after the term is finished and the grades have been submitted, so I think a fear of “repercussions” is likely unfounded. If an instructor actually did try to change a grade after submission because of an individual student’s evaluation, I think it’s pretty likely The Washtenaw Voice would find out about it.

As for his disagreeing with me about having students sign evaluations, let me ask this: whose opinion would/should students value more, someone they know or an anonymous posting? Don’t discussions of teachers happen every hour, every day in the Student Center?

Getting back to the headline, “WCC educators: Regarding SOQs, what do you have to hide?”, he pays it off later in the piece with “...If they do their job educating, engaging and preparing students for their chosen career path, then they have nothing to fear.”

Isn’t this equally true for my “customers?” If they do what they’re asked to – read the assigned chapters, write papers, take exams, etc. – then they should “have nothing to fear.” That would be true irrespective of SOQs, wouldn’t it?

He also writes, “To me it sounds as if the faculty of WCC feel that the students aren’t educated enough to make decisions based on evidence.” To lump all WCC teachers as “the faculty” is as wrong as lumping all students together. Some of us actually disagree with others on the faculty, just as some students disagree with others.

Here’s a thought: I don’t pay for The Washtenaw Voice. Does that mean that because no cash was exchanged, the staff have no responsibility to me or other readers to gather and report news accurately?

One final thought: letters to the editor, which often contain opinions, are limited to 400 words. Mr. Wade’s opinion piece runs approximately 645 words. I recognize that as a staff writer, the guidelines he works under are different than those of a letter writer. Still, it seems a bit unfair that he can write 50% more than what you request of your readers.

David Horowitz
English Department
imdavidh@wccnet.edu

Note: This runs 700 words. I would like it to run, of course, and I do understand the need to edit letters, but I would appreciate it if you would run it unedited. If that is not possible, I’d prefer that you didn’t run it. Thank you.

Editor’s note: This letter to the editor by English instructor David Horowitz was untouched by The Voice editing staff.

Pride runs deep over Voice’s SOQ fight

To anyone passing by, it looks like another office on campus. But inside of TI 106, a dozen or so students are usually hard at work trying to chase down stories and photos that will fill 16 blank pages every two weeks. It’s a difficult and, at times, very intimidating task to complete, but that’s what goes into producing *The Washtenaw Voice*.

Walking into the office on a Monday morning hoping that your story ideas will come to fruition, while providing information that is current and meaningful to the students and staff of Washtenaw Community College, is tough. The most difficult part of that job is having to take on the administration of the college about issues and topics it would rather not talk about or address.

Recently, this year’s group of “Voicers” took on a task that I admittedly backed down from pursuing during my time as editor of *The Voice*. After years of being told students did not have the right to see the Student Opinion Questionnaires we filled out every year, this year’s team at *The Voice* challenged the college for the right to see the SOQs.

After finally succeeding where many of us failed in years past, the group was required to pay \$168.40 for the work associated with producing the last five years’ worth of SOQs. I knew the bill wasn’t anything the newspaper couldn’t afford, but I felt like it was also something *The Voice* shouldn’t have come out of its budget either.

Over the course of the next week, myself and 10 other former employees

of *The Voice* raised the \$168.40 to pay for the costs. While it always feels good to lend a helping hand, doing it for those you share a unique bond with feels even better. Unless you’ve sat through the meetings and discussions about having the proverbial hammer dropped on you because of a story we pursued that upset the administration, you don’t know what that kind of pressure feels like.

As the student newspaper for WCC, it’s the duty of the reporters, photographers, editors and everyone else involved with *The Voice* to speak up for the students. And unlike any issue I’ve known about at the college since I began classes in 2010, this one may be the most important. Knowing what our peers think about those who teach us is the most valuable piece of information a student can have going into a new semester.

While I no longer attend WCC, knowing there is still a passion for journalism and hard work inside TI 106 makes me feel like I’m still connected to the campus.

To the staff of The Washtenaw Voice, I know you hear Keith tell you often how proud he is of your work, but we wanted to let you know he’s not the only one who notices it. So from all of us former Voicers, we say thank you and great work for still being “the voice” of the students, past, present and future.

Kudos,

Matt Durr
Former Voice editor



TAKE 5
with

DAVID BATES

By NATALIE WRIGHT
Managing Editor

David Bates thought it would just take him a minute to grab a snack from a vending machine in the Technical Industrial building between classes on a recent Tuesday afternoon, but *The Voice* intercepted the 20-year-old medical assisting student from Milan and asked him to stop and take five minutes to answer a few of our questions about happenings at the college and around town.

WASHTENAW VOICE: President Obama is coming to town to talk about his proposal to raise the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour. Do you support it?

DAVID BATES: I do. I mean, I feel fast-food workers or minimum-wage workers should get paid more because they do more than what they get paid for. I haven’t really researched the proposition or anything, but I think \$10.10 an hour would be fair. I am a mover; I’m a cash worker, but I do have experience in fast food. I worked at Taco Bell in 2011, and it was pretty rough. It’s kind of hard to live off of \$7.40 an hour.

WV: The college recently raised tuition by \$2 per credit hour, about 2.25 percent. How do you feel about that?

DB: I don’t think it’s deserved at all. Because college is expensive as it is and for students, especially who go

to universities, I can’t imagine how hard it would be to work and still take a full college schedule.

WV: With Record Store Day coming up, can you tell us why do you think vinyl records are so popular these days?

DB: Vinyl, I think, is kind of coming back, I heard. It’s kind of cool bringing back the old-school stuff. Mostly because most of the stuff they’re making now is repetitive and pointless, kinda, and old-school music really has meaning and provides good music, I guess.

WV: What do you think about the geese returning to campus?

DB: You know, I haven’t really had a problem with them, so I can’t complain about them. I haven’t ever stepped in geese sh. . .

WV: In the past, the school has set out boxes of poison to get rid of unwanted critters on campus, but this year they stopped. What do you think about that?

DB: I think they should leave the little squirrels and chipmunks alone. ‘Cause actually it’s cool to look at, you know. You’re out there studying or something and you see the little animals running around. So, I don’t think they should put the boxes back out there.

Tour de Cure races to WCC

By JAMES SAOUD
Staff Writer

The American Diabetes Association is holding the 2014 bike ride fundraising event “Tour de Cure” at Washtenaw Community College on June 7.

Riders will have the option to participate in a number of courses including a 10-mile course, 25-mile course, 40-mile course, 62-mile course and 100-mile course.

There will be a \$25 fee for those who register after April 1. The event will support funding for research, education and advocacy for all types of diabetes.

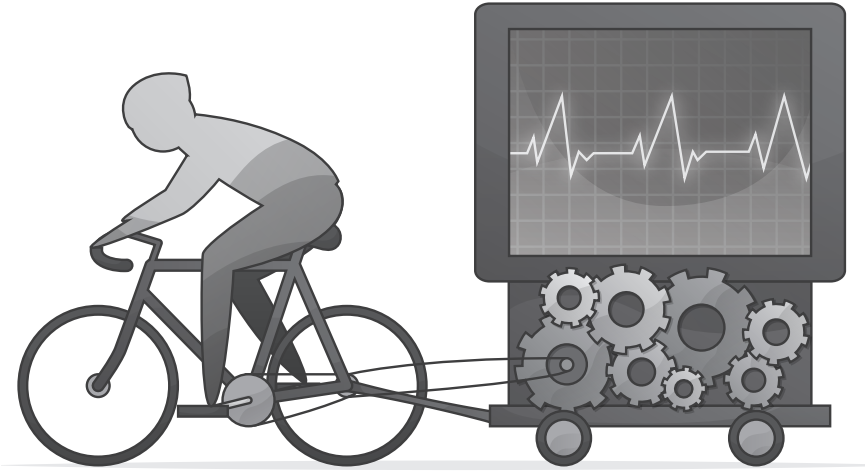
“Over 12 percent of Michigan adults have diabetes,” Leslie Scott, director of the Tour de Cure for the American Diabetes Association said. “There is no way around it, and it takes a community to support our effort.”

Though the ride has been held in various places in Michigan over the years, this will be the first time the ride is held in the Ann Arbor area.

“Washtenaw Community College has been amazing so far,” Scott said. “Offering resources and being very responsive to us here.”

Scott encourages all students to get involved with the Tour de Cure and the American Diabetes Association.

“It’s never too early to be responsible with your health,” she said.



ERIK MORRIS | WASHTENAW VOICE

BRIEFS

U-M Flint eases transfers for students

The University of Michigan-Flint and Washtenaw Community College have signed an articulation agreement for the applied science program, making it easier for students to transfer to U-M Flint to complete their Bachelor of Applied Science degree that can be either completed online or on U-M Flint’s campus.

This is the latest in a series of agreements signed by U-M Flint and WCC. Other agreements include the Bachelor in Business Administration, Bachelor of Science in Nursing and the Doctor of Nursing Practice.

For more information, visit <http://www.online.umflint.edu>.

Gunder Myran recognized for his work at WCC

Former Washtenaw Community College President Gunder Myran was recognized with the national Leadership Award from the American Association of Community Colleges on April 5 for his work at the college.

Myran, who was president of the college for 23 years, worked on developing a model of community-based education including community engagement and career development, and emphasized the need for colleges to become involved in community-based projects.

Myran was one of the administrators who spearheaded the creation of Washtenaw Technical Middle College, WCC’s charter high school on campus. He retired from the college in 1998.

SECURITY NOTES

From redacted incident reports provided by Campus Safety and Security and interviews with Director Jacques Desrosiers.

Larceny

A student attending the Health and Fitness Center hung her beige purse on a rack near the locker room showers. After taking a swim, the woman returned and saw that her purse was missing, along with all its contents, including prescription medicine, keys, glasses and cell phone. The incident took place April 1 at 6 p.m.

CALENDAR

College Visitations

Tuesday, April 8 Concordia University, from 11 a.m.–2 p.m. in the first floor of SC
Wednesday, April 9 Eastern Michigan University, from 1–5 p.m. in SC 206
Thursday, April 10 Davenport University, from 8 a.m.–2 p.m. in the second floor of SC Eastern Michigan University, from noon–4 p.m. in SC 206
Wednesday, April 16 Concordia University, from 11 a.m.–2 p.m. in the first floor of SC Eastern Michigan University, from 1–5 p.m. in SC 206
Thursday, April 17 Spring Arbor University, from 11 a.m.–2:30 p.m. in the first floor of SC Eastern Michigan University, from noon–4 p.m. in SC 206 Western Michigan University, Haworth College of Business, from 2–4 p.m. in the first floor of SC

Same-sex marriage in Michigan: Now what?



Elizabeth Patten, 52, and Jonnie Terry, 50, show off their newly exchanged wedding rings. KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE

By JON PRICE
Staff Writer

A ruling by the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals late last month ordered a temporary stay (suspension) on the issuing of marriage licenses to same-sex couples, just days after U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman had declared the state’s ban on gay marriage unconstitutional.

Since the stay was issued, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder has said that the federal government will recognize these unions and those couples who married in the hours after Friedman’s ruling will receive their spousal benefits from the federal government.

According to the attorney general, the federal government will grant “all relevant federal benefits on the same

terms as other same-sex marriages.” Holder cited a precedent set by recognition of previous marriages by the federal government in similar cases in Utah.

The news came as a relief for some 300 couples, who were hastily married on March 22, when four county clerks’ offices in the state opened their doors for special extended hours on a Saturday to issue licenses. Several

same-sex couples were wed before detractors had an opportunity to challenge the ruling.

Barb Byrum, Ingham County’s clerk, said she issued a total of 57 licenses and performed more than 30 of those ceremonies herself. “Michigan needs to go forward,” Byrum said, “and that’s not where our attorney general and governor are taking it.”

Gov. Rick Snyder issued a statement from the state Capitol last week in which he said, “We believe those are legal marriages and valid marriages.”

His words may sound encouraging to those in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. His actions, however, tell another story.

Even though Snyder acknowledged the weddings that took place were legal, he refused to recognize the unions pending the decision in an appeals case filed by Bill Schuette, Michigan’s attorney general.

This discrepancy between federal and state law has made an already confusing situation even more complicated for those involved.

