



Faculty member helps save life

Director of clinical education awarded for resuscitation efforts

Page 4



MCCC alum set to host Visiting Artist Series

Sidney Robison
Agora Staff

MCCC is welcoming back the visiting artist series with lessons from a 2022 graduate.

Presley Bergmooser, an alum of the college, is scheduled to host the Visiting Artist Series in February.

Bergmooser said there wasn't anything in particular that drove her toward art.

"There wasn't anything specific that made me want to become an artist," Bergmooser said.

She graduated from St. Mary Catholic Central in 2020 and then went on to earn an associate from MCCC and graduated in 2022.

Bergmooser said she purposefully didn't go to art school because she wanted to get a degree dealing with the business side of art. She then went to Michigan State University and graduated with a degree in Advertising Management in 2024.

"I chose not to do the creative advertisement program because I wanted to learn more about the business side of things," Bergmooser said.

She said she isn't inspired by any specific artists, but she is inspired by the people around her and by street art.

"When I get inspired by something my favorite things to paint are always people," Bergmooser said.

Bergmooser uses two mediums for her artwork; acrylic paint and spray paint.

"I prefer acrylic the most because I love working with texture in all of my pieces," Bergmooser said.

She said she uses spray paint only for the murals.

"A majority of my work is doing murals but I also do things on canvases for clients, I do shoes, jackets, live wedding paintings and community murals," Bergmooser said.

"I think that there's a 'starving artist' trope, people think that you can't be an artist but I believe that we can all be artists," Bergmooser said.



Photo provided by Presley Bergmooser

Presley Bergmooser, MCCC alum, is set to host the annual Visiting Artist Series in February. Bergmooser graduated from the college in 2022.

Bergmooser graduated during the pandemic and said her experience felt different than everyone else, and having an in-person class was helpful and very transformative.

"The only art class I've taken was when I attended the community college," Bergmooser said.

er said.

Therese O'Halloran, assistant professor of art, said Bergmooser is working with the art club to put a mural together.

As for goals, Bergmooser said she wants to

stop hesitating with the ideas she has and really try to push herself creatively.

"Just create, keep creating and do whatever you can to get your work out there because the world needs your art and the world needs more of it," Bergmooser said.

Stand up for others, support your peers

Maggie Sandefur
Agora Editor

Growing up, I was taught not to talk too heavily about politics or the state of the world around us.

However, if there's anything journalism has taught me, it's the power of bravery and the strength we have in our words.

Whether it's been a column of Mick's about the protests that occurred at last year's board meetings or even pieces I stumble across from different news platforms, using our voices to stand and unite with others is one of the most profound things we can do.

That's why I am writing to stand with my peers.

By now, most of us have heard about what the Trump administration is doing to minorities all over the country. If you haven't, here's a summary: he is doing harm to practically any person who is not a cisgender, rich white man.

But these aren't just random community members we've brushed by in the store who are being affected. The people being hurt right now by the new executive orders are the very people we talk to on a daily basis.

Not everyone being affected may be a spouse or a loved one of yours, or even you. Consider yourself lucky in that case.

However, these are the people we work with, or who may come into our jobs if we work with the public.

People who sit next to us in class. The same ones who may lend us a pencil or let us copy



their notes or even join a club with us.

People who live next door to us. Who have homes and lives and families rooted on the same street we do.

People we may become best friends with down the line, or our old childhood pals. Those who we played with during recess or shared snacks with, if we were so kind.

People who provide our education, serve our food, answer phone calls when we need help, risk their lives for us every day, treat our sicknesses or perform surgeries when we're

in danger, deliver our mail, drive the bus, wash dishes we eat from, help raise future generations, take care of animals, dedicate time to wildlife, assist our parents or grandparents, create art, build homes, help put our loved ones to rest, direct or star in or even edit the movies we watch, make websites, stitch and tailor our clothing, create our technology, and even people who are just trying to make a difference in their community however they can.

People who deserve to be treated as humans, with respect and care and understanding.

Not all of these new changes from the Trump administration may affect you, but they do harm someone out there, and likely someone who has played a role in your life.

Let me remind you this: it is not only about how these changes could affect you; it's also about the fact that most people in this country are being harmed in the first place, whether we realize it or not.

