

## Patrick Fritz: The Man

Antonia Florence, Assistant Editor

Patrick Fritz has taken a 180-degree turn from his high school days in Harrisonburg where he graduated second from the bottom of his class.

Fritz started working restaurant jobs at 13, and within a few years he began following the older party crowd, slipping into bars at 17. He was on a slippery slope.

His income flourished as his skill-set increased; \$30,000-40,000 per year allowed for ready cash in his pocket, which led him to a lifestyle that he did not wish to continue. Fritz came

to the realization that he had to do something else when one night he “looked at a co-worker who was probably in his mid-forties; he had his job, an old busted up pick-up truck, and a tiny apartment in not the greatest neighborhood; no health insurance, and no retirement plan.” He just did not want to be in that same place in 20 years.

He knew he had to find employment that allowed for advancement and structure so he could continue to help support the family. Finances were so tight that they could not afford to register the family’s car, causing his mother to walk

PVCC professor wins Chancellor’s Award for Teaching Excellence, page 5

the 10 miles to work because the buses were not running at four each morning.

No one in his family had been to college, and he felt that advanced education was beyond his reach. Fritz kept the possibility of military service in the back of his mind because of his father’s Navy career. Sadly, Fritz’s father died unexpectedly six months after retiring.

Luckily, the Navy recruiters were across the parking lot from the restaurant where Fritz

*See Patrick Fritz on page 4*



Fritz with his children. Photography courtesy of Patrick Fritz

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

— SGA Student Appreciation Tables \* —

April 28 to May 5, PVCC Main Campus

— Science 299 Poster Session \* —

April 29, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., North Mall Meeting Room

— Movie: *The Mask You Live in* \* —

April 29, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Dickinson Main Stage

— *The Fall Line* Publication Party \* —

May 2, Noon to 1 p.m., North Mall Meeting Room

— Final Exams —

May 3 to May 11

— Class of 2016 Alumni Association Induction  
Celebration \* —

May 10, Noon to 2 p.m., Bolick Student Center

— Radiography Pinning Ceremony —

May 10, 6 p.m., Dickinson Building

— Class of 2016 Commencement \* —

May 13, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., John Paul Jones Arena, UVA

— PVCC Alumni Association Photos —

May 13, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., John Paul Jones Arena, Graduation Reception

— Foster Care Awareness Walk —

May 14, 8:30 am to 1 p.m., CATEC (see page 8)

— Summer semester classes begin —

May 23

— Memorial Day: No classes —

May 30

— Independence Day Holiday: No classes —

July 4

— Summer class final exams —

Last class meeting of each course

— Fall Semester Begins —

August 22

— Last day to register for Fall 16-week classes —

August 26

\*Free Event

## From the Editor

Elise Hansen, Editor

It is a busy time of year. Final projects are due, exams are looming ever nearer, and many of us are preparing for graduation or planning next semester's courses. In the midst of the frenetic activity, it is often helpful to take a step back and consider why we are investing our time, money and emotional resources in something as tiring as education.

Education is an opportunity. For many of the students featured in this month's issue, it has been a life-changing opportunity. It has helped students change careers, get jobs after prison, recognize their own potential after years of disappointment, or pursue new levels of excellence in their current pursuits. Education can sharpen our minds, increase our understanding of ourselves and expose us to the perspectives of others.

Education is an opportunity—a chance—but we have to take that chance. If we sit passively and hope to magically absorb knowledge and its benefits, we will find those benefits severely diminished. We must seize our education; own it; use it.

And then, pass it on. PVCC programs such as student clubs, career services, and Great Expectations exist to build community and help students overcome the obstacles in their way. When we participate in these organizations, we support our fellow students' pursuit of their goals. Becoming involved not only enriches our own experience, but also expands the opportunities of those around us.

At *The Forum*, we strive to highlight those opportunities, shed light on the obstacles and celebrate the triumphs. We hope to empower PVCC students to transform the opportunities of their education into change.



# Student Government Association News

My name is Wadah Al Mulhim, and I'm the Student Government Association's president for the 2016-2017 academic year. I started attending PVCC the fall 2015 semester and plan to graduate in spring 2017. My academic goal is to graduate with an associate degree in Science, Biology specifically, and transfer to either UVA or VCU for my bachelor's degree. My ultimate goal is to get into the Dentistry School at VCU.

## **Why did I become an SGA member?**

Well, I first joined the International Club here at PVCC and had a blast meeting new people and making new friendships. I had the desire to do more and get involved in the school's activities, so it all started during the first club day at PVCC. I went through all the clubs' tables and saw many interesting clubs and causes. I ended up at the SGA's table and started asking questions about how to join the club and be a member. The SGA president welcomed me and provided me with all the details that I needed to know about the SGA. I was very interested and thought the SGA was the best chance for me to reach out to my fellow students and provide them the best college life. I became an SGA member in fall of 2015 and got involved in all the activities and events that the SGA was part of.

## **Why did I decide to run for president?**

This is a serious position and it takes a lot to be the SGA's president. I want to represent the student body and ensure that everyone's voice is heard. I also want to enhance the students' life in college by hosting events that will help them succeed during their academic year. It is an honor to be the representative of the students, and I will make sure that the SGA is providing what the students want and need.

## **What is my vision for the 2016-2017 academic year?**

I and the SGA executive board will work hard to advance student life on campus. My vision is to get most of the students involved in the SGA and the other clubs here at Piedmont. Being involved in the school's activities will help students succeed and enjoy their college life. I will work with my executive board to provide students with what they need and learn about their concerns through surveys and polls. Additionally, we will work hard to make sure the SGA's events and activities are provided with high quality that matches students' expectations. Lastly, I'm looking forward to working with the executive board and the faculty members to provide a convenient college life for everyone and implement the SGA's goals. I'm very excited for the next year, and I hope it will be another year of success for the students and the SGA.

## **How can students get involved and be an SGA member?**

I encourage everyone to get involved and be part of the SGA. It is a great experience to be an SGA member because you will get to have a voice and present your concerns or ideas. Please feel free to contact me or any of the executive board members via the SGA's email or my personal email.



Email: [wa292084@email.vccs.edu](mailto:wa292084@email.vccs.edu)

## Patrick Fritz, Continued from page 1

worked. He took the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) and the DLAB (The Defense Language Aptitude Battery). He scored equally well on both tests and found he qualified for highly technical fields. Fritz had no interest in anything other than cooking and was told that he was overqualified for a culinary position. Finally, he was allowed to follow his passion for cooking and did so, serving in the submarine force for more than 14 years. He served from 1996 during Desert Storm until March 2011.

When asked if he had any regrets about following his culinary passion in the military, he said, "I am the most insecure nerd, and I am terrified to fail." He did not want to learn another vocation. Cooking was comfortable to him, and he already knew that he was very good; his boss said so, and his paycheck said so. Fritz has no regrets about his military profession.

Fritz's military career did not leave him unscarred. He suffers from PTSD even though he was not on the front line. Fritz lost many comrades to battle. The people he served with were his family. Fritz finds that writing helps him deal with his PTSD. He keeps a journal where he writes when he feels the need. At times, he cannot sleep, experiences nightmares, or has memories he just cannot shake. Writing is his therapy.

Transitioning to civilian life has not been easy. Fritz struggled in the various jobs he was able to secure, mixed with bouts of unemployment, eviction and homelessness. He admits, "I was not right. I wasn't a good husband. I wasn't a good father. I was not good to anybody at that point. I was no good to myself."

The past two years became a turning point for Fritz when he began taking classes during the fall semester 2014. His first class was Professor Jennifer Koster's Honors English. He remembers his stomach churning while waiting for class to begin. He was by far the oldest student and was concerned about holding his own against all those fresh young faces. Just before the class began, an even older student walked in; their eyes met and seemed to immediately recognize "Oh yeah, we're gonna own this!" These two students competed, but not against each other. Instead,

they competed in unison against themselves. Fritz's incredible journey began in this class.