“The governor’s statement is even more bizarre,” said Keith Orr, one of the people who was married in March after Friedman’s ruling. “He was saying that they were legal, but he wouldn’t recognize them.”

Orr and his husband, Martin Contreras of Ann Arbor, are co-owners of the /aut/ BAR in the city’s Kerrytown district.

While the couple remains hopeful that equality in marriage will come swiftly for Michiganders, their patience for the bureaucracy involved in the process is being tested.

“We had no commitment service. We didn’t get married in some other state,” Contreras said. “We both, deep down, felt like until it was OK and legal in Michigan, we were going to wait.”

Wait they did, for 28 years. On Saturday, March 22, they were married at the Ann Arbor County Clerk’s Office. By the following Monday, the Ann Arbor business owners had learned of the stay issued on same-sex marriage licenses.

“It was all fairly predictable if you were following what’s going on in all the other states,” Contreras said. “Michigan is following the same path.”

Though the couple was prepared to see the legality of the marriages challenged through appeals, they believe that the events of that Saturday in March would encourage real-social change.

“For us it was important that as many gay people and lesbian couples got married in that little window,” Contreras said. “It’s that foot in the door.”

Byrum agreed. Her office and those in Washtenaw, Oakland and Muskegon counties all opened on that Saturday, with the intention of marrying as many couples as possible before the ruling was challenged.

“We can’t afford to be a state that discriminates,” Byrum said.

PEST CONTROL



ERIK MORRIS | WASHTENAW VOICE

Watch your step

Geese gather as grounds crew stands ready

By DAVID FITCH
Staff Writer

They’re back. The Canadian geese are already returning to campus and will be flocking in greater numbers soon, according to Superintendent of Grounds Engineering and Fleet Maintenance Rick Westcott.

Last year, there were nearly 200 geese on campus, he said, and he expects around 100 this year. But he has a few tricks up his sleeve to keep the honkers away.

And the solution comes with four legs and a wagging tail.

Westcott has hired Goose Busters in past years to fend off the birds and plans to do the same this year. Their trick? “Hazing.”

Professionally trained collies play the predator by chasing down, but not hurting, the birds. The hope is that the

geese will find Washtenaw unwelcoming and find another place to call home.

And it has been working, Westcott said. But if the birds persist, there is another line of defense.

Goose Busters is also called into action from June 15-30, during which schools that have obtained state-issued permits can remove the birds from the property to be either taken to another location or euthanized if the state bird count exceeds 250,000.

The geese, while making an inconvenient mess on sidewalks and in the grass, also pose a health threat. They can carry salmonella and E. coli. When the grass is mowed, feces can also become airborne, causing concern, said grounds maintenance worker John Bruckner.

The cost for goose control? Last year, the college spent \$950, Westcott reported.

Mice rejoice: poison boxes to be removed

By DAVID FITCH
Staff Writer

Campus mice will be getting a break this spring with the removal of the boxes containing poison that used to be positioned around the school.

The small black or white boxes, which were maintained by Griffin Pest Solutions, offered a solution to the campus’ mice infestation problem, which Recycling Operations Manager Barry Wilkins got pretty serious in past years.

“They were in buildings. They were in people’s cabinets,” Wilkins remembered, adding that the mice would create nests in cabinets, eating the paper and making themselves right at home.

The boxes were put in place about four years ago when Wilkins served as manager of the Building Services department.

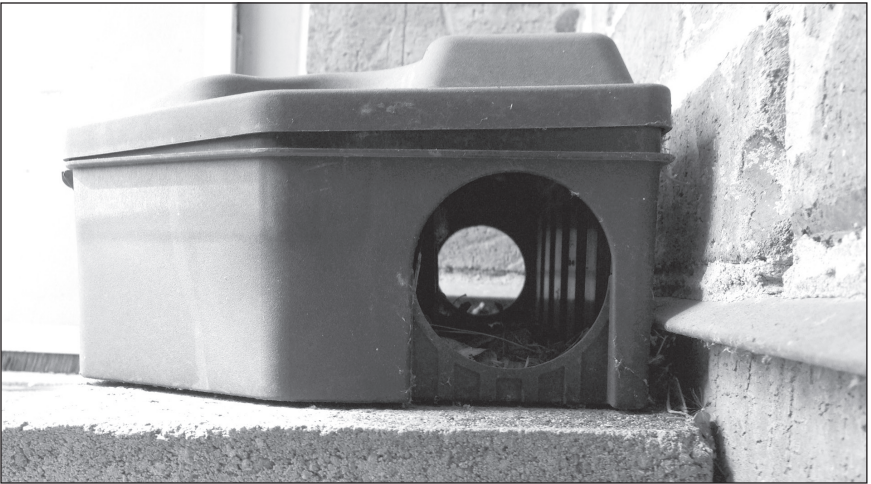
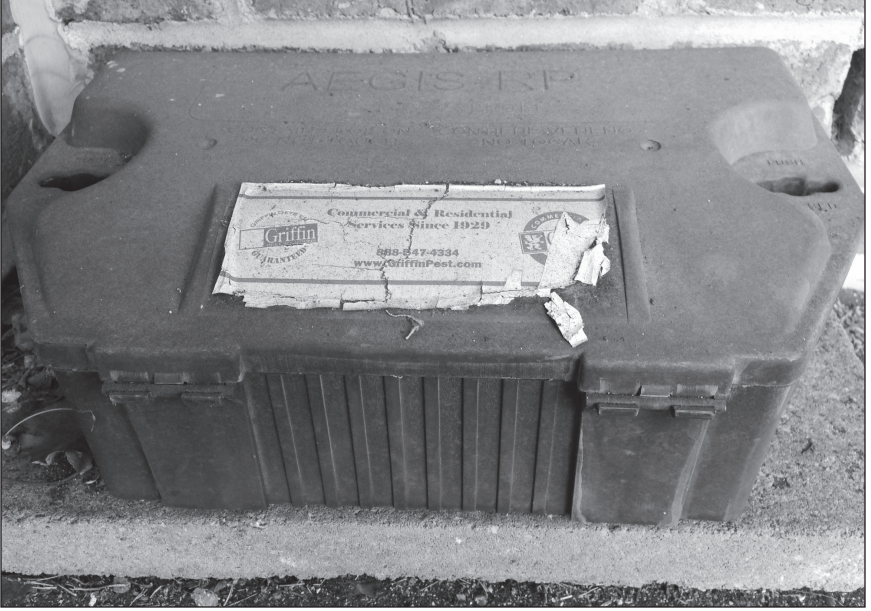
This year, though, most of them were removed after a public outcry regarding the disappearance of the chipmunks that once lived in abundance on the grounds.

While he admits that it’s possible that the chipmunks may have consumed the poison intended for the mice, Wilkins said he has yet to see evidence of this.

And the mice problem was never fully solved, he said.

“They’re not going to go away,” he said.

As for those wondering if “JJ,” the campus squirrel, which captured the hearts of students recently, could have been harmed by the poison, Superintendent of Grounds Engineering and Fleet Maintenance Rick Westcott said that it is unlikely. The holes in the boxes were not designed for rodents of that size, he said.




The small boxes containing poison located around campus were mostly removed by Griffin Pest Solutions, which handles pest control at the school. The boxes were intended to kill mice, which once infested parts of campus. DAVID FITCH | WASHTENAW VOICE




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A sea of cell phones held by students was seen as Obama made his way onto the stage for his speech. KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE

EDITORIAL

Obama is calling on us – listen

In what seemed an express visit to Ann Arbor, President Barack Obama addressed a multitude of University of Michigan students who gathered to hear his remarks on minimum wage, only to leave with more than they bargained for.

After a harsh year in terms of popularity, a government shutdown and overwhelming criticisms of his policies, especially his famous health care reform plan, Obama continues to tackle goals, one young mind at a time.

He came here and spoke to students in a casual yet passionate way. He spoke to Americans about what they have been talking about: equality.

But don't be fooled. He wasn't here just to talk about minimum wage. Obama also mentioned immigration, same-sex marriage and affordable education as some of the components that will lead us to equality.

Some may say that Obama is a calculating leader: he knows what to say

at the right time, and his speeches are well-prepared and delivered.

But last week, he seemed like one of us.

He addressed the crowd about giving everybody in this country the opportunity to achieve their goals and dreams – and an increase in minimum wage is only one of the many ways to get there.

Earlier this year, Obama signed an executive order to raise the minimum wage for federal government contractors from \$7.25 to \$10.10 and Michigan is one of the states fighting and campaigning to follow suit. Ann Arbor-native Paul Saginaw, one of Zingerman's owners, has been lobbying for better treatment of workers through an increase in minimum wage.

Throughout the nation, 28 million people could benefit from this change and more than one million people in Michigan would be directly

or indirectly affected by the increase in minimum wage, according to the Economic Policy Institute. And in a state that has been devastated by the latest economic downturn, this is good news.

The increase in minimum wage “would lift millions of people out of poverty right away” and actively help millions of workers move away from the poverty line, according to Obama.

In his call-to-action speech, Obama acted presidential and fearless, yet relatable as he spoke to a crowd that has the potential to change things. He singled out Republicans in Congress, and suggested we reach out to our representatives to enact this raise. He called on our generation to act.

And so we hope that every single person who attended the event took home more than just a selfie and stream of tweets because we are the generation that can and will mold a better future.



President Obama shakes hands with students following his speech. KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE

OBAMA FROM A1

any new taxes. It doesn't require new spending. It doesn't require new bureaucracy.”

And it would give a major boost to the economy, he said.

“So you would think this would be a no-brainer.”

But for many it's not.

Alex Wernert, a 22-year-old U-M economics student, said that it's wrong to assume there would be no downside to the increase.

“It would have positive and negative implications,” Wernert said. “Going back to Econ 101, you know if you raise the minimum wage, you're going to increase unemployment, naturally.”

But most in attendance agreed with the president's statements, some saying that their only concern is that the plan is too timid.

“Raising the minimum wage is a painless way of giving people more money, but \$10.10 is a little low,” Patrick Balke, a 20-year-old economics student at U-M, said.

Louisa Kane, a U-M neuroscience and Arabic student, agreed that \$10.10 is not a large enough raise, but it's “a good start,” she said.

“There's gonna be a lot of backlash if you go higher than that, I think,” Kane, 19, said. “As a politician, he just needs to get his foot in the door first.”

The biggest argument in favor of the increase from the president and other politicians and U-M students who attended was that the minimum wage simply isn't proportional to the cost of living.

“Raising the minimum wage isn't

going to solve all of our economic challenges,” Obama said. “But nobody who works full-time should be raising their family in poverty.”

“I think that is something that everyone can pretty much put their arms around,” State Rep. Jeff Irwin (D-Ann Arbor) said. “That's why I think the minimum wage campaign will be successful.”

Nine months ago, Irwin and State Rep. Adam Zemke (D-Ann Arbor) introduced state House Bill 4386, which, if passed, would raise the state minimum wage from \$7.40 an hour to \$9 an hour.

Public support for this raise is “overwhelmingly high,” Zemke said.

“I think it's kind of dismal that you have certain employers who are building into their business models that their employees will be on food stamps,” Zemke said. “It means that they're supplementing their profit using our tax dollars.”

“It's wrong from a fiscal standpoint. It's wrong from a moral standpoint.”

OBAMA NEEDS CONGRESS TO ACT

Raising wages, Obama said, is not just a decision for those in the political arena, but also for employers, like Saginaw. But putting the raise into law is the ultimate goal, he said.

For that, Congress needs to get involved.

“What Zingerman's can do on its own, what I can do as the head of the executive branch of the federal government, that doesn't help everybody.”

But the Republicans in Congress are nowhere near getting on board, and Obama was not hesitant to boldly

criticize them for it.

“They're not necessarily cold-hearted,” Obama said. “They just sincerely believe that if we give more tax breaks to a fortunate few and we invest less in the middle class ... then somehow the economy will boom, and jobs and prosperity will trickle down to everybody.”

Next week, he said, Congress will have an opportunity to vote on raising the federal minimum wage, and though the Michigan congressmen all support the cause, he encouraged out-of-state students to call the representatives of their home states and encourage them to vote “yes” too.