Nobody should fear for their safety or the validity of their identities.

And not a single person should be denied basic human rights.

Everyone could use a little more compassion. All it takes is one look at social media or news sites to see that.

This is only the beginning, and as scary as it is, there's power in using your voice. It's part of why I love having opinion pieces and editorials featured in this paper. It empowers people. It makes them feel seen. It gives them a sense of unity they deserve, and shows they're not alone.

It's also why I will continue to feature opinions and editorials. It's why we continue to take stances. We are not only here to inform, but we're also here to provide our support to what we believe in.

Be loud, be supportive, help one another, show them the love you want in return, and don't let your voice be silenced. Have uncomfortable conversations. Challenge what you hear in the news if you know it's not right.

Take a stand and support your peers. It's the least you can do.

Trump works on making America hate again

Mick Valentino
Assistant Editor

I'm sure everyone has heard of Trump's more than obvious hatred for transgender people. His hatred, as well as the hatred coming from others as ignorant as him, is not new.

What is new, though, are the revocations of multiple executive orders and actions that Trump decided would somehow help this great nation. And more than a handful of these revocations are at the expense of trans people.

Executive Order 13988. Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation. Executive Order 14021. Guaranteeing an Educational Environment Free From Discrimination of the Basis of Sex, Including Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. Executive Order 14035. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce. Executive Order 14075. Advancing Equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Individuals.

He's signed an order restricting gender affirming care for minors. He's signed an order to ban trans members from openly serving in the military.

On top of that, an executive order

Trump signed on his first day back in office declares that there are just two sexes, which are male and female. If you've read any sort of science book that pushes past an eighth grade reading level, you'd know that is fundamentally untrue and that intersex people exist, but I digress.

These actions are an attack on the transgender community. There is no other way of looking at it.

We are, as a nation, watching someone fuelled by malice and power actively work on discriminating against and dehumanising an innocent and already disparaged community.

If you think Trump will stop at us, you're quite wrong. Once this wave of bigotry has been legalized and legitimized, another wave will come for other minoritized communities. This is only the start.

If you voted for him, I hope you told every single trans person you know that you don't respect their existence before slipping that ballot into the ballot box. And if you think you don't know a trans person, think again. They're everywhere. You've met them before. Probably shook the hand

See Trump on page 7

The Agora

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Editorial Policy

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Submissions: The Agora encourages submissions by anyone in the college community, including freelance articles, opinion columns or letters to the editor. All submissions must include a name, address and phone number for verification purposes. The Agora reserves the right to edit for clarity, accuracy, length and libel.

The Agora is a student-managed newspaper that supports a free student press. It is a member of the Michigan Community College Press Association, the Michigan Press Association, College Media Association, Associated Collegiate Press and the Student Press Law Center.

Story suggestions are welcome. Let us know what you would like to see in the Agora - it's your newspaper. Email submissions to agora@monroeccc.edu.

Two trustees sworn into MCCC board

Maggie Sandefur
Agora Editor

Trustees Kristy Svatek-Whitson and Linda Roberts were sworn into the MCCC Board of Trustees during the Jan. 27 meeting.

Svatek-Whitson and Roberts were elected during the Nov. 5 general election. Roberts earned 19.86% with 18,864 votes and Svatek-Whitson earned 14.73% with 13,986 votes.

Roberts and Svatek-Whitson were sworn in by Chair Aaron Mason, who was filling in for Judge Cheryl Lohmeyer.



Photo by Mick Valentino

(From left) Chair Aaron Mason swears in Linda Roberts and Kristy Svatek-Whitson after the two were elected in November.

Board suspends contract authorization for vice president

Maggie Sandefur
Agora Editor

The MCCC Board of Trustees unanimously rejected the authorization of an administrative contract at the meeting Jan. 27.

Curtis Creagh, vice president of Finance

and Administration, was included in the board's list of probationary contracts to be authorized. Chair Aaron Mason, however, proposed pulling this item from the consent agenda to revisit at a later time.

"I pulled it just so we could vote on it separately," Mason said.

Creagh's contract, if renewed, would be effective July 1 through June 30, 2026, according to the Board of Trustees' agenda.