The class was reading Liz Murray's book *Breaking Night: A Memoir of Forgiveness, Survival, and My Journey from Homeless to Harvard*. The first writing assignment was a personal narrative. Something about that assignment "just clicked," said Fritz. When he got his paper back and saw he had earned an A, he was ecstatic and remembers saying to himself, "I got a win, dagnabbit. I got a win. It lit me on fire. It made me feel like I had value again."

He scanned his paper and emailed it to his mother with Koster's remarks written on it. He also showed it to his kids. Fritz realized that he was "not a loser" at that point.

Along with his course work and commuting, Fritz is first and foremost a single father to his three young children: Grace, Rex, and Vinny. He actively participates in their school and extracurricular activities, serves in many PVCC leadership roles and volunteers when he can.

Fritz could have graduated in less than two years because of the number of credits he took each semester, including the summer, but decided he needed to become stronger in a couple of areas. He structured his course schedule according to UVA's requirements because attending UVA is his goal.

Fritz has recently been recognized for making the All USA Community College Academic Team. Of the 7 million community college students in the nation and the 1800 who were nominated by their colleges for this award, he placed in the top 20 based on academics, leadership and service. As the highest scoring student from the Commonwealth of Virginia in the competition sponsored by USA Today, Follett, Coca-Cola, Phi Theta Kappa and the American Association of Community Colleges, Fritz has also been recognized as the Virginia New Century Scholar for 2016.

Fritz has been taking all of the congratulatory declarations in stride. "Everybody is congratulating me, but it's the professors and students here that allowed me to succeed. I just did what they told me to do," he said.

# Excellence at PVCC

Owen A. Krug, Staff Writer

“I didn't know anything about it until I received it. I didn't know I was in the running for it. I got a call from the chancellor's office, and he congratulated me and told me I had won it,” said Beryl Solla, the head of PVCC's Art Department.

On April 14, Solla was awarded the 2015 Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence at the annual Virginia Community College System (VCCS) New Horizons Excellence in Education Awards Ceremony, in Roanoke. The Chancellor's Award is given to the most outstanding and dedicated teacher within the Virginia Community College System, and while Solla was recognized for her efforts this year, she has been working with as much vigor for the betterment of PVCC and her students from the moment she began teaching at the college 11 years ago.

Since first entering PVCC and the Piedmont community, Solla has organized countless events and classroom opportunities that not only diversified PVCC artistically, but also presented a number of opportunities for students to become involved within the college.

Solla created PVCC's annual “Let There Be Light” celebration, a fantastic light show thousands of community members come to every year to see the beautiful illuminations against the night sky. Additionally, Solla founded and implemented the “7th Annual Chocolate Chowdown.” The show has been titled the “7th Annual” since the first year it was implemented, an artistic touch by a wonderfully artistic woman.

VCCS colleges can also submit work to three other award categories. Within the Best Practices in Teaching Face-to-Face, Online, and Hybrid category, PVCC Science Associate Professor Lawrence Tiezzi and Political Science Assistant Professor Connie Jorgensen were nominated for their work with students to make Nelsonite the state rock of Virginia. They were the runners-up for the award. Thanks to their idea and efforts, and that of their students, Nelsonite is the official state rock of Virginia.

Tiezzi reflected on the awards: “The number one thing is that PVCC did phenomenally. There

were nine total awards in the EIE. The highest one of all was the Chancellor's award. Then there were six for excellence in education, first place and runner up, and we got two out of those six. So basically, we got three out of the nine awards, but there were 23 community colleges competing for all of these.”

Along with being nominated for his efforts towards the state rock, Tiezzi, as part of the science faculty, won in the Improving Student Success – Institutional, category. The entire science faculty at PVCC won for their innovative project, “Science 299 -- A Successful Model for Capstone Research in Science at Piedmont Virginia Community College.” Professor Joanna Vondrasek led the project and presented with Associate Professor Anne Allison.

When asked what the capstone project is, Tiezzi explained, “It caps it off. The closest I can get [to explaining] is at a four-year school, they would have a senior thesis--it's that. You come up with a hypothesis, you do an experiment, and you report the results. We are the only community college that does that.” In order to graduate from PVCC, science majors are required to complete their capstone projects.

PVCC is indeed an exceptional educational institution, and this is not the only year it has been recognized as such. Tiezzi said, “Since the year 2000 they have given the award for the best all-around student at a community college. So they have given out 16 of them so far. Out of those 16, seven have been awarded to PVCC, even though there are 23 schools.”

Whether it is PVCC's outstanding science program or its creative and highly innovative art department, excellence is a goal that the school consistently strives towards and often achieves. At the core of every educational institution that pushes its students as far as PVCC does is a hardworking and dedicated faculty surrounded by an endlessly supportive community.

Solla reflected on her achievements: “No one does anything on their own. No one. I am the front person, so I get all the credit, but, in fact, nothing happens without a community around you.”

# PVCC Students go to Nerd Nation

Owen A. Krug, Staff Writer

On April 7, Dr. Bruce Robinson and Dr. Kit Decker took seven students from PVCC to The Gaylord Hotel in National Harbor, Maryland, for Phi Theta Kappa's (PTK) annual convention, Nerd Nation. Nick McCann, an officer in PVCC's PTK chapter and upcoming president, said, "It was a great experience to meet with fellow members from around the country, including Guam; thousands of people were there, which was very impressive."

PTK, the international honor society for community colleges, prepared and executed their convention, which hosts over 2,000 honors community college students from all over the country. The event lasts for three days. Each day, a general session is held where academic challenges, award ceremonies, and student and guest speakers address the massive body of PTK members. Students running for positions within their community colleges gave their speeches and were then voted upon.

The guest speakers this year were Yanik Etan, the current international president; Dr. Paul G. Stoltz, published author; Lord John Eatwell, economist; and Katty Kay, the lead anchor at the BBC. They gave a variety of speeches regarding world issues and ways that students can improve and work towards a strong and productive future.

PTK honored many chapters with various awards. While PVCC's chapter did not win any awards collectively, the president of PTK at PVCC, Patrick Fritz, was honored with one of the most prestigious awards of all.

The All-USA Community College Academic Team, with support from The American Association of Community Colleges and Phi Theta Kappa, recognized Fritz as one of the top 20 community college students in the entire country, giving PVCC and the Charlottesville community something to be proud of.

PTK is about much more than individual recognition. It is a group of motivated students who discuss topics, accomplish projects, and



Photography courtesy of Bruce Robinson

enjoy a close connection, both as friends and academics.

Fritz reflected on his award, saying, "Winning these awards has been so incredibly humbling. But these awards are not mine. They are the result of the community I built and the support system I have. The support system is not only my family, the faculty, and staff, but also the exceptional students here at PVCC. They provided the support and motivation to push me further than I ever thought possible. I will be forever in their debt for the time they spent helping me with math problems, Spanish homework, showing me the joys of theater, or just an encouraging word during the mid-semester slump. I am inspired daily by the students here, and I hope to represent them and honor their stories as I move on from Piedmont."

Each night, on the upper floor of the hotel, called "The Casino," there was dancing, games, and opportunities to meet fellow PTK members. Tish Quarles, one of the seven students representing PVCC, said, "One experience I remember is meeting another American Sign Language student. He plans on going to Gallaudet University to be a teacher for the deaf. That was a great part of attending the conference, the people you got to meet between the panels."

Lindsey Woodyard, one of the students who represented PVCC at the event, said, "Nerd Nation was exactly what you'd expect. It was so cool to be around like-minded individuals: nerds that are too school for cool. This is why I like Phi Theta Kappa, for the nerd fellowship."

# Female Gamers: Becoming the Rule

Joe Fowler, Staff Writer

I recently watched a YouTube interview with a long-time gamer. The gamer spoke the language of World of Warcraft. The gamer echoed many of the perspectives regarding the game shared by other players. Like many other players, the gamer grew up playing on a variety of gaming systems. Former adult film star Mia Rose sounded like any guy talking about video games.

