The weekly campus crime report has been released by the Safety and Security office. For the past 6 months, thefts have been on the rise. This past week, there were 80 occurrences of theft, of which there were 40 reported to the Bucks Police. The most common item stolen is electronics such as iPods, as well as credit cards taken from student’s wallets and purses. Textbooks are also a high priority for theft. Lloyd described theft as a crime of opportunity, and that the best deterrent is for students to keep their personal belongings with them at all times and not leave them somewhere where they might be stolen. Lloyd also said that the most common crime of opportunity is larceny or theft, of which there are 80 occurrences in the last 3 years, occurring in 2006. By definition, robbery is the act of taking something from another person by use of threat or force. There have also been 10 cases of burglary in three years. According to the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reports, the average price of gasoline in 2009 will be $3.56 a gallon. Within one month’s time frame, that number has been revised to $2.37 for 2009. Although some energy analysts believe that lower gas prices will spark demand and drive energy prices back up, most people believe that the weak economy will continue to weigh on consumers and businesses and keep gas prices relatively low. If the economy improves, gas prices will most likely go up, but until then, Bucks students are enjoying the savings. Nicole Guth, 19, psychology major said, “I’d like to see them go even lower.”
Lower Bucks grows

By Vincent Lombardo

LOWER Bucks — When discussing the design of the Lower Bucks Campus, Executive Director James Sell doesn't like to use the word "classroom."

"It's no longer a classroom, it's a learning space," he said. Sell was gushing recently when he reported that enrollment at Lower Bucks jumped 40.3 percent this semester from last fall, when its new building opened. This fall, 1,075 students are attending classes, up from 765 students just one year ago. This breaks down to 654 day students and 421 evening students, which has all "learning spaces" in use each night.

Sell attributes the enrollment spike to the campus’ cutting-edge technology and engaging curriculum.

The number of full-time students increased 76.4 percent, to 464 students from 63 students last fall. The number of day students increased 51 percent – to 654 students from 433 students. The 20 “learning spaces” are equipped with whiteboards, Smartboard technology, a ceiling-mounted projector and an instructor’s podi- tom outfitted with a personal computer and a DVD player. WiFi is available throughout the building, and Internet2 is coming soon, said Sell.

Students can complete associate degree programs in business administration, criminal justice, communica- tions, education, and liberal arts, as well as certificate pro- grams in phlebotomy and management.

Sell also is vice president of the Bristol Rotary Club and wants to foster a synergy between local businesses and the campus. Partnerships with some businesses have already been forged, including Wachovia Bank. "They didn't want to com- mit to bricks and mortar. They said, "Tell us what pro- grams are needed."

Another corporate partner is Rohm and Haas, a sub- sidiary of Dow Chemical, whose $100,000 contribution built two conference centers. Sell said there are plans to extend that relationship, with chemistry students set to attend classes at the compa- ny’s Bristol facility.

Sell, who returned to his alma mater to get the cam- pus’ new building ready for last year’s opening, is proud to be a part of the college. "I love this place. [It has] always been home to me," said Sell, who previously worked for Bucks in admis- sions, transfer services and continuing education, before a two-year stint at La Salle University. "We built this from the ground up, and it really shines."

The campus has come a long way since 1989, when it opened in a suite at the Bucks County Office Center. Over the years, enrollment grew, and with it, the need for more space increased.

According to Sell, from the layout of desks to the furni- ture in the lounge, everything in the building was carefully researched to enhance the comfort level. "Keeping peo- ple on this campus is impor- tant to us."

If enrollment trends contin- ue, a campus expansion could be on the horizon. "We will add more as demand requires it."

But because of the Delhaan Woods behind the building, any construction would have to be in the front, along Veterans’ Highway.

With the expansion of Upper Bucks and work here at Bucks, an addition at Lower Bucks is probably at least five-to-seven years off.
Theft, burglary and vandalism

continued from page 1

Crime Reporting Program, burglary is the unlawful entry of a structure for the purposes of committing larceny or theft and any attempt at those actions.

From six cases in 2005, there has been a decrease to only two cases each in 2006 and 2007. Recently, Bucks saw a case of burglary when unlocked cars in the parking lot were opened and the perpetrator took as many items as they could. The person responsible was caught.

A positive statistic that the report shows is the lack of violent crime on the Bucks campus.

"The number one reason that there is no violent crime is that there is no residence on the campus," Lloyd stated. He pointed out that at schools where students live on campus; the rates of violent crime are much larger. "People come here, go to class, then leave," he continued.

The only violent crime on the list was a few cases of assault. Lloyd said that those incidents were just fights, nothing that was life threatening.

He added that an assault is anything that involves physical contact, which can range from spitting on someone to a fist fight.

Another high-ranking offense was vandalism, which saw a sharp increase in 2007 from previous years. Relatively low in 2005 and 2006 with a total of 23 incidents, last year saw a starting 61 incidents of vandalism. An example of a case where is a where a student was arrested by the police for 12-13 counts of vandalism.