Kojo Quartey, president of MCCC, said this doesn't mean Creagh has been dismissed — rather, the board will discuss the matter further at a later date.

"It doesn't mean that he's been dismissed, it's an internal issue that we have to deal with," Quartey said.

Creagh said he had no comment on the matter.

Trustees vote for millage renewal to be placed on May 6 ballot

Maggie Sandefur
Agora Editor

The MCCC Board of Trustees voted to put the millage proposal on the ballot again in May after discussion.

They voted on this at the Jan. 27 meeting, with nays from trustees Mary Kay Thayer and Kristy Svatek-Whitson. The vote passed 5-2. All trustees were in attendance.

Chair Aaron Mason introduced the topic. He said they could either put it on the ballot for the upcoming May election, or wait until either August or November.

President Kojo Quartey said even though the election was a loss, it won in certain areas. This included the city of Monroe, parts of Frenchtown, parts of Bedford, and the city of Milan.

Josh Myers, executive director of The Foundation, said the millage proposal lost by 2.65%.

Myers said if they chose to go with August, they would be losing a chance to get the millage proposal passed.

"You can't win an election you're not in," Myers said.

Thayer, who wanted to wait until August, said there needed to be band-aids put on the community before the board tried to put the millage on the ballot again.

"It hasn't been that long since our last election," Thayer said. "We still have a lot of band-aids to put on in the community, and I don't think from — this is almost February — to this being onto May, I think we're pushing our luck."

Thayer said the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act has done a lot in the community and she would prefer waiting until August or November. She said she wished they had more time

to get a truce.

Myers said the college is looking at \$1 million in technology capital improvements over the next two years that have to happen, and if they can pass the millage, they'll get that million back in their general funds.

Trustee Julie Edwards said she didn't want to miss the chance to get it approved in May.

"I just would hate to give up an opportunity, and if we were successful in a May election, we can focus all of that energy from an August and November election to other things that require our attention," Edwards said.

Heck's Market Food Pantry scheduled to reopen, change service process

Maggie Sandefur
Agora Editor

The Heck's Market Food Pantry on campus is seeing some upcoming changes, including going digital.

Josh Myers, executive director of The Foundation, said the food pantry will be moving from the S Building cafeteria to the Student Success Center. Now, instead of students going in and physically grabbing the items they need, he said there will be a link

that allows students to shop online.

Myers said once a student goes online and adds what they need to their cart, they can select a pickup time and will be able to pull up in front of Founders Hall to have it dropped off to them.

"So we've created an online portal where students can go on, do their shopping, set up an appointment, they will pull up outside of the Student Success Center, and someone from inside the Student Success Center will

bring their groceries out to them to their car, and away they go," Myers said.

Myers explained these changes at the Jan. 27 board meeting. He said these changes are being made for convenience and privacy, as well as better accessibility since there isn't currently a specific person working the market.

Myers said the space in the S Building will still be utilized for storage since there is a cooler that can store certain items, but the

market will operate out of the student success center.

He said he is excited for this change, and thanked those working in student success.

"I cannot speak highly enough about our student success team," Myers said.

Myers said there will be a grand reopening of the Heck's Market Food Pantry at 2 p.m. on Feb. 20 in the Student Success Center.

MC6 leader's vision for the future

Makayla Sorrell
For the Agora

Students surround a piano being played softly by Ashleigh Bentley, a founding member of the faith-based student club, the MC6, while a few sing along to "Never Lost" by Rita Springer.

The members of the Monroe County Community College Christ-Centered Community, MC6, know the words by heart and sway or raise their hands as the song moves them. The La-Z-Boy Center windows bring little light into the atrium as the MC6 group meets for the afternoon.

Matayah Hammill, the MC6 co-founder, starts the group off with a question. "What is an example of a good builder or a bad builder?" she asks.

The club members' answers vary from Bob the Builder being a bad example of a builder to Steve Jobs being a good builder. Good building is shown through building community, building a Christ-centered lifestyle, and building relationships. Hammill said she and her club partner, Bentley, started the MC6 in the fall of 2022 to help build a community for people in need.

"I had a vision before just to bring Jesus to the brokenhearted on campus and show hope," Hammill said.