EQUALITY FOR ALL

While Obama came to Ann Arbor with the stated mission of discussing raising the minimum wage, he made it clear in his speech that this proposal was only a small part of addressing the bigger issue of inequality in the country. He touched not only on income inequality, but also social inequalities.

“We want to make sure that no matter where you're born, what circumstances, how you started out, what you look like, what your last name is, who you love – it doesn't matter, you can succeed,” he said.

“What matters is the strength of our work ethic and the scope of our dreams and our willingness to take responsibility for ourselves.”

He spoke very directly to college students, saying that equality of opportunity should not be something to be nostalgic about, but something that the country, and they, as a generation, must push forward to.

OBAMA CONGRATULATES U-M HOOPSTERS

When President Obama spoke at the University of Michigan last week, he took the opportunity to talk basketball, calling out the names of several of the U-M players' names: Glenn Robinson III, Jordan Morgan, Nik Stauskas as well as football quarterback Devin Gardner.

“These guys were outstanding this year,” he said. And he congratulated basketball coach John Beilein for a great season.

“It's awesome, man,” Stauskas, 20, who was named Big Ten Player of the Year, said. “I'm excited he knows who I am, knows my name. I'm from Canada. Four years ago, no one in the U.S. even knew who I was.”

Robinson, 20, shared in the excitement over the president's arrival and said he was honored to have been invited to attend the speech. He also agreed with Obama's message.

“I read a little about him raising the minimum wage, which would be great,” he said. “I know my mom and other people who have that minimum wage, sometimes they need that raise. I think it's a great idea.”

Obama said that Morgan asked him to talk about his “March Madness” bracket.

“My bracket is a mess,” he said. “I've learned my lesson – I will not pick against the Wolverines.”

He also congratulated Morgan for playing more games at U-M than any player in history and for pursuing both an undergraduate and a graduate degree in engineering.

“That's the kind of student-athlete we're talking about,” Obama said.

Natalie Wright and Jon Price



Glenn Robinson III, Jordan Morgan and Nik Stauskas listen to Obama speak. KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE



Obama brought a small cheat sheet with him listing the names of this year's notable Michigan athletes. KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE

U-M STUDENTS REACT

“A lot of people work for a long time without getting extra money. Like, people work at McDonald's for 10 years without a raise. Raising the minimum wage is a painless way of giving people more money, but \$10.10 is a little bit low.”

PATRICK BALKE, 20
Ann Arbor, U-M economics student

“I think something President Obama said that really resonated was something like: Everyone deserves to have a success story. And I think that's what's so important about raising minimum wage... I can't imagine trying to raise a family. Like, you should be able to work full time and be able to, like, not live in poverty.”

JACLYN COLE, 21
Ann Arbor, U-M Russian language and literature student



KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE

Washtenaw Community College President Rose Bellanca, right, was in attendance at President Obama's speech at the University of Michigan.

Wendy Lawson, WCC's vice president of Advancement, left, and Jason Morgan, Director of Government and Media Relations joined Bellanca for the event.

“I thought he was amazing,” Bellanca said of Obama. “His message was very clear, and he is very, very dedicated to raising the wage to a working wage, which is what we're all about.”

WELCOME BACK, CAP



WES DOES IT AGAIN



'NOAH' FLOODS THEATERS



REVIEWS B4

‘Young’ wisdom

Former WCC student fights homelessness, aids others

By DAVID FITCH
Staff Writer

Some students stay at Washtenaw Community College for two years, others perhaps for even five or six years. But Alonzo Young has been a student at WCC on and off for nearly 30 years.

And now he has his degree.

His time here has taken him through good times and bad times. He experienced homelessness, death in the family and self-doubt, but he didn't quit. And he didn't stop caring for others – even when he was sleeping in the woods.

Young, 49, is a former member of Camp Take Notice, the tent city that used to sit beside Wagner Road and M-14. CTN residents were evicted in June 2012, but many of them have stayed close. Now, a lot of them meet and work together through Michigan Itinerant Shelter System Independent Out of Necessity A2.

Still at MISSION A2, though now he has a roof over his head, Young continues to strive for the betterment of the community, the same community that has supported him through the years.

The group met for its weekly meeting recently. About 25 people sat on couches or in chairs in the living room of the group's recently purchased Mercy House.

Across the room from Young sat Caleb Poirier, Young's fellow MISSION board member and comrade of the past several years.

Poirier, the founder of Camp Take Notice, first met Young at the camp when Young was seeking someone



Alonzo Young, 49, is a former resident of Camp Take Notice, the Ann Arbor tent city. He will be graduating at commencement next month after taking classes on and off at WCC for almost 30 years. DAVID FITCH | WASHTENAW VOICE

to help with his homework.

“He was going just asking these guys for help. He was real persistent about it,” said Poirier. “That really touched me, moved me. That somebody, while they were literally living outside, they were still going to school. I thought that was very honorable.”

Poirier agreed to help Young with his studies and was excited to see

Young complete the requirements for his degree in humanities and social sciences and in performance last semester. He will receive his associate degree at commencement next month.

And through the years of struggling, Young volunteered at places like the Kiwanis Club, going out of his way to help with relief efforts in New Jersey in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy

with a group of others from MISSION.

His attitude is characteristic of many MISSION members, many of whom battled, or still battle, homelessness.

“Striving” is how Young describes so much of what he has been doing

YOUNG
CONTINUED B6

Ann Arbor Film Festival brings out the stars – and creates some, too

By JAMES SAOUD
Staff Writer

In the late 1960s, a young filmmaker from California submitted a 15-minute experimental art film to the Ann Arbor Film Festival. Printed on black-and-white 16 mm celluloid, the short was accepted and screened at the festival.

It was titled “Electronic Labyrinth

THX 1138 4EB.” It was directed by a young man named George Lucas, who hadn't even begun planning for the film that would be his claim to immense fame: “Star Wars.”

The Ann Arbor Film Festival hosted a few well-known filmmakers years before they'd get “discovered.” Also on the list is Gus Van Sant, who is best known for directing “Good Will Hunting” and “Milk,” as well as many others.

For six days at the end of March,

Ann Arbor's Michigan Theater was filled with movies, artwork, spirits and film-buffs from around the world to celebrate the 52nd Ann Arbor Film Festival.

Aside from the films in competition, this year's festival held discussions with acclaimed filmmakers Penelope Spheeris and Thom Andersen.

FILM FESTIVAL
CONTINUED B5



Jared Leathers, a tattoo artist with Spiral Tattoo shop in Ann Arbor, fills in a tribal piece. KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE

INK INVESTMENT

By M.M. DONALDSON
Staff Writer

Branding is the trendy word that has migrated from the business world to individuals to describe and promote who they are. Many people opt for a tattoo as a permanent visual to do this. Investing in a piece of skin art can happen at any time, but some people depend on their savings account set up by Uncle Sam.

In other words, tax-return time can be a boon for the tattoo industry.

Tattoo artist, Steve Carian sees a spike in business in the late winter and early spring, with people receiving rapid returns after filing their income taxes. As the owner of Liquid Tattoo in Lansing, he has many students come in from Michigan State University and Lansing Community College. Still, people using income tax refunds to pay for a tattoo are notable to him.

At Brite Idea Tattoo in Ypsilanti, owner Zera Anderson has also had customers who fund their tattoos by using the IRS as a personal savings account. She thinks people feel better to indulge with tax returns rather than taking money away from living expenses.

“Even though that's not what it's intended for,” Anderson says, rolling her eyes ever-so-lightly. But for many, it's a way to get a lump sum of cash. The average price most of her customers invest is between \$150-350.

Summer is the busiest time of the year for Anderson, as people show more skin in the warmer months.

With college students heading back to campus in the fall, many would assume there would be another bump in business. She feels that students are too busy with new housing, moving and needing to buy books. It is not until they are settled and get to know the area that she sees much college student traffic.

In Lansing, Carian says he hears a lot of, “We just got our loan. I'm ready to get something done.”

The average price for people getting their first couple of tattoos is between \$75 and \$100. Those with three or more tattoos he describes as “repeat offenders” and finds they will usually spend more money for a design.

Carian sees this as a way for college students to commemorate a time.

TATTOOS
CONTINUED B3

Mark Tuscano and Penelope Spheeris watch clips from Penelope Spheeris' early work at the Ann Arbor Film Festival. JAMES SAOUD | WASHTENAW VOICE

Facebook’s future

Can the social network stay relevant in an evolving online world?

By JON PRICE
Staff Writer

The online social network MySpace was launched in 2003, and words of the new online startup spread like wildfire.

At the height of its popularity, MySpace was worth approximately \$580 million, with more than 75 million visits per month, according to a recent study from Princeton University. Then your parents joined.

By 2011, the company had fallen into the throes of obscurity, with revenue losses exceeding \$35 million and more than half of its users jumping ship.

A new online social network (OSN), “The Facebook,” was launched by Harvard University psychology student, Mark Zuckerberg in 2004.

Originally, the site required a university email address to register and was geared towards a smaller, yet exponentially more hip, crowd. The network slowly became more inclusive, reaching high-school students and European universities by 2005 and was made available to the rest of the world by 2006.

Facebook gained users rapidly, perhaps because the site employed a less-cluttered design than its predecessor, MySpace, making it simpler to navigate and connect with friends.

However, the biggest selling point for young people who were dropping MySpace was that it remained largely under the radar of the over-40 crowd.

The words tagging, poking and liking had taken on new meaning. Facebook jargon had made its way into the everyday American vernacular.

Had MySpace become the perfect case study of the life cycle of an OSN? The site’s Romanesque rise, rapid fiscal growth and inevitable exodus, seemed to illustrate the short shelf life of a social-media site.

Facebook would undoubtedly be destined to the same fate, right?

That belief seems popular among technology writers. “PC Magazine,” *The Guardian*, Investors.com and various other reputable technology media outlets have predicted the OSN’s demise on many occasions. Though some experts believe the company has peaked in popularity, Facebook doesn’t seem to be going anywhere.

“I think Facebook is the most important social network at the moment,” said Andrew Dooley, a social-media specialist and web producer for MLive. “Everyone has one.”

Twitter, yet another OSN, has also become an important platform among news organizations and, according to Dooley, vital to journalists and readers who want to be the first to see breaking news or sports stories.

Twitter is what some in the industry would call a “microblog,” limiting users to only 140-character messages, known as “tweets.” These abbreviated posts have become the fastest way for a person or organization to break news.

When social networking started, near the beginning of the 21st century, sites were, at best, an informal way to communicate with friends and family. Users were mainly concerned with posting videos, sending messages, updating statuses periodically and sharing music.

Only recently has the world discovered the true value of unlimited, worldwide communication in real

time.

Some users who were on the sites primarily to keep in touch with friends, eventually grew weary of the endless sea of game requests and status updates but were drawn back to the site by new features.

“When I got on back in ‘09, it was because my high-school class reunion was coming up,” Qunal Jackson, 33, said. “That was a way for everyone to get together.”

Jackson, a construction-management student at Washtenaw Community College, said he doesn’t use Facebook for gaming or sharing lately, yet still considers the OSN to be extremely useful.

“I have connected with a lot of people,” Jackson said. “But now we’re going back to the stone age of actually calling people, so the social aspect is kind of dying down for me.”

However, the transformation of Facebook’s newsfeed, with a greater emphasis on sharing news with users, has kept Jackson’s interest in the site.

“You do get information faster from Facebook,” Jackson said. “That is the way I’m sticking around.”

Experts like Dooley have noticed this change in the way people use OSNs and feel this is a perfectly calculated move by the social-media giants to keep consumer traffic on the sites.

“Reporters need to meet readers where they are,” Dooley said, noting the OSNs provide that meeting place. “There’s a surprising level of news that’s being broken that way and consumed that way.”

Some students said that sites like

FACEBOOK
CONTINUED B7

Is price an excuse for not eating healthy?



M. M. DONALDSON

So many times, I hear people say “It’s expensive to eat healthy. Salmon costs \$16.99 a pound at that store.” True, salmon is a pricey, yet a healthy, protein choice, but it is not the only choice.