Not every female gamer has the same history as Rose. But, according to the Wall Street Journal, they comprise 48 percent of the gaming population.

My experience with female gamers contradicts some stereotypes I have heard. Some of these misconceptions portray female gamers as unattractive nerds who play video games poorly, likely because they only play as a result of some appeal to their boyfriend. Other stereotypes include desperate women who will have sex with anyone at any time. These stereotypes seem to contradict the stereotype of the lonely housewife playing Candy Crush or Farmville.

The reality is, an individual might fit into one or several of these stereotypes. Many others will fit into none these. Stereotypes of any sort are archetypes society creates based on certain facts as popular culture packages them, rather than on the concept of individuality.

Local individual and gaming enthusiast Jessica Burruss spoke about the game Diablo 3 in a recent interview. In addition to Diablo 3, Burruss plays World of Warcraft. In years past, she played Sega Genesis and Farmville 2.

Outside of the gaming world, Burruss bought her own house with money she earned from various jobs when she was barely 30. Though she currently rents a room for help with bills, she manages well alone through her full-time job as a payroll processor. Burruss is currently in a devoted long-term relationship with a math teacher who does not identify as a gamer.

Q: I just want to get my facts straight. You have a successful full-time career, an athletic

build, a decent relationship and a vagina, yet you play Diablo and other games? Is that correct?

A: Hahaha, yes.

Q In the latest expansion of Diablo 3, you killed Death. How did that feel?

A: It was pretty exhilarating. He was kind of a push-over.

Q: So Death is definitely a dude?

A: Yes.

Q: You killed him on a female character?

A: Yes.

Q: That's an interesting take on gender-role stereotypes. How does it feel both in game and out to literally contribute to the death of gender-role stereotypes?

A: It feels pretty badass... though I think that my character could do a little more to work towards that, considering she wears high heels while running around shooting things with a crossbow.

Q: What is it like being a female gamer?

A: It feels like being me.

Q: How do dudes react to you in-game?

A: It depends on where they are relative to my location. I get comments about breasts. Sometimes people express disbelief that I'm a girl. In real life, people just say it's cool.

Q: Do the sexual comments bother you?

A: Not really.

Q: Why not?

A: Because I'm not thin-skinned and can take a joke. Because these people are states away. There are times it would bother me if they are local or who know me and say it seriously. If someone in real life talks down to me because they think it's okay because that's how they talk to women in general, I don't deal with them.

Q: How many other women do you know who play video games?

A: At least nine.

Burruss, much like Mia Rose and any other woman I have talked to about video games, just sounded like anyone else I have spoken with on the subject. Each has her own experiences both with video games and in real life.

# Walking to Foster Change

Darien Tinsley, Staff Writer

The Great Expectations program has a big event coming up! On May 14, Great Expectations will partner with the Virginia Chapter of Foster Care Alumni of America and Community Attention Foster Families to hold a walk for foster care awareness. “Foster Care Awareness Walk” will take place at Charlottesville Albemarle Technical Education Center (CATEC), a local trade school located in Albemarle county and five minutes from the Fashion Square Mall on Rio road. This event will inform people of the rise of child abuse in America for families in the Social Service system and change common misconceptions about foster families.

Did you know, the United States has one of

the worst records among industrialized nations, losing between four and seven children due to child abuse and neglect, according to [childhelp.org](http://childhelp.org)?

Sarah Groom and Shelly Baker are the heads of this event, and have been working diligently to make it success.

Thinking of ways you can get involved? They are accepting donations until May 31 and anything will help. You can also register to walk. You can visit their website, <https://www.crowdrise.com/PIEDMONTVAFOSTERWALK> or register the day of the event at the CATEC site.

The walk will take place from 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. If you choose the register the day of the event, you should arrive promptly at 8:00 a.m. to find parking and register.

# An Afternoon of Jazz

Sam Jefferson, Staff Writer

PVCC visited the classical days of music on Sunday, April 24. Every year, Piedmont Virginia Community College holds an event known as the Chorus Spring Concert, where the PVCC Chorus class at the V. Earl Dickinson Building performs music. The concert provides free admission and everyone is welcome.

What makes the Chorus Spring Concert so unique is that the performances changes each year, ensuring that the same audience will be back next year for some fresh tunes. This year’s theme was *Jazz in the Afternoon*, a 3 p.m. chorus which focused on the classical tunes of American music.

Horace Scruggs III, who teaches and leads the PVCC Chorus class, conducted the entire concert. In addition to the student singers, the concert also featured a classy quartet. Michael Elswick manned the saxophone, Bill Edmonds

played the guitar, Bob Bowen used the upright bass and Drex Weaver played the drums. The chorus started off with an upbeat rendition of “Sing, Sing, Sing,” and kicked things off from there. The concert included many wonderfully performed songs, including a duet from Jenny Matthews and Rick Bayless, and a whole quartet performance “Everything.”

After the intermission, the music got even more interesting. The class sang “Cry me a River.” Halfway through the song, Elswick and his saxophone snuck in through the side of the stage, livening up the song with a jazzy undertone.

Next, the next few songs included “Puttin’ on the Ritz” and ended with “Route 66,” which was met with a standing ovation.

“The Spring Concert allows us lots of variety,” said Horace Scruggs, “We have a good variety of students who participate. So it’s always nice to have a concert where we do different styles each semester.”





# Writers Discuss Upcoming Books, Inspiration

Cynthia Beasley, Staff Writer

Students filled the room, eager to hear the works by novelist Talley English and poet Amie Whittemore. Not only were they able to listen to the authors read pieces from their forthcoming books, they were also given the chance to discuss their writing processes and their inspirations.

The event was sponsored by Writers Unite, PVCC's Creative Writing Club, and was held on Wednesday, April 13.

Professor Jennifer Koster gave a brief introduction in which she mentioned English and Whittemore had connections to PVCC. Both women are also involved in the community.

English grew up in Charlottesville. She taught English as an adjunct professor at PVCC two years ago and tutored in the writing center. Whittemore, who also taught at PVCC for a time, works at Literacy Volunteers and runs the Charlottesville Reading Series.

After speaking about their backgrounds and education, English started the discussion by telling the audience about her novel, *Horse*.

The story follows a short timeline of a teenage girl whose father left their family. She then goes away to school and is given her father's horse. The novel tells the story of the girl and her attempt to understand the animal as well as realize the connection to her father.

The story is told in two perspectives from the same character. Some sections are in third-person, whereas others are told in first-person. These have an almost dreamlike quality.

"I was playing a lot with the idea of memory across time and how we look at our own story and reinterpret ourselves over time," said English.

She started the project while in graduate school in 2005 and worked on it on and off until completely committing to finishing the novel. When discussing the process of finding a publisher, she said, "It was interesting to see basically a year's worth of rejection. That's a word you have to get real cozy with if you want

to be published."

Despite this, she continued working and rewriting, until one day someone contacted her, wanting to publish her book. After which, she said, "I immediately threw up."

She attributes her success to persistence and said, "Do your work. It's your work and you know why you're writing it. If someone else doesn't like it, they eventually will. Just keep working." She hopes her novel will be out within the next year.

Whittemore then read from her book, *Glass Harvest*. The book is a compilation of her poems. "The book covers a variety of themes," said Whittemore, "and as you can imagine with most poetry, not all are happy."

The first section focuses on her family history and her personal life. "Widow Variations," one of the poems in the book, features a few characters from her life and is a poem with multiple sections. "My family is a big inspiration for me," said Whittemore.

She then read from her Series of Odes and Meditations. The first one read was "Ode to the Thermostat." This light, humorous piece articulates her strong feelings about a household utility. "If you know me, you will hear me complain about thermostats a lot. . . I don't really like them," said Whittemore after reading.

When the floor opened to questions, many aspiring writers and students asked them questions about their experiences and inspirations. Whittemore said, "[Writing] is the way I think through things that trouble me, that delight me, and things that I don't understand."