Lloyd said that most of the vandalism was graffiti in the restrooms, often done using a magic marker.

"It's hard to monitor," he stated, adding that the bathrooms can't be monitored because of privacy.

"The best thing we can do is to remove it as quickly as possible," Lloyd said. He said that most people vandalize for notoriety, and by removing it quickly, it negates the purpose that they set out to accomplish.

Lloyd said that vandalism actually hurts everyone on campus because of the cost to remove it.

The money used to clean up the vandalism comes from student's tuition, and the more that they have to spend, the higher costs to students may have to pay. Other offenses include disorderly conduct, of which there have been 28 cases, eight in both 2005 and 2007, and 12 in 2006. In three years, there has only been one case of a drug-related violation. According to the school's drug policy, such violations would include illegal possession, manufacture, distribution or use of drugs or narcotics by students. In this case, the authorities were not involved because of the miniscule amount of marijuana that was involved.

The policy details a 1972 Pennsylvania law that dictates if one possesses or distributes 30 grams of marijuana but does not sell it, they are guilty of a misdemeanor which can be punishable with a maximum of 30 days in jail, a $500 fine, or both.

On the Bucks campus, these kinds of violations are taken very seriously, and those who are in violation are referred to the Judicial Affairs Office for disciplinary action. Punishments can range from a written warning to the extreme act of expulsion.

Over the last six-to-nine months, Bucks has put in place many procedures to make the campus a safer environment. This includes a campus-wide alert system that includes external and interior horns to alert people to emergencies. In addition, there is a text messaging system that students can sign up for, where they can arrange for two cell phones and two e-mail addresses to be contacted in the event of an emergency.

Each classroom should have a flyer in it that lists all of the shelter-in-place locations on the campus as well as information about how to receive emergency information. Faculty members have also undergone emergency training. Upper administrators have undergone National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) training to prepare them for any emergency that may arise. According to the FEMA website, this program was developed so that people from different jurisdictions can work together in responding to natural disasters and emergencies, including terrorist acts.

The program provides a unified approach to incident management, command and manage-ment structures, and emphasis on preparedness, mutual aid, and resource management. Active shooter protocols have been updated as well, which helps students and faculty know what to do in the event of a gunman on campus. The emergency preparedness manual has also been revamped. In addition, the Digital Signage project, which involved the installation of flat-screen monitors on campus to provide students with information, is also to be used to notify personnel about emergency situations on campus.

In addition, television and radio stations are alerted as well if there is an emergency.

The Office of Safety and Security operates 24-hours a day, staffed by 14 full-time and 13 part-time officers who patrol the campus and are responsible for security and emergency response on campus.

The officers supplement the communications center operations and operate special events on campus. The campus also coordinates with the police if necessary.

Students can pick up a copy of the 2008 Annual Security Report at the Safety and Security on campus.

In case of an emergency call Safety and Security at (215) 968-8395.

Theft, burglary and vandalism
The Republican Party is in a fit of breakers buck the trend? This was a year of underdogs and a mandate on racism to be decided go with this mantra, or will the late breakers buck the trend? Washington is awaiting the answers. Obama win the presidency, the country doesn’t mean she’ll be changing her party any-time soon. Rice, who is well respected by conservatives, would be the first African- American to have a realistic shot at the Republican nomi nation if she were to run (I apologize to Alan Keyes, but come on). A Rice vs. Obama matchup would be one to remember and it would be interesting to see how the African- American and female vote would split in that situation. As of Nov. 17, there are only 1,448 days until Election Day 2012. That’s just under four years to decide who will take the Republican Party by the horns—or the tusks—and lead them on to a new decade. Will it be the stalwart political veterans like Hank and Rice take the reins? One thing is for sure, the Republican Party is in a fight like Obama-change like.
To Do

November

Bucks events and listings In the county, in the city

Launching of “We Are Bucks Week” 17 Check out Tyler Park foliage or play frisbee golf while the weather is clear

“We Are Bucks Week” at Upper County 18 Jack’s Mannequin at the Theater of Living Arts at 7:30 p.m.

Upper Bucks evening transfer fair from 3:30-6:30 p.m. 19 Visit Shady Brook Farm Christmas Light Show

Lower Bucks “Thanksgiving for Diversity” 20 Madonna at the Wachovia Center

“Great American Smoke Out” 21 Peddler’s Village 6-10 p.m. Holiday lights ‘switched on’ 6:15 p.m. by Santa

Arts Faculty Exhibition at Hicks from9 a.m.-8 p.m. 22 Visit Shady Brook Farm Christmas Light Show

Arts Faculty Exhibition at Hicks from9 a.m.-12 p.m. 23 Tree Lighting Ceremony On Headhouse Square, South Street at 5:30 p.m.