When considering food based on the calories alone, studies have shown that consumers can typically purchase processed foods cheaper.

The unit price – the tiny sticker on the grocery store shelf – is intended to help consumers to compare apples to apples, but too often it is used to compare apple fritters to fresh oranges. By using the tool incorrectly, many people believe that healthy food is too expensive to buy.

In the USDA bulletin entitled, “Are healthy foods really more expensive? It depends on how you measure the price,” the study attempted to find the answer, but declared that the measurement tools create the potential for misinterpreting the data.

Foods with lower calories were higher in cost, despite being more nutrient dense. Examples of this were fruits and vegetables, sans the sauces, gravies or dips that inflate the calories by the addition of fats and sugars.

To understand the true cost, we have to redefine what food is by understanding the difference between the terms calorically dense or nutrient dense.

Potato chips with the crunch, the salt and the fat are a beautifully orchestrated experience in my mouth, giving me all the salt, fat and calories I desire. With calorie-dense foods, my body, the efficient machine that it is, turns those extra calories into fat.

But take a baked potato, light on the salt and butter, I get the taste of potato and a nice nutty flavor from the skin, so full of fiber, vitamins and minerals. Just an ordinary potato, and it is considered a food that is nutrient-dense.

In the world of processed foods, convenience foods, or rectangle foods (how one person described all the food than comes in cardboard boxes), are an amazing feat of science. Lab

coat-wearing scientists have figured out how to make tasty treats with salt, sugar and fat formulations.

Just as the amount of calorie-dense food has replaced nutrient-dense food, food manufactures and consumers alike have driven the demand for increased shelf life. The same scientists have turned to salt, sugar and fat to make processed foods last longer.

Unfortunately, the refining process of the ingredients has removed much of the vitamins and minerals our bodies need, leaving more than enough empty calories. While aisles of dry cereal tout enrichment and fortification by adding in vitamins and minerals, we really don’t need to be appeased with the message that our sugar is healthy for us.

Using the Healthy Eating Index-2010, which examines the quality of food consumed, the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion has concluded, “the diet quality of Americans is far from optimal.” This is such a paradox when there are so many choices and options of food available. Socio-economic factors do negatively impact availability for some, but does not explain American’s poor eating habits overall.

Revisiting the argument that salmon is too expensive, we have to recognize there is more than one fish in the sea: cod, tilapia, trout and catfish are a few of the most popular ones. And there are creative ways to eat it too.

Tacos with fish that is baked, not breaded, will give similar benefits as salmon, but at a better cost. Canned albacore tuna on a green salad or in a pasta salad stretches out the meaty flavor. Even canned salmon (I prefer the no skin, no bones type) is a pantry item easily assembled with leftover potatoes for a quick soup.

Another healthy option that can be done on the cheap is a vegetarian chili. It can still be five-alarm with spices and garlic, while the kidney beans pack a high dose of protein and fiber without the bad fats.

Again, the question: is price an excuse for not eating healthy?

M. M. Donaldson is a staff writer with The Voice and a journalism student at WCC. She has a bachelor’s degree in family and community services from Michigan State University and has several years of experience with nutrition issues affecting infants through older adults. She can be reached at mmorrisdonaldson@wwcnet.edu. Follow on Twitter @MMDonaldson1.

Five Reasons Facebook will remain on top in 2015 and beyond

1 If you can’t beat ‘em, buy ‘em

The social network has grown massive wealth and is known to absorb smaller companies and incorporate the features from the acquisition into its own site.

Facebook purchased Instagram in 2012 for approximately \$1 billion, and, earlier this year, when newcomer WhatsApp was projected to gain nearly a billion users, Zuckerberg purchased its parent company, Oculus Rift, for an estimated \$16 billion.

WCC journalism student, Aron Turner, noticed how the tech company incorporated features from other popular OSNs.

“Facebook is starting to become your all-in-one center for your personal life and the world around you,” Turner said.

2 “You can check out anytime you like, but you can never leave”

Facebook has figured out how to keep users coming back. Instead of only offering users the option to remain active or delete their accounts, they offer a “Disable” option.

Users who have grown weary of the site have the option to suspend their accounts indefinitely, without having to delete them. This means users are only a sign-in away from returning to the OSN.

“Earlier this year, I deleted my Facebook,” Jacob Palmer, a journalism student at WCC, said. “I ended up getting dragged back into it at work.”

3 Social network becomes news network

“You’re seeing more news on Facebook,” Andrew Dooley, social-media specialist for MLive, said. “That’s on purpose. They want to be a news source.”

New studies done by the Pew Center for Research have backed this theory, finding more than half of the adult users on the website were getting their daily news from Facebook.

4 “No new friends”

Those who believe Facebook will end up collapsing like MySpace cite the fact that the website has experienced a steep decline in the amount of new users.

While this is a compelling argument, the same Pew Research study that shows a spike in the company’s growth also shows that more than half the country already uses the online service.

“I’m sticking around,” WCC student, Qunal Jackson said. “Other than getting info, you maybe see a new friend pop up every three or four months. That’s pretty much it.”

5 Business model? More like model business

“Basically, you won’t leave Facebook because all of your friends and family are on Facebook now,” writes Alex Fitzpatrick, an online editor for “TIME Magazine.” “On top of that, Facebook is by now a much more complex ecosystem than MySpace ever was, with strong bonds to publishers, advertisers and other services across the Internet.”



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Kmart closing a blow to employees, shoppers, community



The Kmart store, a landmark for generations on Washtenaw at Golfside, is set to close on April 13, leaving 83 workers unemployed and elderly customers scrambling to find a new pharmacy.

ARON TURNER | WASHTENAW VOICE

By ARON TURNER
Voice Correspondent

For many, it means great deals on clothing, toys and fitness equipment likely to be abandoned after two weeks of use.

For others, however, the closing of the landmark Kmart store on Washtenaw Avenue means they will have to find a new place to get their much-needed medication.

And for its dozens of employees, it means that the unemployment line is on the horizon.

The store, which went into liquidation on Super Bowl Sunday, will close its doors forever on April 13. The news of its closing has sent shockwaves throughout the community and the store’s customers, some of whom recall shopping there as teenagers in the 1970s.

Stephanie Nerswick, 21, of Ypsilanti, has worked there as a supervisor for five years and witnessed the stress mounting on her co-workers.

“I was talking to someone who was talking about dealing with depression

about the store closing,” she said. “You have to handle it the best way you can. You really don’t have a choice.”

Employees say the store was renowned for its flexibility, giving its 83 workers an opportunity to work around family and college schedules. As a single mother of three, Nerswick found it invaluable to work through the unpredictability of parenthood.

“It’s just so hard with me personally because my availability is so small with the days and times I can work,” she said. “If I needed to be late, have the day off or needed to leave early, they have been so great about it. It’s going to be hard to find another place to fit that.”

For the store’s elderly customers, the closing presents the challenge of having to find another pharmacy after years of receiving their medications from Kmart.

“I’ve had quite a few people confused about the pharmacy closing, about where to go,” Nerswick said. This was compounded by the decision by management to close the

pharmacy soon after the closing announcement. It moved its prescriptions to CVS down the road.

“I know the CVS is taken over, but that’s quite a hike down the road for a lot of these people that walk here every day to get all of their medication and stuff,” she said.

The store also played as a childhood landmark for many of the residents of the surrounding community.

“This Kmart has been here for a really long time,” Nerswick said. “It’s become a pillar of the community. People come in and talk about when they were 15 back in the ‘70s coming in shopping. It’s just sad to see something like that go.”

But it’s hardly a surprise. Many employees saw this coming long before and left when they could find other work. Like Anna Alboth, 21, who serves as the assistant store manager at a local Spencer’s.

Alboth worked at the Washtenaw Kmart for more than a year as a service desk supervisor. She fears that the community will be at risk for more crimes due to the store closing,

as history around the community has shown.

“When the Farmer Jack closed, that got broken in to,” she said of a similarly large building sitting vacant on the same lot. “It kind of scares me because it’s going to become just another vacant building to get ransacked.”

Alboth hopes that whoever bought the Kmart building does something productive with it.

“I truly hope whoever bought the Kmart turns it into something useful for the community to make it better, because it’s going down fast,” she said.

Alboth criticized recent store management that ran it out of business – saying she learned a lot in the process about how not to manage a company.

“It showed me what not to do. It showed me how to not manage a store. It showed me how to not treat employees,” she said, noting how little recognition and reward they got received after years of working for \$7.40 an hour.

But soon many of them will be out of a job – and have to start again at square one.

A parade of Easter traditions for WCC’s international community

By MARKO DELIC
Voice Correspondent

When many American children wake up on Easter morning ready to hunt for colored eggs, Sofia Chesnokova will miss a tradition she championed back home in Irkutsk, Russia.

“Almost every year, I am considered to be the queen of egg-tapping,” Chesnokova said proudly. She explained that Easter is a big thing for millions of religious people in Russia – and egg-tapping is something children there enjoy.

Egg-tapping, also known as egg-knocking, involves boiled eggs that are colored or hand-painted. Two opponents each hold an egg and tap them against each other.

Some go out in the neighborhood, some keep it a family tournament only, but in both cases, the rules are the same:

If your egg cracks first, you lose.

The day of Easter in Russia

starts with the Christos Voskrese, meaning that Jesus Christ had resurrected. The response following this salute is Voistinu Voskrese, or “Indeed he did,” Chesnokova said.

From a certain point in time, until the day of Easter, it is common to be the part of the long feast. For many, the Passion Week, which is the week before Easter, is when the feast is most important. According to Chesnokova, this is when respect is paid to Jesus Christ.

“On the day of Easter, we have a special cake called Pashka,” Chesnokova added. This dessert, prepared especially for Easter, is similar to a cheesecake, only without a crust. Its flavors, however, may vary.

Elisabeth Thoburn, 55, an art history instructor at Washtenaw Community College, was born and raised in East Germany and brought her cultural experience from her hometown to the United States.

“I was raised in a Christian

household,” Thoburn said. She cross-walked, woke up for the early services in the dark, cold, and spooky graveyards and she enjoyed this time of the year. She loves art and enjoys sharing her cultural experience.

Every year, Thoburn creates events at her own home – Easter walks, storytelling and decorating for neighbors and friends that enjoy her company.

Decorations she had gathered and brought from Germany, including the great carvings made on the Ore Mountains (Erzgebirge), reflect her childhood and teach people here her culture.

“I’ve learnt Americans are not early birds when I got here,” Thoburn said. “That is why the Easter walking starts at 10 a.m. at my place.”

While growing up, Thoburn came across many foreign families who came to work in East Germany.

“New cultures, new traditions,” Thoburn added. She learned the art of hand-painting eggs from the Serbian families she met there and keeps these creations to this day.

It is uncommon for those celebrating Easter to “boil-paint” eggs. Chesnokova said that her grandma “boil-paints” her eggs still. This procedure takes a little more time.

“She uses leaves and flowers and attaches them to her eggs while boiling the eggs in onion peel,” Chesnokova said. The peel gives a golden-brown color to the eggs, while the additional leaves leave beautiful marks on the eggs themselves in a bright golden color.

Glory Lu, 33, of Beijing, China, studies accounting at WCC. She said that due to government regulations of her country, religious holidays are not allowed.

“Some people go to church to pay respect still,” she added. Although it is not a big thing in China, Easter is special to Lu, and she will continue the tradition of celebrating Easter here.



WIKIPEDIA.COM

Raw emotion and a slice of pizza



Scott Beal performing his work at Silvio's Ristorante & Pizzeria on the night of March 23.

GREG STRINE | WASHTENAW VOICE

By GREG STRINE
Voice Correspondent

To most people, the word poetry doesn’t evoke much thought other than the dusty memory of a brief English lesson in high school.

But the feeling of the entire room’s vibe synchronizing when everyone’s attention is focused on a poet pouring their heart out through words is undeniable.

And so it is with the weekly poetry slam at Silvio’s Ristorante & Pizzeria in Ann Arbor every Sunday at 8 p.m.