Both agreed that one of the most important aspects of being a writer is persistence and discipline.

"There are times when writing just comes, and there are times when it doesn't," said English. "It is part of whatever causes that inspiration, but it is also learning to be disciplined as a writer. When you're ready to do the work you have that notebook at hand because the thought does not come twice."

# Class Behind Bars: PVCC's Prison Program

Elise Hansen, Editor

Every week, English Professor Ben Sloan arrives on campus to teach English and humanities courses. His supplies include books, papers and a single key. He hands over his driver's license to expectant security guards, passes through a metal detector, undergoes a frisk search and sends his supplies through an x-ray screening device. The vigilant eyes of security cameras follow his movements across the grounds. When he arrives at the far end of campus, a security guard unlocks the classroom and remains on watch throughout the class.

Sloan proceeds to teach, just as he would in any other classroom.

He is teaching at Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women (FCCW), a maximum-security prison. While the environment is more austere than PVCC's main campus, Sloan and John Donnelly, vice president for instruction and student services, who also teaches at FCCW, insist that little else differs.

"I interact [with students] as with any regular face-to-face class," said Donnelly.

Women who enroll in classes can earn an associate degree and accrue transfer credits for four-year institutions. Those who seek to enter the program undergo placement testing and are subject to the same qualifying criteria as any other community college student. Each year, about 10 to 15 students earn an associate degree, and Donnelly and PVCC President Frank Friedman hold a graduation ceremony at the facility.

"A lot of people probably don't think these students have to meet the same standards...[but] they're good students; often better than others," Donnelly said. Sloan agreed the women at FCCW are often very strong students. "The students are a faculty member's dream," he said. "They ask questions that go beyond the curriculum...they are highly motivated. Education to them is very meaningful," said Sloan. "It's a way to grow and change their lives."

The program began in 2008, and in 2013

became a credit program focused on helping students obtain an associate degree. Each year, about 70 students enroll in one or more classes.

"[The program] is part of our mission as an open-access institution: we provide education to anyone that can benefit, and oftentimes people who are incarcerated can benefit," said Donnelly.

A 2013 study by the RAND Corporation, funded by the Department of Justice, found that correctional education while in prison reduced the risk of recidivism by 13 percentage points, increased the odds of obtaining employment post-release, and can be cost-effective because of reduced recidivism.

Earning an associate degree "shows a level of accomplishment," Donnelly said. "There are so many barriers [offenders] are going to deal with...this is something that helps."

Many prisons offer vocational training, but Sloan believes that a college liberal arts education is also valuable, and even practical. "Taking college classes improves one's ability to think, to communicate clearly," he said. He considers an associate degree a "boost" that can enable offenders to more easily obtain jobs and pursue a bachelor's degree at a four-year institution.

One former student of a similar program agreed. "College credits from actual community colleges go better on a resume than job experience from prison," he said. The student was not at FCCW but took college classes in two Virginia correctional facilities during two separate sentences, accumulating about ten classes in all. "Life after prison is hard...I had a lot of growing up to do and dues to pay," he said, "...but I wouldn't trade those classes for anything."

Donnelly, too, has witnessed students' empowerment when they complete a class or earn a degree. "Many have been told all their lives that they'll never accomplish anything...this is a huge accomplishment," he said. He describes teaching incarcerated students as "some of the most rewarding work I've done in higher education."

*Read the complete article on our website.*

# Manifest Destiny: A History of Excuses

Joe Fowler, Staff Writer

Not long ago, the curricula of various schools taught much about Manifest Destiny, the 19th century idea that Anglo-Saxons possessed a kind of God-given right to own any land they laid claim to in the area now known as the United States. With the intent of spreading liberty from “sea to shining sea,” early Americans gradually settled from the east coast to the west. The only problem with Manifest Destiny was its failure to consider the people already occupying that land.

Karenne Wood, a member of the Monacan Indian Nation and director of Virginia Indian Programs at the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, spoke in the school auditorium April 4. Wood gave a lecture on subjects like the history of America from the perspective of those who suffered during it.

Though much of the lecture contained some of the saddest aspects of America, Wood also spent a great deal of time talking about more progressive attitudes towards American Indians. Much of the progress emerged from the change in social attitudes during the 1960s.

After the lecture portion of the event, members of the audience asked questions about the latest information about native people. Wood fielded the questions with ease, answering many directly, and pointing out online resources that could be used to answer more complicated inquiries.

During the event, she mentioned that Virginia recognizes close to 6000 members of Indian nations. The tribal leaders of those nations meet annually with each other. Additionally, leaders also meet with the governor annually.

In regards to community involvement, Woods pointed out various events that native people hold throughout the year, which are open to the public, including a powwow during the third weekend of May.

One member of the audience asked Wood about Manifest Destiny and its effect on American Indians. Wood explained a concept whereby Christian princes alone could own land,

simply by stepping foot on it and planting a cross in the ground. This principle carried over to the new world, thus entitling Anglo-Saxons to all of the land. The Christian settlers viewed the native people as pagans not deserving of land.

Wood continued, stating that once settlers conquered the land, Congress passed the first Civilization Regulations in 1880. The regulations deprived native people of their land rights and religion while also mandating the forced assimilation of native children. Wood described the regulations as, “hilarious, since native people had their own civilizations.”

Though the regulations ceased in the early portion of the 20th century, it was not until 1978 when the government passed the American Indian Religious Freedom Act. “Native people couldn’t practice their religions for over 100 years in a country founded on religious freedom,” she said.

The event wrapped up with a discussion on apologies and reparations. Reparations would bankrupt America and not reach all the people entitled to them. However, a resolution passed issuing an apology for the atrocities against native people that has yet to be read aloud by the president, according to Wood. “It’s a sad commentary on America that we would pass a resolution and the president won’t read it aloud,” she said.



**Karenne Wood: Photography by Joe Fowler**

# Photography Class Visits Dogwood Festival

Arif Michael Vega, Staff Writer

Stacey Evans led her photography class in exercises at the Dogwood Festival Carnival April 12. Around 12 students attended the event, each with a list of inspirations to fulfill as an assignment. The students drove or carpoled to the scene and immediately began taking pictures.

The carnival, held at McIntyre park, was noisy, bright, boisterous and cheerful. There were more children than adults, which concerned some students. “How can you take a photo without someone in it?” asked student Nicole Boldak. Later, when Evans asked how students felt about taking photos at the carnival, this subject was the first to come up. Corey Boggs mentioned that when he asked, the parents were happy to pose with their families. Several students reported getting dirty looks, and observing their classmates getting them as well. Boggs’s solution was to set up a tripod and try to look official.



The Roundup, Student photography by Chris Barbour

Others ignored the issue or did not notice.

Evans assigned inspirational challenges for the field trip. The first inspiration was an opening theme, or introductory picture. The others were “something passing,” “artificial light,” “a detail” and “magic hour,” which is the time directly after sunset.

The subjects were numerous. There was a Ferris wheel, carousel, roller coasters, aerial rides and several games. Food stands stood alone or in rows, lit in neon, creating a busy background to students’ photos of yet more neon.

Students met in small groups to compare progress and share their personal inspirations. Some participated directly with the event, taking their cameras on rides or buying a product. Julian Allen, a student, found his inspirations in a caramel apple and moving pictures of the various rides. “I actually took two pictures of [the apple],” he said, “But I didn’t like the one with a bite taken out of it.”



Student Photography by Arif Michael Vega

# PVCC's Soccer Club Heads to Playoffs

Annette Cashatt, Staff Writer

The Bears are Piedmont's secret gem. Many do not realize it, but PVCC has its own soccer teams supported by PVCC's Soccer Club, and the men's division II team has been ripping up the field this season. In fact, the team is headed to the playoffs Sunday, May 1 at the Charlottesville High School stadium.

It is no surprise that the Bears are headed to the playoffs this coming Sunday. They have only lost one game this season. They are one of the top teams in their division and on their way to win the quarterfinals. But that is only the tip of the iceberg; many members of the team also have a long history at PVCC.