Arts Faculty Exhibition at Hicks from9 a.m.-4 p.m. 24 Check out the Peddler’s village Gingerbread House Competition and Display

Arts Faculty Exhibition at Hicks from9 a.m.-8 p.m. 25 One Republic plays at the Electric Factory

CROSSWORD CLUES

Across
1- Clothes-pins
5- Wale
9- “The Sweetest Taboo” singer
13- Underlying cause
14- AKA
16- Race pace
17- 365 days
18- Bowling alley button
19- Soon
20- One of Chekhov’s “Three Sisters”
22- Coat hair fabric
24- Sharon, e.g.
27- Amphibian
28- Tidily
29- Atrophied
33- Cautious
34- Old-fashioned pronoun
35- Stir up
36- Barcelona bear
37- Facial hair
38- Where ___?
39- Pouting grimace
41- Start of a counting rhyme
42- Coup ___
44- Alluring
46- Ceremonial prayer
47- Canines
48- Draw near
49- In a faint
52- Hoover, for one
53- Reformer Jacob
57- Film unit
58- Diciembre follower
60- Resting place
61- Threesome
62- Claw
63- “Rule Britannia” composer
64- Tall tale
65- Put a fancy coat on
66- Riga resident;

Down
1- Ask invasive questions
2- Fair-hiring abbr.
3- ___ few rounds
4- Furrow
5- Gingerly
6- Nicholas Gage book
7- One of the Simpsons
8- ___ kwon do
9- Totter
10- Tuscan river
11- Way out
12- Sicilian volcano
15- Began
21- Depend
23- Japanese drama
24- Receipts
25- Period of the year
26- Highly seasoned stew
27- Intensely ardent
28- Where ___?
29- Resounding blow
30- Lasso
31- Violinist Mischa
32- Divinity
34- Ages between 13 and 19
37- Square doughnut
40- Phantom
42- Caliginous
43- Endless
45- Dove’s sound
46- Lake in W Scotland
48- Christmas song
49- Bohemian
50- Lab fluids
51- Small dam
52- Where heroes are made
54- Able was ___...
55- “___ She Lovely?”
56- Keep it, to an editor
59- Pester

CRYPTOGRAM

LAI BTW ZUMAB MP, BU XMOW WOWCNBTMAF.
XMOW BTW DEWPBMUAP AUH, ZWCTLZP BTWA,
PUGWILN RLC MA BTW REBEWC, NUE HMXX
FCLIELXXN HMBTUEB WOWA AUBMSMAF MB, XMOW
NUEC HLN MABU BTW LAPHWC.

-CLMAWC GLCML CMXVW
Paula Raimondo of Newtown won the 32nd annual Poet Laureate competition, which is now the longest running competition of its kind in Pennsylvania. Judges Gregory Danisian, director of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Pennsylvania, and Nancy Thompson, professor at Clark College, were more than delighted to award Raimondo with this honor. Both being established poets themselves, they said they could not ignore her undeniable talent.

They stated that, “The poet plays beautifully with language, but with purpose and clarity. The structure of the poems is well thought out, and the strength of the poems is consistent throughout the entry.”

Such a statement was to be expected as Raimondo beat out 70 other entries to win the competition. Each of the 70 contestants was to submit 10 authentic poems, and soon after doing so the 70 turned into 20 finalists.

The finalists were determined by Dr. Allen Hoey, Bucks professor and director of the Poet Laureate program. Out of the 20 finalists, Raimondo came out on top. However this is not the first time Raimondo’s poems have received recognition. Many of her poems have appeared in the “Sarah Lawrence Review” as well as the “Beloit Poetry Journal.”

Her hard work helped her achieve this goal. She attended Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, NY as well as Oxford University in England. After this she received her master’s degree from Arcadia University in Glenside, PA. Once graduated, she taught poetry workshops in the Philadelphia schools, and today she teaches here at Bucks while residing in Newtown with her husband, sculptor Elijah Kaufman, and their daughter, with another on the way.

Raimondo was scheduled to read her poems at Bucks on Nov. 16, along with the 2007 Laureate Marsha Kroll. The runners up from this year’s competition were also scheduled to read. The runners up were Sandra Becker, James Freeman, Laura Holloway, Camille Norvaisas, Laura Gaydos and Elizabeth Evers.

On Oct. 16, Raimondo gave her inaugural reading as the new Bucks County Poet Laureate and also received a proclamation from the Bucks County Commissioners, as well as a $500 prize.

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Let Us Prove It to You.
SGA offers services

By Kenneth McCaffrey

The Student Government Association (SGA) offers students the opportunity to change their educational environment for the better, as well as manage student life programs. SGA is a student-run organization that represents the student body in the Board of Trustees, said Student Life Director Matt Cipriano.

“The SGA’s basic function is to oversee all student clubs and organizations. They approve them, as well as allocate the funding through the use of the student activities fee. They also appoint students to various committees on campus where needed.”