Her voice raw with emotion, everyone went silent with awe as a victim of abuse recalled her ordeals. With tears in her eyes, she recited line after line of words carefully crafted into a work of art, one that not only moves people at the moment, but inspires them to tell their story.

“It’s not a space that has closed doors. Everyone is welcome,” said Lindsay Stone, co-host of the slam.

“When we refer to the slam as a slam family, there is a slam family. It’s a community of poets, and it’s not about the scores, it’s about embracing each other.”

And it’s a contest, too.

Five judges are picked from volunteers in the audience and individually score poets from 1-10, combining their scores and dropping the highest and lowest scores for a total usually in the 20-30 point range. Points accumulate all season long.

“I wanna hear everybody’s voice, the voices that are being silenced in our communities, silenced in our society,” said Garret Potter, a co-host of the event. “I want to hear the voices of politicians and people who have a voice in the community. I want to hear what people have to say because everybody matters, and everybody’s story matters.”

The poetry slam season is nearly over, but the Ann Arbor Poetry Slam city finals are coming up on April 12 at The Neutral Zone in Ann Arbor. The winner will compete in the nationals in Oakland, Calif., in August.

TATTOOS FROM B1

“They’re studying to be a doctor or something and about ready to lose the rest of their life. After they graduate, it’s the real world. No more taking time to go on trips,” Carian said.

But he also is the voice of reason to some of his customers. Carian says he talks more to younger customers about the long commitment of a tattoo. He explains how tattoos on the neck or forearms are visible all the time.

“If you have a job interview, and there’s five applicants for the job, they won’t pick you even though you might be more qualified,” Carian said. “What you do can hinder your future. Society’s guidelines still have a lot of influence, and not everyone is going to be a doctor, lawyer, CEO of their own company. Not everybody has the flexibility to be free

with expressing themselves.”

Carian says there is a lot of spontaneity with some people, but tattoos cannot be spur-of-the-moment decisions.

“I get a lot of attitude from those that want it now,” Carian said. He stresses that anyone interested in a tattoo should look at an artist’s portfolio first. He asks customers what their ideas are and asks if they can email him some stuff and create some ideas off that. Walk-in work is a rarity, especially with his wait-list that is typically three weeks long.

Anderson says she has new customers based on a good word-of-mouth reputation. She is proud to note that customers seek her out based on her line quality.

The business end of her shop is what pays the bills, but she starts waving her arms around expressively when she talks about the artistic

part. Anderson said she would have given her work away when she started because she was so excited to be doing what she loved – creating art.

Edgy and trendy are OK with Anderson, but she will not do tattoos representing racism, dog fighting or animal cruelty. Nor will she tattoo private parts. And she refuses to ink minors – even with a parent or guardian. Too much family drama, she says.

Carian is up front about not doing anything offensive, gang- or hate-related.

“Study what you want; get a good artist,” he said. “It’s about the experience.”

Anderson cited Pinterest as a popular site for people to find creative ideas, but cautioned that designs can go in or out of style. And it’s there for all time.

“You can’t lose it. No one can steal it or break it,” Carian said about investing in a tattoo. “You have it for the rest of your life.”



Tax-return season brings tattoo shops a spike in business with students using their extra funds for new ink.

KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE

‘Noah’ – the book was better

By JON PRICE
Staff Writer

“Noah” is director Darren Aronofsky’s artistic vision of the Biblical epic from the Book of Genesis, staying true to his reoccurring trope of a protagonist who is driven into madness by a vision.

Aronofsky’s movies like “The Wrestler,” “Requiem for a Dream” and his 1998 thriller, “Pi,” all explore the theme of men who are driven to the brink of society by drugs, dreams or visions.

While I most certainly am no expert on the Bible, I do feel the director remained relatively close to the story as I recall it. Except when Nick Nolte appears as some gravelly giant named Semyaza: Those who told me the Noah

story when I was young neglected to mention that.

Instead of going for radical changes in the plot (admittedly some liberties are certainly taken), Aronofsky relies on stunning visuals and top-notch artistry to keep this two-hour story bearable.

One might be relieved to discover that the actors speak almost exclusively in English. Not that anyone should be discouraged from watching films in a foreign language. (Ann Arbor’s Film Festival had multiple screenings for packed audiences of movies with sub-titles that were well-received.)

Anthony Hopkins makes an appearance as Methuselah, grandfather of Noah, who was said to have lived to be 969 years old. As usual,

Hopkins appears to look good for his age and provides a little wry humor in the long, serious epic.

From the previews for the film, I thought I might be going to see a Michael Bay-like CGI extravaganza. Instead, the film has a more artistic feel. The animal scenes were entirely animated but it was tactful and played down, yet realistic.

At times, the movie seems to drag on, yet that seems to be one of its strongest benefits. It doesn’t try to totally rewrite the story or dazzle the

viewer with unnecessary special effects. The film stands on its own as an aesthetically-pleasing interpretation of one of the oldest stories known to man. Scholars will surely point out obvious errors in the story when compared to that in the Old Testament. And special effects do appear at crucial times, keeping things suspenseful. But overall the film feels somewhat restrained, and it is an interesting and welcome change from an industry teeming with CGI.

Overall, the movie, which starred Russel Crowe as the titular Noah, was long and at times very boring, but was ultimately redeemed by its artistic value. Stunning and surprisingly subtle, it’s worth the price of admission and then some.

Grade: B+
Genre: Biblical Drama/Action
Rating: PG-13
Runtime: 138 Minutes



COMICBOOKRESOURCE.COM

A ‘Marvel’ grows up



SCREENCRUSH.COM

By JAMES SAOUD
Staff Writer

When 2012’s “The Avengers” ended, it was hard to imagine how Marvel Studios could send their superheroes back into battle with a second batch of solo endeavors.

With “Thor: The Dark World” last fall and “Iron Man 3” early last summer, we saw the Avengers go at it alone once again, and the reception was lukewarm at best.

Within the first 15 minutes of “Captain America: The Winter Soldier,” it was apparent that not only was Marvel’s star-spangled hero reaching higher highs than he did in his first solo picture or “The Avengers,” but that the studio had taken on a more mature approach to filmmaking altogether.

The film, unlike any of the previous Marvel films, stares directly in the eye of modern America – targeting politics, pop-culture and modern warfare.

Grade: A-
Genre: Action/Thriller
Rating: PG-13
Runtime: 135 Minutes

“The Winter Soldier” is a raw and stripped-down take on the far-too-glossy superhero movies of late. There are no alien monster super-villains this time around. Instead, the bad guys are real people with believable motives for their destruction.

The entire cast brings its A game, particularly newcomer Robert Redford and the films haunting villain, The Winter Soldier, played by Sebastian Stan.

And though the film has less CGI and fewer special effects, it takes on a scale just as big as any superhero picture before it.

The Captain’s latest outing may drag on a bit toward the midway point, but things pick up big time during the film’s last half hour and the momentum continues all the way up until the end credits stop rolling.

With a darker tone and a much more serious storyline, it’s safe to say Marvel studios has finally grown up.

In ‘Grand Budapest,’ Anderson puts quirk before characters

By JAMES SAOUD
Staff Writer

Endlessly idiosyncratic filmmaker Wes Anderson makes a bustling return to theaters with “The Grand Budapest Hotel.”

After leaving audiences with 2012’s “Moonrise Kingdom,” which was arguably his best (and certainly his most “Wes Andersons”) film yet, fans gleefully waited to see how he could top himself.

The cast is enormous, the dialogue is quirky and the shots are faultlessly framed.

The pairing with composer Alexandre Desplat has been one of Anderson’s biggest assets in years. His score for both “Moonrise Kingdom” and “Grand Budapest” adds a very distinct layer of storybook mystique that many of Anderson’s earlier films were missing.

The film focuses around the misadventures of hotel concierge M. Gustave H. (Ralph Fiennes) and his lobby boy Zero (Tony Revolori). After stealing a famous painting, the two characters are on the run from a slew of bumbling police officers, led by Edward Norton; a psychotic murderer, portrayed by

Willem Defoe; and the furious Dmitri (Adrian Brody), who was meant to inherit the painting.

The story is complicated and delicate, but Anderson does a great job at never letting it get away from him.

However, unlike any Anderson movie before this, the story takes the major focus over the characters. All of Anderson’s films are overly quirky and overly stylized. At times it can be very off-putting to audiences. However, Anderson has always created very real characters that he drops into his fantasy worlds, which is why his films usually work.

In “The Royal Tennenbaums,” a family of truly miserable and terrible people inhabit the quirkiness of Anderson’s vision.

“The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou,” Anderson’s revenge film starring Bill Murray, works well because of the script’s dark and tragic elements. When put in to the Anderson’s visual style, the irony of the film is

magnificent.

And in “Moonrise Kingdom,” young lovers Sam and Suzy attempt to run away from a world they hate, Anderson’s quirky world. The self-awareness elements are what make it one of Anderson’s best.

Grade: B
Genre: Black Comedy
Rating: R
Runtime: 100 Minutes



GRANDBUDAPESTHOTEL.COM

Johnny Cash’s ‘Out Among the Stars’ shines

By JON PRICE
Staff Writer

“It’s midnight at a liquor store in Texas,” the opening line from the title track, “Out Among the Stars,” Johnny Cash’s lost 1980’s album that was released near the end of March.

More than three decades after the album was recorded and subsequently shelved, fans of the singer got their first listen before its March 25 release, when it was streamed on <http://www.theguardian.com>, the British news organization’s popular website.

While the album doesn’t sound much like his famed early releases, it is an interesting look at the progression of Cash’s career and the transition to his later works and style. However, his ever-haunting vocals and multiple duets featuring the famous June Carter, his wife, solidify the posthumous release as another classic album from the Man in Black.

The recordings were produced by Country Music Hall of Fame inductee Billy Sherrill, who worked with other country music giants, such as George Jones, Tammy Wynette and David Allen Coe.

“Out Among the Stars,” is an emotional rollercoaster. Songs range from the lighthearted “If I Told You Who It Was,” about a fling with an anonymous Nashville chanteuse, to the regret-filled ode to love lost, “She Used to Love Me a Lot.”

Fans will appreciate the iconic duets that appear on the newest release, including “Baby Ride Easy,” featuring Carter, and “I’m Movin’ On,” an epic pairing with fellow country-music outlaw Waylon Jennings.

The album was pieced together from unreleased studio recordings of the era, using studio musicians and friends of the late Grammy-winner to fill in the gaps.

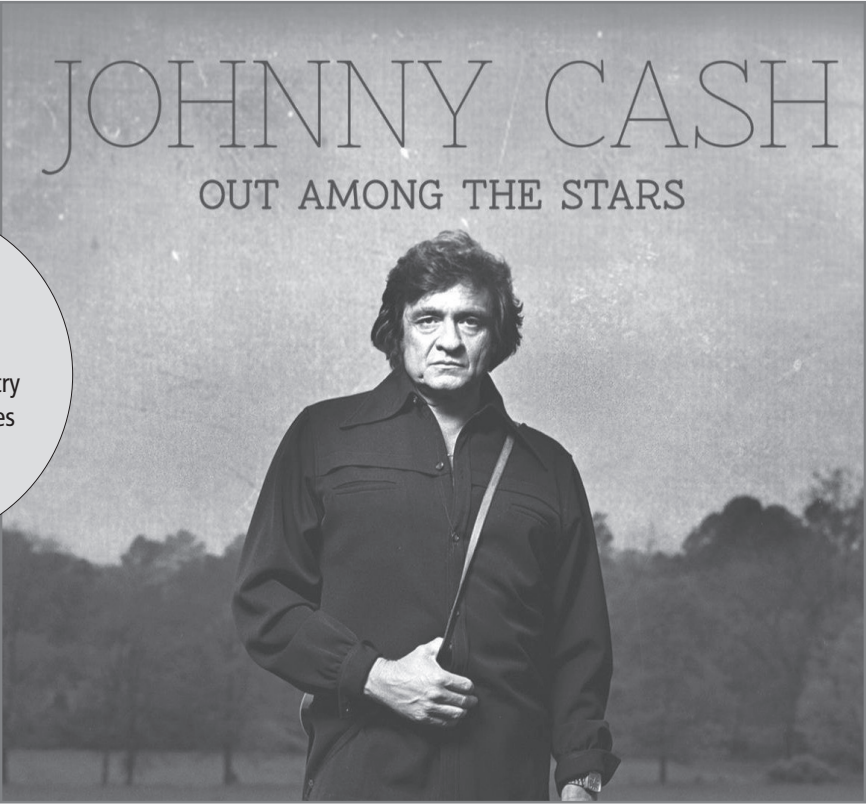
Fans, who were excited about the

record, may be able to look forward to future releases from the country music star. In a recent interview with *The Guardian*, John Carter Cash, only son of the famed romance between Cash and Carter, said there was enough unheard material to fill “probably four or five albums, if we wanted to release everything.”