In 2004, PVCC hosted a fundraiser and family day for refugee children from Kenya and Somalia. Several of those children played soccer on the front lawn as they began their new lives in Charlottesville. Some of the faculty, such as Rob McHenry, remember the children from years ago and have had the opportunity to watch and mentor them as they grew into college-age adults. According to McHenry, "I am very proud of them and it has been fun to be part of their lives and watch them grow into fine young men."

Now, the Soccer Club includes a diverse, international group of students, several of which had their first experience with PVCC as children playing soccer on the lawn.

Muse Mohamed is a current team member and also happened to be one of the refugee children from 2004. Both he and another team member, Baker Osman, state that the chemistry and atmosphere surrounding the team is the most enjoyable part of the Bears.

Player unity is a sentiment echoed by Edwing Alicandu, the team leader and president of the Soccer Club. He explained that one of his favorite aspects of the team is the way that each team member aids each other and how they work together as a team. He recalls one situation when several team members were unable to make a game, yet they still played short-handed and won because they truly supported one another.

Alicandu encourages people to join the Soccer Club and participate in the sport. He says that the club is open to PVCC students, and he has hopes of one day expanding the club to include more officers and even games against fellow community colleges. Currently, there is also a co-ed soccer team as well as the men's division team.



The Piedmont Bears, Photography courtesy of Edwing Alicandu

# Review: Polaroid Stories

Darien Tinsley, Staff Writer

On Sunday, April 17, I was invited to see a production that Gorilla Theater Productions was putting on. The name of the production was “Polaroid Stories” by Naomi Iizuka. This play was inspired in part by Ovid’s “Metamorphosis;” it mingled classical mythology with the real-life stories of street kids.

The cast was divided into five women and five men, and took place in an intimate setting. Even though Gorilla Theater is a small space, I felt like it was the exact size needed to draw the audience in and help them to feel the emotion.

The show starts off with phrases uttered to futuristic music and a gritty, dingy, grungy woman appears, singing the lyrics to the Beatles’ hit song “Blackbird” and writing sayings on a chalkboard structure in a lethargic state. In this production, there are also numerous real-life themes such as drug use, prostitution, rejection and abuse.

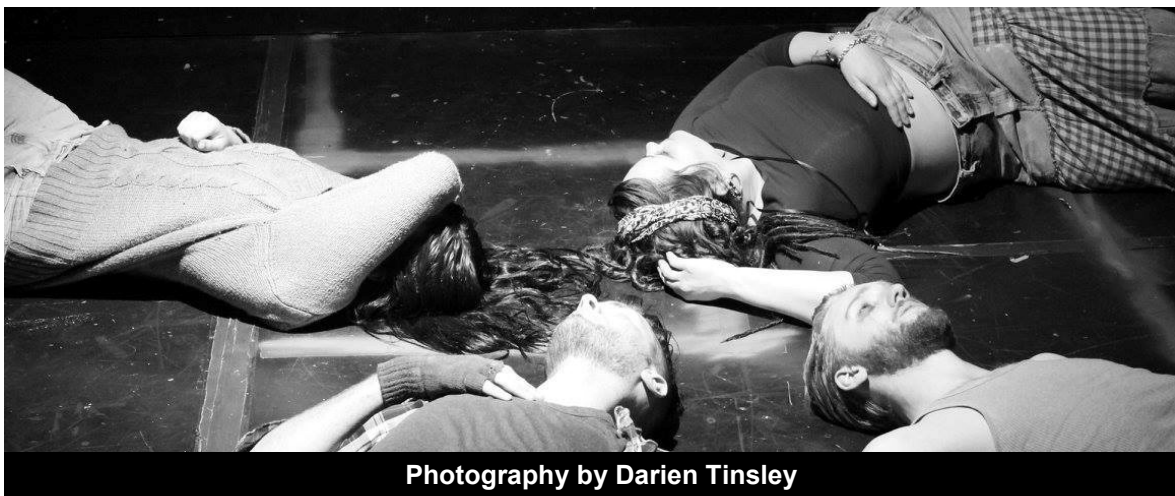
Jonathan Karns, a seasoned actor in the Charlottesville community and a PVCC student, and Emily Lien, phenomenal actress and PVCC faculty member, were among the cast of fabulous innovators. Anna Lien, the theater’s creative mind, artistic director, and an actress, spoke about the show and Gorilla Theater and its hopes for the future.

When asked why she chose the production “Polaroid Stories,” Lien replied with, “Polaroid

Stories was a story with which I fell in love in undergrad. The fusion of the dirty street life with the lofty quality of the classics I thought brilliant, and I’ve been waiting for the right time and place and people. When I was talking to my co-star Kendall one evening in a late night artistic conversation, it came up, and our mutual passion for the piece lead us to pull together a team and move forward with producing it.”

In describing Gorilla Theater Production’s mission and vision, she said, “GTP has been an educational theater company for kids, teens, and adults for the last five years, and it currently shows no signs of slowing down. As artistic director I work to keep my finger on the pulse of the community that surrounds the project and provide opportunities that fuel individual creativity and artistic fulfillment. We have a fusion of classic and avant-garde aesthetics and I think that it allows our students and artists to develop in powerful and innovative ways. On the horizon we’re about to put up a Mad-Max style *Romeo & Juliet* with our teens, our summer shorts festival is about to bloom, *Antony and Cleopatra* is in full wing, and the fall brings us the *Phantom Tollbooth* (kids/teens) and *Marat/Sade* (teens/adults). Onward and upward!”

Clearly, GTP is in it for the long run. If you missed out on seeing this show, you missed an absolutely life-changing moment. The actors in the show were phenomenal and it will go down in history as one of my favorite productions.



Photography by Darien Tinsley

# The Fall Line Debuts May 2

Cynthia Beasley, Staff Writer

PVCC's many clubs and organizations give students a way to express themselves and share common interests. *The Fall Line*, PVCC's literary magazine, gives students a way to share their work as well as gives their peers an opportunity to see some of the talent we have here at PVCC.

This year's edition of *The Fall Line* features creative writing pieces and artwork from students. The magazine includes writing that was chosen by the Creative Writing Club as well as pieces from the winners of the Writers Unite Three-Minute Fiction Contest.

This publication includes many student groups. Student art from the Art Department archives will be featured and the Communications Design Class II worked together to design the layout of the magazine.

"I think what I love about it is it's a collaboration between lots of people," said

Professor Jennifer Koster, faculty advisor of the Creative Writing Club.

Fourteen students will have writing published in the magazine while 13 will have art featured.

A comic by Abigail Woodward is being featured about her experience of cutting her hair. Throughout the comic, you see the personal journey and results of her experience. "It's about the gradual process of cutting my hair," she said, "It's been a personal thing to enjoy my short hair and do cool things with it."

Telling another true story, Antonia Florence's piece is called "Why then..." This piece tells the story of her as a young tomboy whose father was in the Navy and was often out to sea.

Her story is about her experience of growing up and being socialized as a girl. "I grew up as an independent individual. I was born that way," said Florence.

Pick up the 2016 edition of *The Fall Line* Monday, May 2 in the North Mall Meeting Room at 12 p.m.

## Students Enjoy Art and Chocolate at PVCC

Kaitlyn Duvalois, Staff Writer

Johnny Cash played through the speakers, while students and onlookers praised artwork hanging on stark white walls. On Friday, April 26, PVCC Art Department threw the Seventh Annual Chocolate Chow Down.

PVCC student artists are encouraged to add pieces of their own artwork to the art show each year. These works can be anything from graphic design projects to ceramics. The paintings must be matted and framed; ceramics are held in glass cases; some students even put them up for sale. Some artists wore beaded necklaces handed out by adjunct instructor of art Fenella Belle.

"I think seeing all of the artwork hanging on the walls and kind of being finalized is really cool. You really get to see how hard the students work during the semester," said PVCC student Molly Brennan.