While the SGA serves this purpose, its most important role is its ability to represent the students within the college and bring about change in the student’s favor. “They basically will address issues on campus; if there is a concern or problem that needs to be brought up, the SGA will represent the students and make corrections, and in the long run, make sure that change happens. They also look for ways to improve the college,” said Cipriano.

The SGA appoints 10 staff members to run the organization, each with their own jobs to take care of: the executive board consisting of President John Skadrzak, Vice President Ravi Patel, Councilor at Large Seth Gansman, Vice President of Activities Ellen Bratkars, Executive Treasurer Justin Derry, and other members specializing in student involvement, public relations, student advocacy and clubs and organizations.

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Zombie game offers fewer escapes

BY CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON
Interactive Media Editor

When the game developer Valve is mentioned, people have one of two thoughts, either “Half-Life” or “The Orange Box,” which is a perfectly normal reaction to those who know who the company is and what they’ve done.

Since the announcement of a new project, Valve has been center stage for most of the conventions with its highly anticipated first person zombie survival game “Left 4 Dead.”

Unlike the other zombie-apocalypse-type-scenario games, this game doesn’t give you a whole bunch of options in order to escape the zombie infested hellhole. You have one option, to become very close to the three other people who haven’t been infected and want to survive.

Unlike the other games in this genre, you can play with either three other human players or you can rely on the game’s AI, which according to some videos of the gameplay, is not in any way dumb or sluggish.

The game’s storytelling style is also very different as it is set up in mini-campaigns that can only be described as sections or chapters of a movie. Each chapter takes place in a different location as you and your fellow survivors make your way to your final destination, which is revealed as an airport. Little pieces of the story make their way into each chapter as you fight your way through each movie and get hints to the climax of the “film.”

As far as your enemies go, they don’t appear to be regular shambling zombies with little-to-no thought other than who’s left to eat. They’re more like the zombies from “28 Days Later,” not slowly shambling along, but full-out sprinting to kill and eat you. The interesting part about this is the fact that as you go along, zombies won’t just walk out of doors or climb through windows; they’ll spawn in places you’d never think to look like in the rafters of a building or on the roof.

Along with the co-op gameplay that allows you to use either AI or other players, the fun takes place in versus mode. Why should you always play as human fighting hordes of the undead? Thankfully versus mode allows for some fun as one of the undead or one of the survivors.

The gameplay as a survivor in each mode is similar to that of the campaign, where you use your teammates and survive the map. As far as strategy goes, the only way to win is to stick together and help each other out. If one of your teammates becomes debilitated, you have to go over and revitalize them, which only takes a few seconds, while your teammates deal with the hordes of zombies.

The flip side is being one of the undead whose versus mode experience is completely different from that of the survivors. The whole point of being a zombie is completely decimating the survivors with superior numbers. However, being one of the undead has a disadvantage in that they all have very low health and can easily be killed. But if you die, just find a sneaky place to respawn and attack again.

With its release date only a few weeks away, it looks as though Valve will have another hit on its hands as this zombie survival game is completely different from that of any other in the genre. The different ways to play the game certainly is original and unconventional.

Those who want to use the Xbox 360 will have an advantage to playing on Xbox Live over the PC. The flip side is that PC will have far superior graphics and sound to the Xbox. If you own either of these formats you should definitely pick up this game for the simple reason that killing zombies is a lot of fun.

Top movies, games and shows to give or get

Films:
- The Dark Knight
- Hellboy II: The Golden Army
- Kung Fu Panda
- Hancock
- Wall-E
- Get Smart
- Tropic Thunder
- Wanted
- Command and Conquer: Red Alert 3
- Left 4 Dead
- World of Warcraft: Wrath of the Lich King
- Fallout 3
- Little Big Planet
- Gears of War II
- Dead Space
- Call of Duty: World at War
- Shaun White Snowboarding
- Warhammer Online: Age of Reckoning

Here’s a list of some cool websites to visit...

- freenlinegames.com
- amiwasted.com
- break.com
- dumbentia.net

Dumbentia.net What is Dumbentia? Well, to start, it’s a combination of a couple of words: dumb and dementia. That pretty much describes this place -- a showcase of humor.
BETTER JUDGMENT

Jamie and Elle know fashion, and they are ready to tear your closet to pieces

ELLÉ CREEDON AND JAMIE MELGOZA
Art Editors

Some say fashion does not matter, but it has the potential to reflect who you are.

Some have all the right elements to putting an outfit together but need some help in sprucing it up.

In each of the pictures you will see some outfits that have great potential, but need a little boost.

One tip to making any outfit make a bold statement is dark denim, whether you are dressing up or down.

In the first picture (A) this guy can certainly use a tune up. Although his classic yellow-hooded sweatshirt may be a staple in his closet, it can certainly use more to be an "outfit." He could start by adding something under underneath. Layering is a great tip to give anyone a more put together look without too much effort. A white button down or long white Henley will provide this look easily. Lastly, his denim would match better if it were dark to help the yellow pop.