Hammill said her vision is that MC6 continues to grow a deeper connection with each other and with the school while showing the love of Jesus. Since the group began, Ham-

mill said she helped organize several events on campus such as The Mystery of Healing, Conquering Shame, Seeing Yourself, and Meals for Haiti.

Mackenzie Ernest, a member of MC6, said The Mystery of Healing was an event conducted to specifically connect with the community.

"It was mental and physical help and well-being and like healing," Ernest said. "We did actually have one event that was specifically centered around people who are skeptical to Christianity and the religion."

Hammill said starting the club was a rough journey without much direction because the college's coordinator of campus events and facilities, Mary Lyons, retired in October 2024.

"It was up in the air," Hammill said. "All of the staff we contacted were wonderful, polite and kind and doing their best, but it was like the confusion of where we needed to go in order to find success."

Hammill said she worked with Lyons to establish her vision. Even while retired, Lyons directed Hammill to the right people to get in touch with. Hammill's perseverance to start MC6 is addressed by her professors and peers.

"She's just one of the kindest, most humble and most hardworking students I've encountered," said Tim Curry, faculty adviser of MC6. "She is an introvert who's doing a lot of extroverted activities."

"As a club, you have to have two events per semester," Curry said. "We've had as many as three or four."

Hammill said she and the MC6 leaders began organizing a project on Dec. 5 to help bring meals to people in Haiti. MC6 organized this event in the cafeteria so volunteers could pack meals into boxes to ship to Haiti for families in need.

MC6 partnered with a nonprofit missionary group called Lifeline to get meals to the people in Haiti.

"It's so difficult to get real help into Haiti, but it's an organization that's been there for four years," Curry said. "So they know the funds are going directly to meals that are going to school children that are in these buildings made by Lifeline, but it's run by native Haitians."

Hammill said MC6 packed 20,088 meals in 2023. In 2024, Lifeline split the meals to help others afflicted with hardships.

"This year, we are sending out the first half to the hurricane relief victims in the Carolinas because that's really bad," Ernest said.

Ernest, as a peer of Hammill's, also commented on her caring personality.

"Literally the entire time I've known her, if I had one word, she's so compassionate," Ernest said. "She just cares about everybody."

Hammill works as a student assistant in the Student Success Center in Founders Hall. MC6 meetings are held in the La-Z Boy atrium Lobby at 2:30 p.m.



Matayah Hammill

"We like keeping the structure of giving and teaching and being able to pray for people and for people to ask questions too," Hammill said. "We have more events in store."

Respiratory therapy faculty member honored for life-saving efforts

Sidney Robison
Agora Staff

Without a second thought, a spectator in the stands jumped into action to help save a man's life.

Angela Prush, director of clinical education/instructor of respiratory therapy, was enjoying her time at a basketball game between Jefferson High School and Summerfield High School when she noticed one of the referees, who looked like he was going to pass out.

"I saw the ref on the other end of the court and I saw him hunched over like he was out of breath and as soon as I saw him slumping to the left, I don't know, instinct took over and I knew he was going down," Prush said.

Prush said she was at the game with her daughter, supporting one of her friends on the Jefferson team.

"I knew what was happening from the second he started to slump I took off running," she said.

Prush has worked in critical ER for 18 years and she is an American Heart Association instructor.

Prush said she has never experienced something like this before while out in public.

"I've never had this happen out in public but in clinical, at the hospital, it happens frequently," Prush said, "this was my first true public emergency."

After the incident occurred, Prush said she was very calm.

"I had no idea that they made an announcement to clear the gym. I heard none of that because once I felt that he did not have a pulse, my instinct took over," Prush said.

Prush went to MCCC and graduated in

2002 with the Respiratory Therapy program. During her career, Prush has worked at Michigan Medicine, St. Vincent's, Royal Oak, Henry Ford Wyandotte, Trenton and Wayne county hospitals. In 2018, she went to teaching full-time at MCCC.

"My favorite part about the college is the students. I enjoy teaching people what I've learned over the past 20 years and pass on all the experience that I've had in those hospitals," Prush said.

Prush teaches 11 classes at MCCC.

"Time is the most important in those moments and the right people were there at the right time," she said.