Although this is the 11th year doing the student show, it has always been referred to as the Seventh Annual Chocolate Chow Down.



# PVCC: Past and Future

Sam Jefferson, Staff Writer

Piedmont Virginia Community College has served as a center of education for students for over 50 years. Around 213,000 students have taken classes on campus, more than 12,000 associate degrees and certificates have been awarded to students, and over 500 students transfer to four-year schools each year. Moreover, local businesses rely on PVCC to bolster their workforces with graduates who are seeking employment.

“PVCC is committed to providing access to a college education for all who can benefit, an opportunity for each student to reach his or her potential and excellence in our programs and services,” says the summary on the college’s webpage. PVCC is a thriving community college that has been around for decades, but like all colleges, there was a time when the idea for a college by state Route 20 was fresh and new.

The idea for a new community college first struck the local steering committee in 1969, and at their request, the Virginia State Board for Community College granted permission to build a new college at a recently-purchased parcel of land located at the corner of Interstate 64 and state Route 20. PVCC’s first president, Harold J. McGee, was elected in September 1971. He served as president for four years.

Despite the State Board approving a college in 1969, it was not until April 1972 that the college was built, and at the time, it only consisted of a single building.

The official groundbreaking ceremony took place April 17, 1972. Over 450 students applied to

the college; the first was Wanda Birkhead.

“We had such a good time that first year with classes,” said Birkhead. “We knew that we were special, that we were in the spotlight because this was a new venture.”

Since the college building was still being constructed, PVCC’s first few semesters had to be held in different locations, including the University of Virginia and Albemarle High School.

According to the History of PVCC article on the PVCC website, it was not until Fall 1973 that Piedmont Virginia Community College was ready to hold classes on 501 College Drive.

From there, the college continued to grow and improve. In December 1979, the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools gave full accreditation to PVCC, which allowed the school to give associate degrees. In July 1981, construction began on PVCC’s library, which was completed in September 1982. Construction also began on a new wing in August 1985, which was completed in May 1987.

But PVCC does not stop with just three buildings. A new building for the science wing is in the works, which means that things can only get bigger and better for Piedmont Virginia Community College.

“The college has expanded,” said Frank Friedman, “And I think this gives you a bit of an idea as to how PVCC has grown.”

Even though it has changed throughout the decades, PVCC remains a center of learning. It has educated people in the past, it educates them now, and chances are that it will continue educating them well into the future.



Photography by Krista C. Petzold



# A bit about Charlottesville

Sam Jefferson, Staff Writer

Many students of Piedmont Virginia Community College have lived in Charlottesville for most of their lives, and some have lived there since birth. They have walked through the town's lush and verdant countryside, strolled through the hustle and bustle downtown, and attended the prestigious University of Virginia.

The city of Charlottesville originated in Albemarle County, and before that, there was a Native American village that existed five miles north of the town's center.

Another notable feature of the city was a path that led from Richmond to the Blue Ridge Mountains known to travelers as Three Notch'd Road. Around the mid-1750s, various land grants secured a substantial amount of land surrounding Albemarle County, which, according to [visitcharlottesville.org](http://visitcharlottesville.org), was named after the Governor of Virginia at the time.

At first, Albemarle County was much larger

than it is today, but eventually it was divided into multiple counties.

Charlottesville was named after Princess Charlotte, who eventually went on to become the Queen of England. Though established as a settlement, Charlottesville did not become an official city until 1888.

A year later, Thomas Jefferson founded the University of Virginia, and Charlottesville continued to evolve from there. Today, Three Notch'd Road includes Downtown Mall and Main Street.

Albemarle County was home to three of America's founding fathers, Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe. PVCC is just a short distance away from Jefferson's home, Monticello.

No one can know if Charlottesville's rise and development would have impressed the founding fathers, but as Jefferson once said, "I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past."

## Opinion: Supreme Court Selection

Tucker Poe, Staff Writer

The Supreme Court has a profound impact on all of our civil liberties. With the passing of Justice Antonin Scalia on Feb. 13, there was speculation about whether President Obama would select a successor. Obama said, "I plan to fulfill my constitutional responsibilities to nominate a successor in due time."

Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell said, "The American people should have a voice in the selection of their next Supreme Court justice. Therefore, this vacancy should not be filled until we have a new president."

With the Republicans holding majorities in both houses of Congress, they could easily reject any nominee that they deem too left-leaning. McConnell is already in a position to do this without having to state it. With Obama's selection of centrist Merrick Garland on March 22, this

statement makes McConnell look like a "flip-flopper" if the already tentative situation were to change.

In a best-case scenario for McConnell, a Republican wins the presidency. McConnell, who endorsed Rand Paul for president, has become the majority leader by being a party man. Donald Trump and Ted Cruz are not party men. The mainstream GOP at this point is hoping that none of the candidates can get the required delegates. Former Republican Speaker of the House John Boehner said, "If we don't have a nominee who can win on the first ballot, I'm for none of the above."

Suppose a Democrat is elected and they decide that it is now in their power to delay a selection until after congressional elections in hopes of a more favorable split between the parties. By waiting until after the election, Congress is creating a precedent.

# Charlottesville Subbredit

Tucker Poe, Staff Writer

The Charlottesville subreddit is a fascinating place to learn all kinds of things about the city. Whether you are looking for an apartment that will not check your bad credit score or wondering if anyone knows what the *zxcv cats* are, the Charlottesville subreddit is a great way to learn things about the city that Google could not otherwise answer.

User jxf said, “What's with the *zxcv cats* around town? Do they mean anything or are they just fun art?”

The *zxcv cats* refer to a series of chalk drawings of the same style cat with the letters *zxcv* often written on the cat's forehead. While the drawings remain a mystery, user meekohi said, “I've seen the artist around doodling them.” Not exactly Banksy.

On April 19, user kintaeb said, “I'm on Grounds and have noticed that the air is full of a thin smoke and there is a slight smoke smell. A

co-worker ran some errands up 29 and said that it was also up there. Does anyone know what the source of this is?”

Almost immediately, users responded with articles about the wildfires in the Shenandoah National Park.

Along with discussing local mysteries, the Charlottesville subreddit has a nice mix of useful and not-so-useful content. Beside information about the soon-to-arrive Alamo Drafthouse Theater and Uber's morning availability is a call to all guinea pig lovers.

User badkarmaclub is looking to start Charlottesville's first Guinea Pig social club. They said, “I love guinea pigs and am interested in getting to know pig fans in the area. I have three of my own and thought it'd be a fun warm weather activity to take the pigs to the park for a meet up.” The image of someone trying to wrangle three “pigs” running around Darden-Towe was not enough to warrant a response.

We can only assume they are still looking.

## Enjoying Ivy Provisions

Ryan Winkler, Staff Writer

One of Charlottesville's premier delis and locally-sourced grocers Ivy Provisions lies just minutes from the UVA Corner. A relatively new addition to Charlottesville's food service industry, Ivy Provisions offers local meats, cheeses, and vegetables on a multitude of different gourmet breakfast and lunch sandwiches and wraps.

Additionally, they stock an extensive selection of beer and wine, including a plentiful variety of inventory from local wineries and breweries.

Not only does Ivy Provisions provide a broad selection of food and drink, upon entering the store one is immersed in a truly unique atmosphere.

With old, stylized wooden walls, Ivy Provisions gives off a truly rustic vibe and makes one feel as one might have stepped into a time

machine, headed to what a grocery store might have been 60 or 70 years ago.

Aside from offering walk-in service, Ivy Provisions also offers an extensive catering menu of “Sandwiches by the Box,” which includes eight sandwiches of the customer's choice and an option for large green salads.

Despite established Charlottesville delis Foods of All Nations and Bellair Market surrounding Ivy Provisions, the store has held its own as a stand-out popular breakfast and lunch destination in the UVA area.