In the second picture (B), this girl had the right idea. With her ability to layer and add accessories, it just needs some help and a push in the right direction. Her blue button down cardigan makes a bold statement with her gold buttons. The hardware on clothing can always help to pull an outfit together. With such a dark color, the best option for underneath is a solid neutral such as a cream or sand, even a white long sleeve tee underneath. When it comes to her denim, she should also try a dark wash to pair with this ensemble.

Her ability to accessorize stands out and makes a statement about her outfit. This scarf definitely helps pull everything together, keeping it unique, while keeping her warm. In this next picture (C) this boy seems more concerned with keeping warm than what he's wearing. His Nike sweatshirt could be traded in for a plain thermal long sleeve tee shirt. Keeping him warm and comfy. A plain shirt paired with dark denim is a good way for men to accessorize and look hot without a lot of effort.

This subtle combination leaves room for accessorizing with anything from a leather belt to nice boots, even a hat. Lastly, his coat is a great wool mix that will keep him warm in the winter, but the color is a bit dull and won't do much for the rest of his outfit. He should try and pair it with a chocolate brown, black, or red suede or leather coat. This will amp up his look, while keeping him toasty.

In the last picture (D), this girl started out well with her sweater vest. The colors, however, do not do much for her. When picking a staple like a sweater vest, try and look for a solid color like black or blue, etc. This solid vest paired with a corresponding color underneath will completely transform her look from boring to chic.

She should try a dark vest and a light, white long sleeve tee to complete her look. Her jeans should be a darker, giving a more sophisticated look. Everyone has their own style. That is what makes fashion fun.

When shopping and getting dressed, find a look best suits your style, and represents you as a person, and adult. With that said, please leave your pajamas and slippers at home and try on some boots and a pair of denim.

You can still be comfy in cool clothes.

'Desperate Housewives' jumps in time

BY BRITTANY KENVIN
Columnist Staff

Now in its fifth season, ABC’s longtime hit show “Desperate Housewives” has a whole slew of new storylines in the works this year largely due to its five-year jump into the future.

The season premiere, launched on Sept. 28, picked up exactly where the season four finale left off—only five years later.

The question still remains: will this aid the writers in creating new and interesting storylines for the inhabitants of Wisteria Lane or will it leave us reminiscing about the “good old days?”

So what has happened over the past five years?

Well, Bree (Marcia Cross) has established her role as the Martha Stewart of suburbia by publishing her own cookbook, igniting competitive tension between her and Katherine (Dana Delaney), especially since Bree failed to give proper credit to Katherine for a bulk of the recipes in her cook book.

Possibly the most noticeable change is Gabbie’s (Eva Longoria Parker) appearance. She is now the mother of two and still married to Carlos (Ricardo Antonio Chavira), who is also still blind.

Apparently motherhood has taken a toll on our beloved glam Gabbie because she is looking as disheveled and frumpy as we’ve ever seen her.

With a choppy new haircut and baggy unflattering clothing, she is a far cry from the glitzy ex-model we knew and loved.

The suss that this gal exhibits is unquestionable. Fortunately, she’s still Gabbie, bringing viewers that quick wit and humor that she’ve seen in her countless times before.

Edie (Nicolette Sheridan) is back in town with a new husband to keep her occupied, although she’s still the same shrill, trouble-making woman we’ve come to know in the past, especially when commenting on Gabbie’s new and less-than-fabulous look.

Her new man seems to have a sneaky background that should prove for some interesting plot lines as well, but we all know Wisteria Lane is no new to neighbors with ominous pasts.

Susan (Terri Hatcher) and Mike (James Denton) are no longer together, although Mike has now moved into a house across the street. Susan has a new love in her life, Jackson (Cale Harold), however she is not acting too serious about their relationship so far. It should be interesting to see how they end up and if she ends up returning to Mike, who is, after all, the father of her son.

Tom (Doug Savant) and Lynette (Felicity Huffman) are dealing with troublesome 16-year-old twins, which will definitely be a fun story to see played out now that they are old enough to start getting into some real trouble.

With all the changes, it’s comforting to see that the basic storyline is still true to its roots. Just as it has always been, “Desperate Housewives” will remain the charming comedy and drama hybrid that we have come to know and love over the past five years, just with some new storylines and a strong emphasis on the show’s originally established main characters.
A Modern Hypocrisy: A special edition column

If you or someone you know has been affected by cancer, these are some websites I recommend checking out:

- chemoangels.com
- livestrong.org
- chemotherapy.com
- cancercare.org
- fcc.edu

Got an opinion? Agree or disagree?
Tell us in a letter to the editor.

E-mail Editor-in-Chief Laura Irwin at centurion@bucks.edu.