Jefferson High School held a "hero award ceremony" on January 30 to commemorate each individual who helped during the medical event. Each person received a certificate

with their name, along with a medal that says "you make a difference," which Prush earned.



Photo by Sidney Robison

Angela Prush, director of clinical education and instructor of respiratory therapy, was honored Jan. 30 for helping save a referee's life.

Whitman Center coordinator comes full circle

How Rebecca Fournier found her way back to MCCC in full-time position

Maggie Robinson
For the Agora

As a student, she took a communication fundamentals course at the Whitman Center. Then, years later, she helped register that same professor of that class for a Lifelong Learning class.

Rebecca Fournier's communication fundamentals course included a demonstration speech as one of the projects. She did her presentation on wigs: how to take care of them, how to style them and how to wear them. Fournier said she greatly enjoyed being creative with her schoolwork. Fournier drew from her creative interest of cosplay to choose this topic.

Fournier earned two associate degrees from MCCC and has found her way back to the college as the Whitman Center's full-time coordinator last fall. Drawing from her creative interests has helped guide Fournier in her career and academic life.

Fournier said she took many of her MCCC classes at the Whitman Center. She said she spent a lot of time studying in the dining area, where large windows look out into a forested area.

Ken Mohnney, professor of anthropology at MCCC, was teaching classes at the Whitman Center when Fournier was a student. He said teaching at the Whitman Center was "very pleasant, but a different vibe."

"Administrators were always more accessible," he said.

Fournier says she likes being involved as an administrator at the Whitman Center. She enjoys being at the forefront of the Whitman Center and being able to hear about students' backgrounds.

Before becoming the coordinator of the Whitman Center, Fournier said she was an assistant of Tina Pillarelli, the director of Lifelong Learning.

Pillarelli said Fournier was working "as a frontline person" when she was with Lifelong learning. She was "the one students talked to first, instructors talked to first."

"I think she'll be great in that position," Pillarelli said.

Mohnney was one of Fournier's professors at the center. Fournier said she was an introvert, but Mohnney said "she was always willing to talk, offer an opinion but not just an opinion. It was clear she was thinking about her responses beforehand."

As a creative person, one of Fournier's hob-



Courtesy Photo

Rebecca Fournier poses for a photo outside of the Whitman Center. Fournier is the new full-time coordinator.

bies growing up was theater.

"Being in theater and the arts from a young age I used to draw a lot," she said.

Fournier said her interest in the arts was one thing as an employee of the college that helped her come out of her shell.

Different creative projects, like decorating the office for the holidays, were important to Fournier. She said it let her connect with others and see the ideas of her coworkers who all came from different backgrounds.

"I know I'm a creative person," Fournier said. "I want to express it."

Pillarelli said Fournier would add flair to her work in Lifelong Learning when she could.

When Fournier was a student of Mohnney's, he said "it was apparent she was going to do something good with her life."

And Fournier said she wants to go back to school. She is looking to double major in leadership

management and marketing at UT. She said she watched her close friend return to school which helped inspire her to do the same.

"I'm giving her kudos for having that cour-

age," Fournier said.

Going back to school does not mean Fournier has any plans of leaving her position at the college.

"It seems to be a generational thing that younger employees change jobs every couple years," Fournier said. "I'm done doing that."

Fournier said MCCC holds a special place in her heart. She wants to bring more activity to the Whitman Center and stick around as the coordinator.

Fournier has seen both sides of MCCC. Her experience with her communications professor showcases that.

"It was a really neat experience to go full circle having that initial relation with the professor, not just from the class as a whole, but also having that reconnection out of the blue," Fournier said.

"She was always willing to talk, offer an opinion but not just an opinion. It was clear she was thinking about her responses beforehand."

Ken Mohnney

Professor of Anthropology

One Book, One Community selection sparks curiosity, sympathy

Sidney Robison
Agora Staff

An exploration of loss and loneliness, “Remarkably Bright Creatures” by Shelby Van Pelt shows the emotions that come along with newfound friends and experiencing things at an older age.