Charlottesville native Emily Wood said, “Ivy Provisions is amazing. Whether it is breakfast or lunch, it's hard to not find something you like at that place. I personally always go for the Notorious P.I.G. sandwich when I stop in for lunch...It's great to see another deli spring up and hold its own in the competitive Charlottesville restaurant environment.”

# What is Your Excuse?

Tucker Poe, Staff Writer

Many people have a go-to excuse. One person can use the same excuse many times over with different people. Being able to adequately defend or justify a fault or offense is a skill that many students hone over their years in school.

In the computer age, saying your dog ate your homework no longer works.

“The excuse I hear most often is that I ‘thought I turned it in’ or ‘I turned it in and there must have been an error on Blackboard.’ I also hear about computers catching viruses all the time and deleting everything,” one communications instructor said. This is an approachable excuse. Most people have had computer issues at some point in their lives. By having an excuse ready that is relatable and realistic, the hope is to inspire sympathy.

The success of your excuse often depends on who you have to present it to. Professor Jessica Kingsley said, “I like to give students the benefit of the doubt...Life happens and pays no attention to our due dates.”

There are other instructors who no longer believe their students deserve the benefit of the doubt. One said, “After teaching for almost 15 years, I can usually tell when a student is lying, and I actually ask that students just refrain from trying to offer me an explanation unless they can provide documentation for it. This way, no one has their time wasted.” They later said, “Believe it or not, I also hear about dead relatives quite often as well. I now ask for some sort of documentation about deaths in the family because of how frequently this particular excuse is utilized.”

Other excuses are so good that they don’t even seem like excuses.

One instructor said, “I had one student recently that is a bank teller and they were held at gunpoint and had to be the person that handed the money over to the bank robber...the story was in the news, so this particular absence was definitely excused.” Sure, you could have a buddy come to your job and hold you at gunpoint, but wouldn’t it just be easier to go to class?

## Sociology: A Pathway to Understanding

Tucker Poe, Staff Writer

Sociology is the study of all societal behavior. There is the sociology of sleep, road rage, education, and work. Taking a sociological look at anything, leads to a well-rounded perspective on a given topic.

“For sociology, I think it’s vital to being a good citizen,” said Dr. Kim Hoosier. “In this class we talk about very relevant issues... we talk about race relations, social class inequality; we talk about deviance in the criminal justice system; we talk about culture, inequality from a gender perspective so real kind of real world issues that all students probably have or will encounter in their lifetimes.”

The sociological perspective is the crux of sociology. It is a view on human behavior and its connection to society as a whole. It invites people to look for the connections between the behavior

of individual people and the structures of the society in which they live.

The sociological perspective allows you to even understand how certain tribes in Papua New Guinea have masculinization rituals where starting between six and ten boys are taken from their mothers and are transformed into warriors through ingesting semen.

“Sociology is not common knowledge all the time but it’s things that are commonly occurring. It gives you a different perspective on the things that are already happening in the world around you,” Hoosier said.

“My most important goal is that you think about things a little differently,” Hoosier said, “I want all of my students to come to sociology with an open mind, an open way of viewing the world and then leave sociology just thinking a little differently than maybe they had before.”

# Start the Presses: Take Journalism

Sam Jefferson, Staff Writer

Many students and faculty at Piedmont Virginia Community College are avid readers of *The Forum*, the school's student paper. *The Forum* contains all sorts of stories, discussing classes, campus and local events. But while *The Forum* helps keep people up-to-date on classes and restaurants, it does not go into much detail about the people who write the articles.

In fact, there is a whole journalism class. In it, students help create *The Forum* and do various writing exercises. The class welcomes anyone regardless of their writing skills.

"You don't have to be a good writer to succeed in the course," said Assistant Professor Tamara Whyte, who teaches the class.

In PVCC's Journalism classes (ENG 121 and 122), students learn about news writing and reporting, as well as skills for layout and editing.

Students are tasked with writing one article a week. First, the students choose a topic for a story. It could be about an event or club in college, something in the community, or even general history about a place. Once that is done, students go out after class and gather information about their subject through note-taking and interviews. After the students have gathered

enough information, they write a draft of the article and submit it to the teacher for editing. When that is finished, the teacher hands back the articles for students to make corrections. Afterwards, another student goes over it and makes recommendations for the author to edit the articles. Next, students set up the layout for their articles, and then the articles are ready to be published in the latest *Forum*. The Journalism class uses a smooth system to publish its articles.

"Everybody should take it," says Arif Vega, who has attended nearly two semesters of Journalism classes at PVCC, "I think it should be a required course."

PVCC's Journalism classes are a good opportunity to show others your work, and you do not have to pursue a career in journalism to join the class. Journalism helps students improve their writing.

"All students can benefit by being better writers and critical thinkers," said Whyte, "The skills we cover in Journalism improve clarity, precision, writing, and communication."

The course is an approved transfer elective and is offered in both Fall and Spring semesters. Interested students can sign up for ENG 121 this fall, a late-start class starting in September. The second class, ENG 122, is offered in the Spring.



Journalism students practice their headline skills with a card game. Photography by Katya Beisel

# Seeing Literature from a New Perspective

Cynthia Beasley, Staff Writer

While many college composition classes focus primarily on writing, Professor Jennifer Koster has a different approach. In her honors college composition course students must learn to think critically and see things from different perspectives.

“I remember learning in college about a theorist who said that ‘the most significant learning takes place when a student learns something about themselves,’” said Koster. “I try to keep this in mind.”

Throughout the course, students read short stories and poems by authors such as Ernest Hemingway, Marjane Satrapi, Bobbie Ann Mason, Jamaica Kincaid and more.

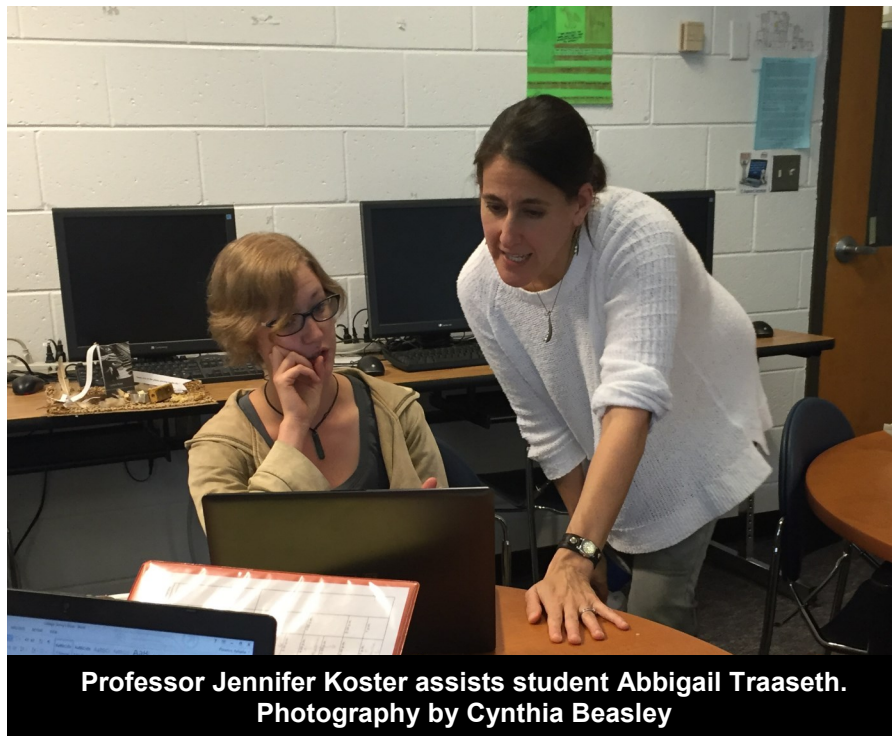
“I’ve tried to loosely organize these stories as a kind of coming of age . . . childhood through adulthood. I feel students can connect to it in some way,” said Koster. “I think it helps you get through your own issues or things that you think about in a kind of sideways way, and then it helps people grow.”