Until that time, fans can enjoy the “lost” album and the endless surprises it offers the listener.

“Out Among the Stars,” is a unique album that true fans are sure to enjoy, a joyous romp around through a lesser-known part of Cash’s career. Country music’s favorite bad boy doesn’t disappoint.

Grade: A-
Genre: Classic Country
Runtime: 36 Minutes



AMAZON.COM

Love at first take

Couple met at WCC and went on to form International Broke Student Film Festival

By DAVID FITCH
Staff Writer

Magical meetings of lovers don't just happen to characters in films. It can happen to film students, too.

The third Broke Student Film Festival that took place recently is the brainchild of Lawrence Technological University graduate Kat Ruff, who has organized the event with the help of her now-fiance Adam Nelson, a former Washtenaw Community College film student.

The story is not your typical love story though.

"It's pretty stupid, but it's pretty adorable," said Ruff.

Nelson and Ruff had unknowingly "orbited around each other" in social circles in the film community. When Nelson was working on a film called "Ziljzive" for his portfolio class, he called on Ruff to help on the project.

"I knew that she was into film, and

we had had a few conversations, and she seemed pretty awesome," he said.

So with Nelson directing and Ruff serving as a production assistant, they filmed. And fell.

"For some reason, just watching him direct, he stole my heart," said Ruff.

In the same room at the same time, another film student, Scott Campbell, filmed his project titled "A Song to Fall in Love To."

"I don't know. I'm a girl, so I think it's cool," laughed Ruff.

So later that evening, the two film lovers also confessed their love for each other.

Not long after, Ruff decided to start the BSFF, and the ambitious couple has since been running the rapidly expanding event.

This year's event took place over three days from April 4-6 and featured workshops, one of which was presented by WCC film instructor



Broke Student Film Festival founder Kat Ruff and co-organizer and fiance Adam Young began working together and fell in love in WCC's green screen room. KAT RUFF | COURTESY PHOTO

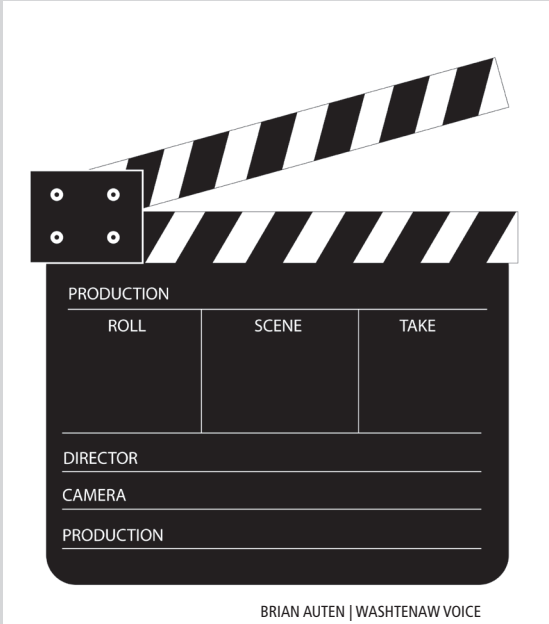
Matt Zacharias.

Zacharias, who taught Nelson at WCC, said that the BSFF has been a great opportunity for students. Not only can students hear feedback on their work, they also get their films in front of professionals.

"(Nelson) just said to me that he was really impressed with the work that has been coming out of digital video," said Zacharias. "He has already started to inquire about professional opportunities for a few of our students."

WCC students have historically made a strong showing at the festival, with several, including Jeremy Liesen and Brad Tennant, bringing home awards in the 2013 festival. Winning Best Sound that year was Campbell's "A Song to Fall in Love To."

FILM FESTIVAL FROM B1



Winners of the 52nd Ann Arbor Film Festival

- Ken Burns Award for Best of the Festival:**
Karimah Ashadu - "Lagos Island" and "Lagos Sand Merchants"
- Gus Van Sant Award for Best Experimental Film:**
Els van Riel - "Gradual Speed"
- Stan Brakhage Award Film at Wit's End Award:**
Charlotte Pryce - "A Study in Natural Magic"
- Chris Frayne Award for Best Animated Film:**
Karolina Glusiec - "Velocity"
- Lawrence Kasdan Award for Best Narrative Film:**
Akram Zaatar - "Letter to a Refusing Pilot"
- Barbara Aronofsky Latham Award for Emerging Experimental Video Artist:**
Johan Rijpma - "Division"
- Michael Moore Award for Best Documentary Film:**
Rodrigo Reyes - "Purgatorio"
- Prix DeVarti for Funniest Film:**
Atsushi Wada - "The Great Rabbit"
- Best International Film:**
Mati Diop - "Mille Soleils"
- Best Music Video:**
Martha Colburn - "Metamorfoza"
- Tom Berman Award for Most Promising Filmmaker:**
Andrew Kim - "Will o' The Wisp"
- Kinette Archival Film Award:**
Aykan Safoglu - "Off-White Tulips"

PUNK ROCK AND 'WAYNE'S WORLD'

On Festival Thursday, Spheeris was the center of a discussion about her documentary work. Accompanied on stage by Mark Toscano, a film preservationist for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, she spoke about her documentary series "The Decline of Western Civilization" Parts 1-3, working with a young Richard Pryor and about her early student works, which were recently restored and screened at the festival.

Though discussing her independent work, she couldn't get by without talking a bit about her well-known studio films, which include "Wayne's World," "The Little Rascals" and "Black Sheep." She also acted as a producer on "Saturday Night Live" in the '70s.

It made for an interesting discussion about the differences between shooting a feature for a studio and doing it independently. Spheeris noted her first time walking onto a studio set and thinking, "You don't need this many trucks to make a movie."

She also spoke about the inspiration for her punk rock documentary "The Decline of Western Civilization."

"I knew I had to document that," Spheeris said. "I didn't sit around thinking, 'Hmm, where can I find a couple of drag queens I can make some interesting movies about?' No, they just walked in front of me. And the thing is to be observant when it walks into your path, like Richard Pryor did. Do something about it."

As a part of the festival, Ann Arbor's favorite midnight-movie house, the State Theater, did screenings of Spheeris' indie-cult-classic "Suburbia" Friday and Saturday night.

THOM ANDERSEN PLAYS HIMSELF

Also displayed at the festival this year was the work of film-essayist and documentarian Thom Andersen, who teaches at the California Institute of the Arts.

The festival showcased Andersen's documentaries including "Eadweard Muybridge, Zoopraxographer," "Los Angeles Plays Itself" and "Reconversao."

Before his final screening at the festival this year with his film "Reconversao," he had some very high remarks about the Ann Arbor Film Festival.

"This is one festival I know where films that are marginal at other festivals are at the center and where they draw an audience that appreciates, values and understands these movies," Andersen said. "It's a festival both for Ann Arbor and for filmmakers and other people who are interested in films, who come from all over the world. Now I understand why."

"It's the only festival that I've ever been to

where the board of directors of the festival actually come see the movies. Normally they just go to the parties."

"Los Angeles Plays Itself," Andersen's most acclaimed film, drew a large crowd at this year's festival. It is an essay about many things, though primarily about Hollywood's misinterpretation of Los Angeles.

The film is 170 minutes long and is composed entirely of feature-film clips that were shot in Los Angeles with an insightful dialogue that gives a history lesson and critique of Hollywood, Los Angeles and the movies that were shot there.

During a Q&A with Andersen after the screening of the film, an audience member asked Andersen if it was difficult to obtain rights for the movies used, which included "Blade Runner," "Swordfish," "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" and "Chinatown."

Andersen responded "No," and explained that it was easier to obtain rights when you don't ask permission in the first place.

THE BIG WINNERS

Winners announced Sunday, the closing day of the festival, included: Karimah Ashadu, who won the Ken Burns Award for Best of the Festival With the pair of films "Lagos Island" and "Lagos Sand Merchants;" Andrew Kim, who won the Tom Berman Award for Most Promising Filmmaker with the film "Will o' the Wisp;" Shelly Silver, who won the /aut/FILM award for Best LGBT Film with "Touch;" and Els van Riel, who won the Gus Van Sant Award for Best Experimental Film with "Gradual Speed."

Jack Cronin, of Ann Arbor, won Best Cinematography for his film "Rivergarden," which was shot in Ann Arbor and Dexter.

A screening of some of the winners followed directly after the announcements were made at 6 p.m., followed by a screening of additional winners at 8 p.m.

CINETOPIA

Though this year's festival has come and gone, film lovers of Ann Arbor will not be too long without a film festival.

The Michigan Theater will be the home of the third annual Cinetopia International Film Festival from June 4-8.

Cinetopia, Ann Arbor's newest film festival, does cater a bit more to the mainstream than the Ann Arbor Film Festival. However, that does not mean a lack of quality.

So for film junkies around the area, Cinetopia is a great way to get your fix in as you wait until the 53rd Ann Arbor Film Festival.



Thom Andersen's "Los Angeles Plays Itself" was a special feature at this year's festival. JAMES SAOUD | WASHTENAW VOICE

Film Festival and LGBT community lift each other up

By NATALIE WRIGHT
Managing Editor

Ann Arbor is famous for its support of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. People move here for it.

And the Ann Arbor Film Festival is no different. The festival, which was held recently for its 52nd year, has set aside a special night, called "Out Night," for LGBT-themed films for the last 13 years.

The films at Out Night this year were a good mix of experimental (the most common at AAFF), narrative and documentaries filmed all over the world.

Out Night was sponsored by the University of Michigan's Spectrum Center and by the Jim Toy Community Center.

Washtenaw Community College's Director of Government and Media Relations Jason Morgan also serves on the board of the Jim Toy Center and addressed the audience before the films began.

In his address, Morgan expressed gratitude for the festival's and the city's support of the LGBT community.



Jason Morgan

"We are very fortunate to live in this very good, this wonderful community," he said. "We are so, so appreciative of this night at the film festival."

Morgan also talked about some of the goals that the community is still striving for. First on the list is marriage equality, he said.

"Not only that, but transgender issues," he said, "to make sure that we have equality in terms of our public services."

"Our mission is to make sure Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County are safe communities," he said. "They are safe for us in terms of non-discrimination policies, in terms of protection, in terms of our city and county services."

"And, really, our mission is to make sure that we expand that vision outside of Washtenaw County as well."

After Morgan and a representative from the Spectrum Center spoke, the films were under way.

The road-trip comedy, "The Thing," which opened that night, followed a transgender man, his girlfriend and their cat on a journey toward the mysterious "Thing."

"Cakes Da Killa: NO HOMO" received the loudest ovation of the night. The audience laughed often during this introspective documentary about

Area homeless discover true family in MISSION

By DAVID FITCH
Staff Writer

Family. The word plays on the lips of members describing the community of the Michigan Itinerant Shelter System Independent Out of Necessity A2.

MISSION A2 is a nonprofit organization that works to aid the homeless community, specifically those in tent cities.

In 2012, Ann Arbor resounded with the controversy surrounding the existence and closing of Camp Take Notice, the tent city community near Wagner Road and M-14.

When the campers were evicted in June 2012, a home was lost, but a fire had been started in the community.

MISSION members work to give to the community through volunteering for programs such as highway adoption and food distribution. They seek to rally the community around those in need and to be a place which fills needs as they arise.

Members like Tim Green have found something unique at MISSION: people helping people. A South Florida native, Green came to Ann Arbor knowing that he would face homelessness. But he couldn't stay

away. There was something different about the people in this city, he said. They cared for each other and treated people as human beings.