“Remarkably Bright Creatures”, which is One Book, One Community’s book for this year, is about Tova Sullivan, the cleaning woman for the Sowell Bay Aquarium. She enjoys talking with the aquarium’s octopus, Marcellus, an intelligent creature who speaks directly to the reader about his captive circumstances at the aquarium. Marcellus learns how to escape from his enclosure and travels through the aquarium looking for snacks. One night, Tova finds him tangled in cables in the director’s office. Tova helps free him and Marcellus recognizes that without Tova, he would have died. The two of them begin an unlikely friendship.

Van Pelt’s portrayal of a small-town com-

munity and sensitive depiction of issues such as loss, grief, loneliness and aging were well done. Even though the plot is somewhat predictable, the story is well told. Marcellus is adorable and is a reminder of how precious our animal friends are to us, especially in moments of loneliness. The story makes you ponder over the state of animals in captivity. Though none of the animals in the book were harmed, you can’t help but feel sympathy for Marcellus when he feels imprisoned within the glass walls of the aquarium and misses his natural habitat.

While reading this book, I really enjoyed how the author put together the characters and gave them unique personalities and traits. It was interesting to read the story from an octopus’s point of view and how he sees the world. The drama between Tova and her human counterparts, Cameron, Ethan and Avery, was interesting and I liked how it progressed throughout the book. There were a lot of moments that I laughed out loud at.

‘Flight Risk’ offers turbulent movie-watching experience

Dalton Brown
For the Agora

“Flight Risk” is the newest movie directed by Mel Gibson and starring Mark Wahlberg alongside Topher Grace and Michelle Dockery. It is, essentially, a “one-location” movie, meaning that a majority of the film is shot in one-location. In the case of “Flight Risk” it is filmed inside of an airplane. Though, the beginning sees us in a cabin where Topher Grace’s character, Winston, is hiding.

Initially, we don’t really get much of a reason as to why he is hiding. But, whatever, the police find him anyway within minutes of the movie starting. Don’t worry though, the reason for his hiding becomes increasingly clearer as the movie progresses; as do many of its other plot points, too. In that way, “Flight Risk” is a fun, rewarding movie-going experience. However, this is arguably where the fun ends for most.

Personally though, I had fun for the entirety of this 1 hour 30 minute affair. But I don’t hate Mark Wahlberg, you could even call me a fan of his. He plays as Daryl, the pilot of the airplane. There is something not quite right with Wahlberg, though.

The movie does not do the greatest job at re-

warding us with the resolve. Without spoiling too much, “Flight Risk” knows how to build up to its key moments. I just felt like every resolve left me wanting more of an impact.

While the story itself is lacking, the action was rather epic. It was never anything too crazy or over-the-top, like we’ve grown accustomed to in films like “John Wick” or “Kingsman,” but it did just enough to keep me intrigued. The action is spread out rather evenly throughout the entire thing. There was even a jumpscare, which was completely unexpected. There really was no build-up to it, it just sort of happened. This was arguably the most impactful moment of the entire movie (aside from the ending).

Yeah, “Flight Risk” is, honestly, not that good of a movie. If you look online, you will see people bashing it left and right. Many are calling it “the first bad movie of 2025.” Even on Rotten Tomatoes, it has scored rather low (it is currently sitting at a 25% overall rating).

Now, personally, I disagree with the overall negative reception. I thought it was a fun time. But I do agree with most that you probably don’t need to go see this one in a theater. Though, given that our local theater is cheaper than most streaming services, it might be better to actually just go out and see it.