She incorporates different forms of informal writing in an effort to help her students generate ideas. These include reader response journals, exploratory and creative writing, and focused and reflective free writing.

These exercises are introspective, reflective and beneficial for planning formal essays.

The course places a large emphasis on critical, argumentation and research essays. Koster’s process involves multiple drafts and revisions, as well as workshops with fellow classmates to understand the reader’s perspective and reactions.

Koster said, “One of my hopes is that students learn to gather ideas together so that they



**Professor Jennifer Koster assists student Abigail Traaseth.  
Photography by Cynthia Beasley**

don’t wait to write. They have been building upon or working with the ideas so they have things to work with when they sit down and write.”

Another unique aspect of the class is the intriguing, thought-provoking group discussions. Through the discussions, students are able to think about the issues and make arguments relating to stories or research. They are able to discuss how they perceived a story or poem, yet also learn about different perspectives.

“This course is more critical-thinking oriented . . . so some of the stories are not about what is happening in the story, but what’s the larger issue or point the writer is trying to make,” said Koster.

This course will improve a student’s writing ability and teach them how to think critically. It will broaden their thoughts, as they must view stories from a different perspective while incorporating their peers’ ideas and interpretations.

This course can not only expand their knowledge about literature and composition, but teach them something about themselves.

# Summer Puzzle

Brennan Tanner, Staff Writer

□	η	ε	λ	δ	Σ
φ					
ν					I/J
γ	M/N			Q	
θ					U/V
Δ		X		OU	Space

The sets of symbols listed below each correspond with a single character based on the grid seen above. Some of the letters have been filled in for you. Replace the pairs of characters with letters to solve the puzzle. Fill in the grid as you guess the right letters.

It is a encoded phrase in keeping with the theme of this year's summer issue.

Seven of the letters are already placed in the grid; it is up to you to find the rest.

γε νΣ θΣ φδ ΔΣ Δη Δδ θε ΔΣ γΣ φε θη θη νΣ γλ

γη ΔΣ νΣ θη ΔΣ θλ νλ φδ ΔΣ γη γλ θλ θλ γλ ΔΣ

νε νλ θε ΔΣ θλ νλ νΣ θη ΔΣ Δη φδ νε θε θη ΔΣ

θη θΣ γη γη φδ θε ΔΣ γλ γε Δη γη γΣ νΣ φλ

# Riddles

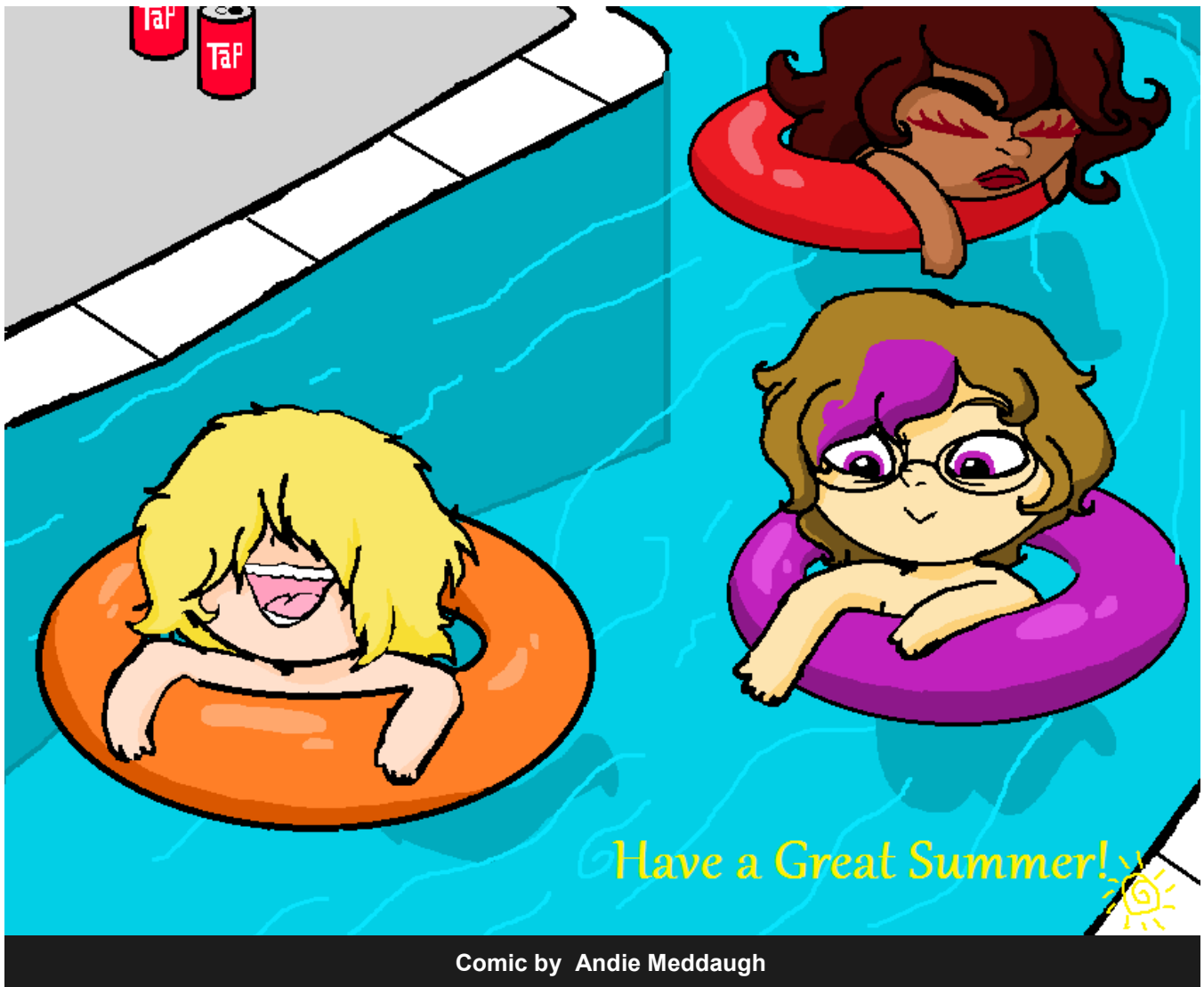
Brennan Tanner, Staff Writer

I live in the sky, I live in the sea,  
And they together make me.

A landscape shifting 'neath your feet,  
Filled with joy and laughter, or shadows fleet,  
Your darkest fears, your most heartfelt wishes,  
Sumptuous banquets of fragrant dishes.

Finality walks shrouded in black,  
Shadows drape its ancient bones,  
It visits all, from manors to shacks,  
And topples kings from thrones.

In teardrops,  
'tis held in liquid form briny with salt,  
And if it grows too big to bear,  
it brings life grinding to a halt.



# Classifieds

## Looking for Fall classes? Consider these:

### **SOC 210—Survey of Physical and Cultural Anthropology.**

Why are humans the way we are? From the human body to human behaviors, anthropology will take you on a journey across time and space to answer this question and more.

### **ENG 121—Introduction to Journalism.**

Interested in seeing your work in *The Forum*? ENG 121 offers students a chance to learn about journalistic writing and get their work in print. This 12-week class will start in September and is an approved transfer elective.

Know of any Community Events, Announcements,  
or Advertisements you'd like to list?

Contribute and Submit to



Contact us at [theforum@pvcc.edu](mailto:theforum@pvcc.edu)  
for more information or visit our website :  
[www.piedmontforum.com](http://www.piedmontforum.com)



Check us out on social media

@PVCCForum

The Forum is a voice for all students. Accordingly, materials published in The Forum, including any opinions expressed, should not be interpreted as the position of the VCCS, Piedmont Virginia Community College, or any stakeholder thereof. The paper welcomes letters to the editor, guest columns, questions, photography or any other ideas or submissions one may have for the upcoming publications. Please contact [twhyte@pvcc.edu](mailto:twhyte@pvcc.edu) with any questions.

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