"I found home. I found my family," he said.

Green was homeless for three years. But those three hard years helped prepare him for what he does now in his work with MISSION, where he serves as a "house mother" at Mercy House. The house was purchased by MISSION to offer a place of hospitality and refuge for those experiencing homelessness.

Green sees his work as one of the overseers of the house as what he was meant to be doing.

"I've never been so happy in my life," he said. "There is no end goal to my plan. My plan, my mission, is to try and help people. If I just help (one person) make it through the night, if I just make their life a little bit better, or help them survive, or give them a little hope, that's all I ask. That's all I want."

MISSION board member and founder of Camp Take Notice Caleb Poirier said that the group was anticipating a greater need to arise after the closing of the Delonis Center's warming center on April 6. He said

that MISSION's real niche is in getting physical essentials to those who need them.

"Our major push is toward pulling together sleeping bags and tents and other survival supplies for those people who are living on the street," he said.

And the MISSION family is a close one.

Peggy Lynch, now a MISSION board member, said that she saw something unique in the community of Camp Take Notice. She recalled how campers volunteered to share their tents and sleeping bags with complete strangers who entered the camp late one fall night. And how a man volunteered to share a pair of shoes for a boy who was wandering in the woods barefoot.

"That kind of amazing caring for each other and generosity and sitting through the meetings where they would have all these very difficult issues to sort through," she said. "I felt like it was a situation that was really compellingly beautiful."

Lynch also said that through the organization's volunteer efforts, people are regaining something that many of them lost.

"There's a lot that you can say that's negative because folks are homeless and have lots of different issues," she said. "But despite their issues, they were building a community, and they were helping each other, and in the

course of doing that, they were gaining a sense of self-worth.

"They had something that they could do for somebody else instead of constantly being the one in the position of receiving help."



Former members of Ann Arbor tent city Camp Take Notice, from left, Alonzo Young, Dory Boston, Caleb Poirier, the founder of CTN and Peggy Lynch, a community volunteer form part of MISSION A2 which offers support for those experiencing homelessness. DAVID FITCH | WASHTENAW VOICE

YOUNG FROM B1

in the past. Striving to stay positive. Striving to keep on loving people. Striving to make it through the rough spots.

And Washtenaw served as a "boot-strap" for him through the rough patches.

His goal now? To complete his degree at a four-year college toward becoming a social worker to continue helping those in need.

Meantime, WCC will always hold a special place in his heart.

"It's like another home," he said, noting the care he felt from students and teachers who have helped him.

Like music instructor John E. Lawrence and dance instructor Laurice "Noonie" Anderson, who helped encourage and inspire him.

Young also said that people like

enrollment services technician Nancy Farmer and counselors Kim Groce and Diane Trosch help and encouragement along the way.

Young didn't shut down when he was homeless. He kept going when his mother passed away a year ago. He didn't stop after CTN was shut down. Something kept him going. He said that he gives credit to the "Big Man" that he didn't quit.

And that spirit is contagious.

Young also drew inspiration from his friends. And vice versa.

"He cares about his friends; he cares about his family; he cares about MISSION," said Christina Marudas, 27, a former CTN resident.

Scott Ellinger, who also camped with Young at CTN, said that Young has come a long way from the hard place he once knew. If you meet him, he would greet you with a toothy grin,

followed by the warm handshake and the invitation to meet others in the group.

He is at times quiet, but when something stirs his spirit, he won't be quiet.

He is sometimes goofy, blurting out a song here, smiling at a friend there. His humble, magnetic personality draws people.

"If you travel with Alonzo through Washtenaw County, you can't take 10 steps without meeting friends of his," Poirier said.

For those he meets, he brings hope and a smile. And a little advice for those newly finding themselves homeless.

"I'm just blown away. I think that's a beautiful story that you won't find anywhere," said Poirier.

"I could go many lives and not meet somebody as cool as Alonzo."

OUT NIGHT FROM B5

a 22-year-old gay rapper, Cakes, who deals with the stigma surrounding homosexuals in his community by rapping about sexuality and gender issues.

Brazilian filmmaker Rita Piffer also screened her film "Ghost Syndrome," which featured a Moroccan woman who spoke, over haunting imagery, about coping with culture shock after moving to the United States.

Piffer, who got up on stage after the screenings to answer questions from the audience, said that this was her first visit to the AAFF.

"It's amazing to be here to see the different types of films and experimental practices," she said. "It was really exciting to see people react to my film."

The night concluded at Kerrytown's /aut/ BAR, an LGBT

community hotspot.

Owners Keith Orr and Martin Contreras hosted patrons from the festival who packed both floors of the bar. The owners provided a table full of free food that they constantly replenished, keeping up the jovial atmosphere of the night.

Orr and Contreras, who are well-known figures in Ann Arbor's LGBT community, were one of the couples married last month at the county clerk's office.

"It's that foot in the door," Contreras said of the marriages that are now in legal limbo. "Once there are people who have rights, and people who don't have rights, that's the undoing of the ban on gay marriage."

Additional reporting by Staff Writers James Saoud and Jon Price



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WCC instructor’s art makes it to the governor’s house

By NATALIE WRIGHT
Managing Editor

After establishing a career in graphic design, Angela Pierro decided a few years ago to return to her first love – painting. And it paid off. On March 26, Pierro, a Washtenaw Community College

graphic design instructor, attended a special event at the governor’s mansion in Lansing, where some of her paintings were hung. As a part of the Michigan Governor’s Lansing Residence 2014 Art Collection, Pierro’s paintings will be on display for a year. While the collection is not open to

the public, special guests and national and foreign dignitaries who visit the residence will be able to see the pieces and have the opportunity to buy them.

Only about 12 artists were selected to be a part of the collection, Pierro said, “so it’s a big honor.”

Pierro was selected for this honor because Lee Jean-Gilles, the curator of the show, also owns a gallery in Ann Arbor, Pierre Paul Designs, where he displays and represents Pierro’s work.

At the event, Gov. Rick Snyder and his wife gave a speech in front of all of the artists and their immediate friends and family, Pierro said, and “made a big statement in support of the arts.”

For Pierro, the event was the culmination of a lot of hard work and determination to make money through her art. “You always get told you’re not going to make any money as an artist,” she said. “My parents were definitely nervous.”

Meg Fairchild, a student in Pierro’s publication design class, said that children are often told this. “It’s more of a product of a failing art system in schools rather than a lack of artistic ability,” she said. So, Pierro got into design as a practical way to express herself artistically. She worked on magazines for a while in Toronto after graduating from Ontario College of Art and Design University in 1996. Then she got a job as art director for Borders and moved to Michigan. Eventually,

she opened her own design and marketing company, Zero Gravity Designs, in downtown Ann Arbor.

While design is her second love, Pierro said, elements of design have definitely influenced her painting.

“I consider myself a colorist,” she said. “That comes a lot from my training as a designer.”

Pierro’s paintings are very abstract. “My goal is to say a lot with very little,” she said.

One reason Pierro loves to teach is so that she can help young artists overcome the fear that they won’t be able to make money from their art, a fear that is all too familiar to her.

“If I can impart one thing to my students, it’s that in this industry, never take no for an answer,” she said. “I didn’t like hearing no and that’s what kept me going.”

Fairchild, 32, of Dexter, said that Pierro’s real-world experience stands out in the classroom, and her artistic ability leads to more concept-based discussions rather than software-based.

And the teacher/entrepreneur/painter/designer says that she encourages students to wear many hats, like she does.

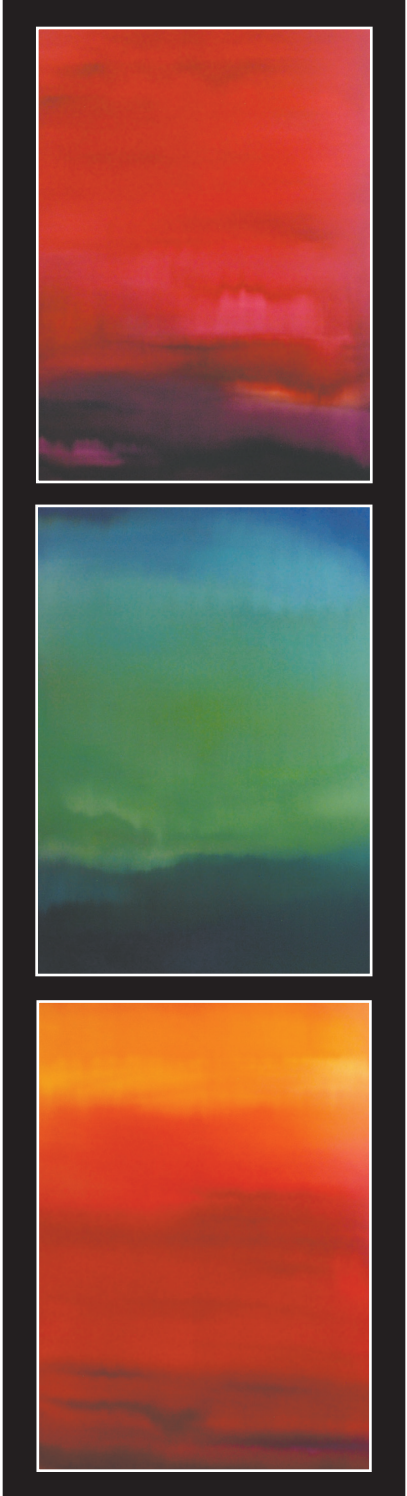
“Don’t let anybody tell you you have to be only one thing,” Pierro tells them. “Do it all and do it with gusto and with passion.”



At the Governor’s Lansing Residence, Angela Pierro stood in front of her oil painting ‘Serenity’ which she painted in 2013. ANGELA PIERRO | COURTESY PHOTO



WCC graphic design instructor Angela Pierro met Gov. Snyder when her paintings were hung in his Lansing residence on March 26. ANGELA PIERRO | COURTESY PHOTO



From top: oil on canvas ‘Meditation 1,’ ‘Serenity,’ ‘Meditation 3.’ ANGELA PIERRO | COURTESY PHOTO

The doctor is in – to belly dancing

By MARIA RIGOU
Editor

If she could choose to be or do anything in the world, she would like to spread joy.

This is Patricia Ortiz-Tello’s wish, a Washtenaw Community College student (and med student at Stanford University and PhD candidate at the University of Michigan) who belly dances as a hobby.

The 31-year-old Peru native remembers growing up in Texas and really enjoying seeing people smile.

Ortiz-Tello moved to Texas in the third grade while her father completed his post-graduate degree at Texas Tech, where her family lived on a teaching assistant salary in what she calls “a ghetto of international people.”

Her first memories are of her putting up shows with her younger sister and the neighborhood children for Mother’s Day.

“People forgot where they were,” Ortiz-Tello said. “I would love to do that as a doctor. I would help so many people.”

Ortiz-Tello graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in biological mathematics, something she describes as “using math models

for evolution, epidemiology, growth, or even weather.”

However, during her studies at U-M, she started feeling like she needed more human contact, and co-founded Project Suyana in 2006.

Project Suyana is a non-profit, non-governmental organization at U-M that works with local Peruvian communities to improve healthcare, especially in pregnant women. Suyana, which means hope in Quechua, works with the Ministry of Health and the Regional Hospital of Puno in Peru to lower increasing infant and maternal mortality rates by focusing on obstetric/gynecological health.

Ortiz-Tello came back from Puno after spending two months doing research and decided that she wanted to enroll in medical school, but not be limited to either being in research or being with people.

While at Stanford, she started to get overwhelmed and stressed with the medical program and looked into belly dancing.

“I was always interested in belly dancing,” Ortiz-Tello said. “My grandfather is from Morocco, but grew up in Peru.”

So she has the heritage. Ortiz-Tello remembers that she

was obsessed with belly dancing even before Shakira was “a thing,” and that her stressful career took her in that direction.

And she became obsessed, “like the way I’m with my science,” she said.

To decompress, Ortiz-Tello enrolled in ballet classes at Washtenaw while she writes her thesis for her PhD. She chose to come back to Michigan to be closer to her family, where the belly dancing took an unexpected turn, becoming more and more relevant in her daily life.