Monday, November 24 2008

Letters to The Editor

Dear Laura,

I’m pleased to report that I’m writing this while wearing my mismatched sweats, with my loyal and worn UGGs on, inches away. Better judgment? Hardly. At 6:30 a.m., the last thing on my mind is looking fashionable. Why should I, or any other student, care about modeling the latest fashions? Sure it’s great to feel good and look good, but this is school—not a runway show! I, for one, am not here to impress you. And if you must give a Star Honey Ice Tea about what anyone else thinks, I’m here to attend my classes, write my papers, etc. Honestly, what gives Jamie and Elle the right to tell me, or anyone else, how to dress? I’ll look like a scrub if I want to. It’s of no concern to them, and in my opinion they should stop caring so much what everyone else is doing and be more concerned with what kind of attitude they’re putting forward. From this article, I know I would walk past them and roll my eyes. Who really cares what anyone else is wearing? To Jamie and Elle, all I have to say is shut up. Nobody cares.

-Maggie Driscoll

A weekly column by Centurion Editor-in-Chief Laura Irwin

This isn’t going to be a happy story. There are parts that will be depressing and sad. There are parts I hope to be motivational and inspiring. I want to share my story to alert others who were once on my path, or ever went through what I have gone through. I want to tell others how I changed. And here we go...

Nine years ago I was on the honor roll and a competitive swimmer at Penn State. Then, I realized I was something—free—from home, my parents and any “rules.” Basically, I made those bad decisions that affected the real reasons I was at college. So I went from being an honors student to someone who lived everyday on one illegal drug or another. I slept nearly 16 hours a day, or none at all. I dropped out of Penn State weighing 90 pounds; I was so high, depressed or manic I would forget to eat.

Then, I changed again. It happened in an instant. I don’t know what spawned it, but there was an “epiphany”—I woke up. Either I got scared, or the antidepressants I’d been taking finally kicked in. Whatever the reason, I stopped throwing my life away. In that epiphany I realized I was getting older and I was too old to remain a loser. If I was getting older and I was ing my life away.

I found a woman who wrote for the Newtown Advance. She said I could be a stringer or freelance reporter. Sure, I liked to write. I might be able to do something like that.

I didn’t think about living life to the fullest all the time. I just found a reason to get up in the morning. I hadn’t experienced that feeling in years. It was wonderful.

Finally, my manic episodes were under control. I wanted to go back to school, attend Bucks part-time, work and get a degree in journalism. I gave myself a timeline; I found that maintaining a schedule helped me function normally. I would work through the fall of 2005 and save for spring semester tuition.

I look back on those days now and feel bittersweet. I had a boyfriend I lived with, flawless peaches and cream skin and platinum blonde hair. I was 105 pounds and my eyes were baby blue. But, I also had cancer. I wrote this column this week because my diagnosis of stage 3B Hodgkin’s Lymphoma occurred at 1 a.m. on Nov. 23, 2005.

Three years ago, I was dying. I entered St. Mary’s Hospital via ambulance from my job at Goodnoe’s and I left with a 60 percent chance of survival. To those who never saw their life in percentages, those are the kinds of odds that keep you awake at night. On steroids I gained nearly 60 pounds. I vomited dozens of times a day.

Chemotherapy makes you an insomniac. Chemotherapy causes your hair to fall out. It hurt all the time. I’d cry, physically and mentally. Of all a sudden my friends were gone, family members gone. Most every- one was too scared to see me or talk to me, I guess. At first I didn’t think I was different, nothing about the person I am had changed. But the more I felt isolated, the more numb I became.

My best friend broke up with me. I was a “burden” and “responsibility.” The sad part—I felt like I was. I couldn’t have done any better though, I believe. I did what I was told to do and what I had to do.

I hated everyone who said how well I was doing. I lived inside my frenzied bald head and suffered the abuse I put on myself. I couldn’t go out that Christmas without a wheelchair or sterile mask, so I never left home. I watched these brown marks appear on my skin where I itched. You get so itchy. My nails were yellow and my eyes were dull. The scars hurt. My body hurt and I was so tired all the time and couldn’t sleep for days on end.

After the surgeries and chemotherapy, the worst part happened: the waiting and the acceptance. I didn’t have time to think about my future, if there was one. My brain was too caught up in the big “C” was over and I one inch at a time.

My oncologist said it was after the surgeries and chemotherapy. The worst part happened: the waiting and the acceptance. I didn’t have time to think about my future, if there was one. My brain was too caught up in the big “C” was over and I one inch at a time.

Eventually I connected with other young people who got sick like this and watched them die before them. We learned together to accept that in order to continue, you have to let go of everything you were before your brush with death.

Just move forward.

Now two years in remis- sion, I am doing most every- thing I wanted to, but more importantly working toward what I want. I had other plans for the Newtown Advance. It gives me a reason to be with someone else—I’m alive and I am still me inside. I’m still dealing with the “outside” issues. “Everything I have ever learned in life can be summed up in three words: it goes on.”