While sitting at a Toyota dealership after her father surprisingly won a Toyota Matriz, Ortiz-Tello engaged in conversation with staff members from Alpha House, an emergency center for homeless children and their families in Ann Arbor.

“It was really weird,” Ortiz-Tello said. “We just started talking and it happened.”

Ortiz-Tello now gives belly dancing lessons for children at Alpha House, and it takes her right back to her childhood memories.

“It was rough growing up for us,” Ortiz-Tello said. “And the belly dancing is a mental distraction ... that brings joy.”

“It’s a memory they will always have.”



Patricia Ortiz-Tello, also known as Alma, performed a traditional bellydance at the WCC talent show. KELLY BRACHA | WASHTENAW VOICE

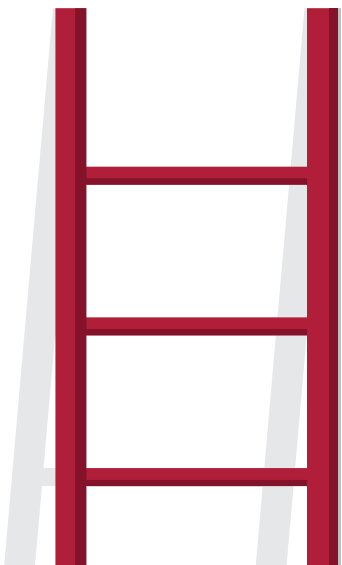
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RECORD STORE DAY™

APRIL 19, 2014

Local store owners drop the needle on new releases

By JAMES SAOUD AND JON PRICE
Staff Writers

April 19 is Record Store Day, when music junkies will scavenge record stores all around Ann Arbor, bouncing from store to store in search of limited releases including previously unreleased material, colored vinyl discs and picture discs of David Bowie. This is a day to celebrate the vinyl medium and what it means to be a music fan. Music is a huge part of Ann Arbor’s culture. From the plethora of street performers to famous venues like The Ark and The Blind Pig. Finding places to buy great music is not difficult around here. No matter what corner of Ann Arbor you’re closest to, you’re never far from a great record store.



Conveniently located Wazoo Records storefront. FILE PHOTO | WASHTENAW VOICE

A FEW OF OUR FAVORITES:

Wazoo Records

Here you’ll find a labyrinth of physical media. Used CDs, DVDs and, of course, vinyl records surround shoppers. With massive windows overlooking S. State Street and the University of Michigan’s campus, store owner John Kerr always has music overhead, creating a soundtrack for the sights of downtown Ann Arbor. Surrounded by students, Wazoo is a near-perfect location for Record Store Day. “When this started six, seven years ago, it was nothing, it was almost like a formality,” Kerr said. “The second year people all the

sudden were asking for this stuff. Word was getting out,” Kerr said. Now a line is always expected at Wazoo on Record Store Day, he said. And for good reason.

Encore Records

Stepping into Encore Records is like stepping through a doorway into the ‘60s. The seemingly endless tunnels of used records will lead most who enter to something worth a buy. “There has been a record store here going back to ‘60s,” co-owner Jim Dwyer said, “It was called Liberty Music and sold primarily classical and international music.” The store transformed into a used record outlet more than 20 years ago and has been a hot-spot for vinyl junkies ever since, especially on Record Store Day. “We’re placing advance orders for things that we think our customers will be interested in, based on the kind of stuff we sell throughout the year,” Dwyer said. He specifically noted special issues, colored vinyl and advanced releases. However, Dwyer notes that it’s not just the odd-ball releases that make Record Store Day special. “The whole point of the day is to just get people into a brick-and-mortar store,” Dwyer said, “and that’s really successful.”

Underground Sounds

Here’s a place where it’s easy to kill an entire afternoon. Starting in 1993 as a store in Ypsilanti, Underground Sounds opened in Ann Arbor in 2001 and has been serving music junkies ever since. With a location just down the street from Encore Records in the heart of Ann Arbor, Underground is the place to go for new vinyl releases, especially on Record Store Day. “Last year there was a line from here to the next block,” owner Matt Bradish said, “so we’re just trying to bring in as many things as we can.” Bradish noted releases from Grateful Dead, The Flaming Lips and Joy Division to be on the radar this year.



Owner Jim Dwyer in front of Encore Records. JON PRICE | WASHTENAW VOICE



A stack of vinyls awaits eager music enthusiasts. FILE PHOTO | WASHTENAW VOICE

‘I Shall be Released’: A monumental year for reissues of classic vinyl

By JON PRICE
Staff Writer

Collectors will soon be lined up around the block of their favorite record stores when the music world celebrates the annual Record Store Day on April 19. What can vinyl enthusiasts expect to find this year?

“Special issues of things, a lot of colored vinyl,” Jim Dwyer, owner of Encore Records in Ann Arbor said. While some releases are kept secret, others are made known well in advance, giving listeners something to hunt for on Record Store Day. This year record store owners are tight-lipped about their orders, but most said that 2014 would be a big year for

reissues of classic albums. Already making a buzz: Joan Baez and Neil Young are reissuing special editions of classic albums, and a special David Bowie picture disc has classic collectors on the edge of their seats. Unofficial lists of expected releases are weighted down with some of the heaviest names in classic rock.

HONORABLE MENTIONS GO TO:

The Flaming Lips, ‘7 Skies H3’

The American experimental rock group the Flaming Lips always has something to release for fans on Record Store Day. The record was first released on hard drives encased in a skull — that’s right, human skulls — on Halloween 2011 for approximately \$5,000. The experimental “24-hour song” is condensed into an 80-minute record and will be available on April 19.

Sam Cooke, ‘Ain’t That Good News’ (50th-Anniversary Edition)

This is the 50th-anniversary reissue of the last-studio album by the “King of Soul” Sam Cooke. With only 1,800 copies printed, this album could be a rare find for collectors. The iconic album features “Change is Gonna Come,” and “Rome (Wasn’t Built in a Day).”

Outkast, ‘Southernplayalisticadillacmuzik’ LP

This is a rerelease of the 1994 debut by the Atlanta rap duo. This limited edition print of the rappers’ freshman album is going to number around 4,000. Andre 3000 is starring in the upcoming biopic on the life of Jimi Hendrix.

The Doors, ‘Weird Scenes Inside the Goldmine’ LP

This double LP is a re-release of a 1972 album of the same name. A total of 7,500 copies will be released of this retrospective collection, which features hits such as “L.A. Woman” and “Riders on the Storm.”

Jimi Hendrix Experience, ‘Live at Monterey’ LP

This live album captures Hendrix and the Experience’s first show in the United States at the Monterey Pop-Music Festival. With 6,000 copies being released, this will be a popular album among classic rock collectors.

Notorious B.I.G., ‘Life After Death’

This triple LP will have hip-hop fans excited for Record Store Day. The final studio release from Biggie has tracks like “What’s Beef?,” “Hypnotize” and “Notorious Thugs,” featuring Bone Thugs-N-Harmony. Also featured on this 1997 original, Puff Daddy, Diana Ross, Lil Kim, Jay-Z, Too \$hort, R. Kelley and more.

Joan Baez, ‘Blessed Are’ LP

Another record from the vault, fans voted on this rerelease on the performer’s website. So 1,500 copies will be released of this 1971 recording by folk-rock hero Joan Baez. This album features her famous rendition of the Band’s “The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down.”

OTHER NOTABLE RELEASES:

- Johnny Cash, ‘With His Hot and Blue Guitar’
- Public Enemy, ‘It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back’ LP
- Death Cab for Cutie, ‘Live’
- Atmosphere, ‘The Lake Nokomis’ LP
- Mazzy Star, ‘I’m Less Here’
- Conor Oberst, ‘Million Dollar Bill’ and Dawes, ‘Easy/Lucky/Free’
- Chuck Inglish, ‘Easily’ (ft. Mac Miller and AB-Soul)
- Dave Matthews Band, ‘Live Trax: Volume 4’



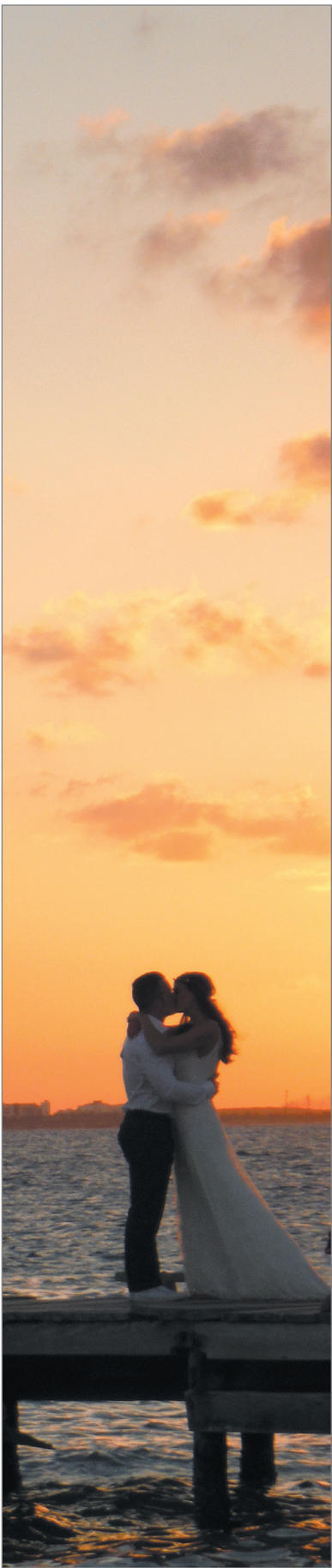
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C2

EXCURSION



A spectacular view of the turquoise waters between Cancun and Isla Mujeres. Garrafon Natural Reef Park is located in the foreground and offers such activities as snorkeling, kayaking, hammocks and zip lines.



The entire island of Isla Mujeres can be seen from the airplane window. The powder-white sands of North Beach can be seen on the left side of the island above.

No need to ‘peso’ much for a vacation

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY
BRIAN AUTEN

As this dreadful winter seems to linger on, a warm vacation might be just what you need.

If you are looking for a vacation spot that is a little off the beaten path and won't break the bank, Isla Mujeres, also known as "Isla," Mexico might be your option.

The temperatures on Isla average in the 80s year-round, with the summer months averaging in the 90s.

Situated on the Yucatan peninsula, Isla Mujeres is a quaint little island just 8.1 miles northeast of Cancun in the Caribbean Sea. From the Cancun airport you can take a taxi or shuttle to Puerto Juarez to catch the 20-minute ride on the Ultra Mar high-speed ferry across the beautiful turquoise water to the island.

Upon exiting the ferry, you will find tourists cruising along the streets on golf carts and mopeds. There are very few vehicles on the island, with the exception of the red taxi cabs frequently used by the

local residents.

A short stroll down Avenue Hidalgo, the main street through downtown, will take you to the very picturesque North Beach. The breathtaking crystal-clear turquoise waters offer excellent snorkeling and swimming. There are numerous bars and restaurants located along the beach that offer dining options.

Drinks and food served along the beach will be a bit more expensive than eating along some of the restaurants on the side streets in town. For an inexpensive lunch,

Playa Lancheros is a favorite of both tourists and locals of Isla Mujeres, where the island famous "tikin xic" dish is served. Playa Lancheros is located mid-island.

In the evening, you will find that tables and seating for many restaurants along Hidalgo will spill out into the streets. There are many options for food, with dinner entrees starting at about \$6.

There are numerous options for places to stay while traveling to this island paradise. Many locally-owned hotels offer accommodations beginning in the \$50

range per night for a double room. If you are staying for an extended period of time, you can also find homes and apartments for rent by the month.

Renting a golf cart for the day and touring the island is an absolute must do while on Isla.

For a reasonably priced, low-key vacation, this island paradise is a must-see—especially after a very long Michigan winter.

For more information on this tropical get-away, visit: <http://www.isla-mujeres.net> to help plan your next trip.



A panoramic view of North Beach where tourists spend the day lounging on chairs and soaking in some rays of sunshine along with swimming in the crystal clear waters.



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