Dear friends, whether you know where your life is head- ed or not, I offer you advice based on my experience. One: Get a college degree. I don’t care if you major in Liberal Arts or Underwater Basket Weaving. But some- day soon or distant, you’ll find something you love to do. Therefore, the time you waste skipping class, blowing off working toward some- thing because you don’t know what that “something” is, well, it does you no justice. You’re hurting the future you. Tomorrow is not a guar- antee. You will never, ever be able to do it later, to figure it out later. You only have today.

Two: Waiting for more money, more of anything is not an excuse. You will always be in debt. You will always have bills to pay. Just set a goal for yourself—it’s harder and stiffer and over- whelming—but in doing so you can balance your life. There is no reason for a life of failure. I learned the hard way.

Three: It’s going to suck. I have failed and accom- plished. I have been embar- rassed and disgraced and overjoyed. I try to live life without thinking about how mine nearly ended. I don’t want to think about death, my wasted years, but I do. I am affected, but not dam- aged. Sometimes I fall to my knees in tears at the sight of lost strands of hair. I beg god to make the cardio and crunches and skin treatments and hair dye erase the physical elements left over from my illness. People say how strong I am, how strong I must have been. I hate them, because it’s not true.

I’m just me.

Whether I am or am not less beautiful, less of something or more of something, it can’t do anything about it, as I didn’t do anything about being sick. All I can do is accept it. All I can do is keep moving forward and finding a reason to make survival worthwhile.

Yoda said, “Do, or do not. There is no try.” I said the whole time that how you sur- vive defines you as a person. After everything, I did find me. I learned to like me, for the most part. I’ll move into self-actualization one step at a time.

But move forward in your life, because it keeps going no matter what.
**Features**

**Meteorologist followed her dream**

**BY KRISTEN WALSH**

Centurion Staff

On Saturday, Nov. 1 Bucks held the 26th Annual Day for All Women with a special appearance by Michelle Grossman of NBC-10. The developmental conference featured workshops focusing on health issues and personal and professional development. The event was co-hosted by Bucks County’s Commissioner’s Advisory Council for Women.

“In direct response to evaluations from past participants, the theme of the conference this year will be women’s health issues,” said conference coordinator Marian Cello. “We’ve invited St. Mary Medical Center as our ‘gold’ sponsor, and we have included workshops ranging from belly dancing to cardiovascular imaging.”

About 400 women attended the event and chose from three different workshops and five dozen offerings ranging from career management and family issues.

Free health screenings were also offered. In addition to the selected workshops, Michelle Grossman, meteorologist of NBC-10, was the keynote speaker of the day. She talked about balancing the stresses of work and home, all the while maintaining a confident well-being. She also wanted to get the message across to never give up on dreams and goals no matter how old one is, and that hard times only teaches determination.

Grossman, a Doylestown native, began her by telling the audience it was her lifelong dream to become a meteorologist. Growing up she recorded the weather to learn everything about it. Grossman grew up in a large family where money was tight, but it made her self-reliant.

“I had the Barbie, but not the jeep,” said Grossman, insinuating that life wasn’t horrible. Through her parents’ hard work ethic, she developed her own sense of self-reliance and learned to work hard for “the life your Barbie deserves.”

Grossman moved on to Penn State University and thought, being from a small town, she couldn’t make it out on her own, but decided to continue with her goal of becoming successful. She graduated from Penn State with a bachelor’s degree and worked eight years in sales. However, Grossman still had the “weather bug.”

By this time, Grossman was 28 and realized the risk wasn’t that bad, so she decided to quit her job in sales and take an unpaid internship at news station. At the internship, she learned she was the oldest one there, but she didn’t let this bust her confidence. Grossman grew up in a large family where money was tight, but it made her self-reliant.

“I had more confidence than I did when I was 18,” said Grossman as she felt she was the right place at the right time. "I am here because it was my dream," said Grossman. Grossman closed her address with a comforting message.

“To be healthy and develop yourself, you have to want to change and when you get to that dream remember who you are, don’t forget yourself.”

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**Essay contest offers $$ and Nevada trip**

**BY JEN GOLDING**

Webcast Anchor

Are you interested in winning $1,000 and an all-expense paid trip to Nevada? The Community College Baccalaureate Association (CCBA) is currently accepting essays that address the topic, “Why would be important to me.”

Any student who is currently enrolled in a community college is eligible to enter. The winner will attend the CCBA’s annual conference in Reno-Tahoe, Nevada from March 13-15.

The idea of community colleges offering baccalaureate degree programs is becoming increasingly popular. Baccalaureate degrees are currently offered on community college campuses in 14 states and three Canadian provinces. The CCBA is conducting the essay contest to determine what students think about community colleges offering four-year degrees.

According to its website, the CCBA’s philosophy revolves around the idea that, “The baccalaureate degree is an important entry requirement for the better jobs and a better lifestyle. Therefore, everyone person should have an opportunity to pursue the b a c e.”

Never having to worry about credit transfer issues is another benefit to receiving a baccalaureate degree from a community college. Although most community college credits transfer easily to four-year schools, it can often be a hassle, especially if a student decides to change majors.

Many community college campuses that offer baccalaureate degree programs have found success by teaming up with four-year schools and using university centers, 2+2 programs, and distance learning to help confer degrees.

Florida is a leading state in offering baccalaureate degree programs from many of its community college campuses. According to its Department of Education, Florida is facing a “significant challenge” because it is ranked no 46 out of the 50 states in producing baccalaureate degrees.

Although many community colleges in Pennsylvania offer dual admissions agreements with four-year schools, there is currently no Pennsylvania community college that confers baccalaureate degrees from its campus.

Enter the CCBA’s essay contest by Feb. 5, 2009. The winner will be notified no later than Feb. 10. All of the essay rules and entry information can be found online at accba.org.

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**Featured photo: ‘Bee’**

By Laura Irwin

Contribute your photos by e-mailing a jpeg or pdf to centurion@bucks.edu
Eagles don’t get anywhere against Bengals

By The Associated Press

CINCINNATI— Trick plays went backward. Punts barely went forward. Chances to take the lead got frustrated away with miscalculating timeouts.

If ever a game deserved to end without a winner, this was it.

After 3 hours and 46 minutes of ugly and unsettling play, the Eagles and Bengals walked away with the NFL’s first tied game in six years Sunday. It ended 13-13 after Cincinnati’s Shayne Graham missed a 47-yard field-goal attempt with 7 seconds left in overtime.

For the first time since the Falcons and Steelers played to a 34-34 tie on Nov. 10, 2002, the NFL had a game that went 75 minutes with neither team coming out ahead.

Basically, it was a waste of an afternoon.

“I don’t believe in ties,” said defensive end Trent Cole, who had two of Philadelphia’s eight sacks. “I’m used to playing football until the end, until someone scores. That should decide the game. Taking a tie is a bad feeling.”

Players on both teams were unsure of the rules, thinking the game could end tied.

“We were treating this like a playoff game,” Cole said.

They had one of the league’s top defenses, but quarterback Donovan McNabb has struggled without a running game to help on short-yardage downs.

Philadelphia’s solution? Just throw it. The Eagles had 18 third-down plays, and tried to throw on every one of them — even the three times they needed only one more yard for a first down. They went 0-for-3 on those short-yardage tries, and were 3-of-18 overall on third downs.

“You try to throw a couple of different things, and we weren’t successful,” said Brian Westbrook, run for 60 yards in his third straight subpar game.

The play calling is going to come under scrutiny after the Eagles settled for their first tie since 1997. They tried a flea-flicker that fell incomplete. They lined up rookie receiver DeSean Jackson in a shotgun formation during the overtime, and he flipped the ball to Westbrook for a 3-yard loss.

McNabb set the game on course for its unsatisfying finish by losing a fumble and throwing three interceptions, matching his career high. He set up 10 of the Bengals’ points with his turnovers. Then, the 10-year quarterback showed he needs some help with the rules, too.

He and several teammates thought they would keep going until someone pulled ahead. They weren’t aware that an NFL game could end tied.

“I guess we’re aware of that now,” said McNabb, who was 28-of-58 for 339 yards. “In college, there are multiple overtimes, and in high school and Pop Warner. I never knew in the professional ranks it would end that way. I hate to see what would happen in the Super Bowl and the playoffs.”

Uh, Donovan? They play those until someone wins.

Moving on to the Bengals ... Graham had missed only one attempt between 40-49 yards this season, but his kick from 47 yards away was long enough, but drifted inches wide of the right upright with 7 seconds left.

“There’s not much to say,” Graham said. “Just a lot of disappointment.”

The Bengals have long been out of contention, so this was just another bad afternoon in a series of them. The Eagles had a lot at stake.

“We were treating this like a playoff game,” Cole said.

Not really. Those don’t end in ties.

Sixers are winning despite empty seats

By The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The Philadelphia 76ers expended quite a bit of energy in overcoming a 26-point deficit in their victory at Indiana.

Yet they still had plenty of pep one night later.

Thaddeus Young scored 23 points, Elton Brand and Andre Iguodala added 15 apiece, and the 76ers cruised past the struggling Oklahoma City Thunder, 110-85 on Saturday.

“We got some energy after halftime and built on it,” Iguodala said. “It was a good win for us.”

Samuel Dalembert contributed 13 points and 16 rebounds for the Sixers, who won their third straight game to even their record at 5-5.

One night after staging a furious rally to win 94-92 at Indiana, Philadelphia had little trouble dispatching of the Thunder Young shot 10-of-15 from the field and had all 12 of his points by winning two in a row.

“The game was on, and had missed only one attempt between 40-49 yards this season, but his kick from 47 yards away was long enough, but drifted inches wide of the right upright with 7 seconds left.

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