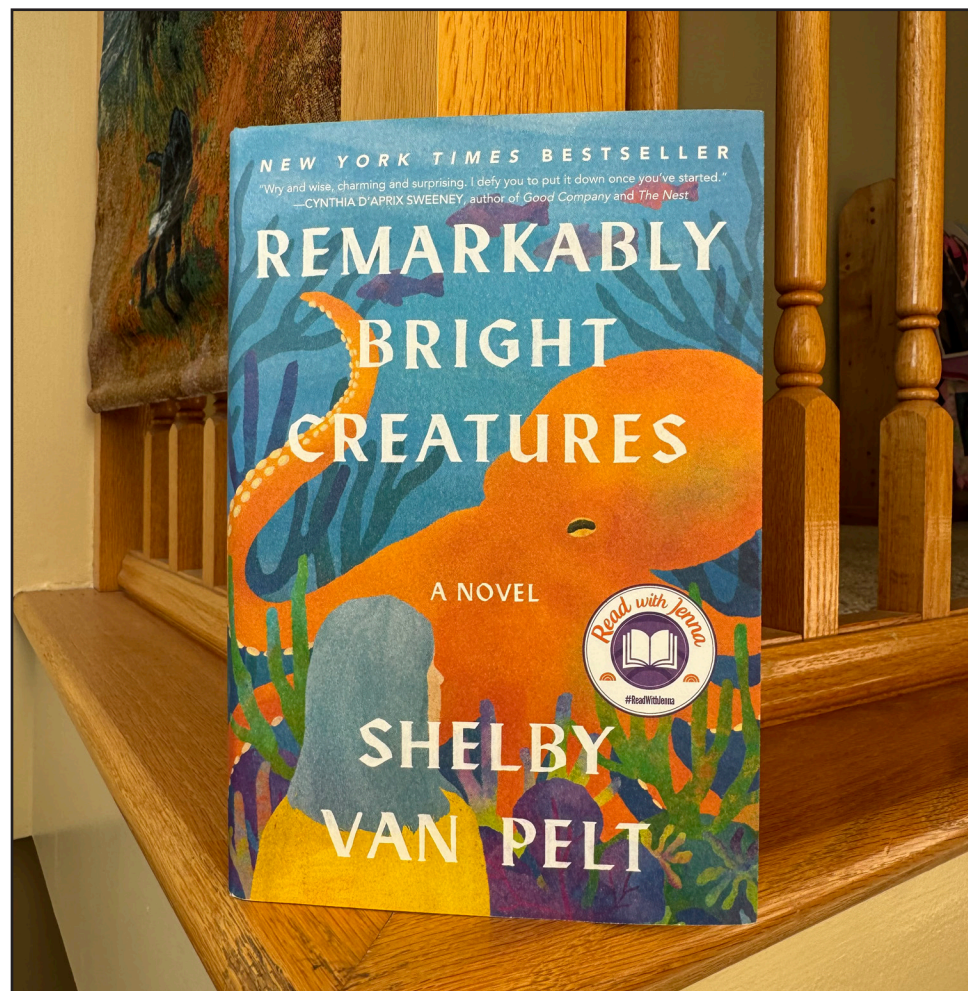
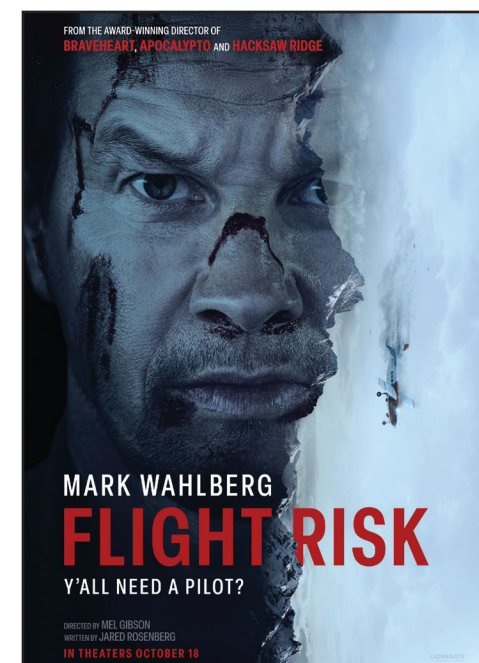


Illustration by Sidney Robison

Anyway, I enjoyed “Flight Risk”, flaws and all. I feel like fans of Mark Wahlberg will enjoy it, too. He does something a bit different here that I felt like was refreshing. I don’t think this will blow anybody away or anything, but I thought it was a nice, low-stakes thriller. It was a comfortable time at the cinema. And sometimes, that’s all I’m really looking for.



Rating: 3 out of 5

Rollbacks and revocations equal discrimination

TRUMP: from page 2

of a trans person at some point. I'm sure that's a horrific realization to you, though. To touch someone that disgusts you so much.

Why would you vote for someone so hateful? Why idolize someone who runs on venom and purposeful ignorance? Why do you want to see me and my community and other minorities treated as less than human? Where in your life did you start to look at us as lesser beings than you?

Are you happy with this outcome? Happy to see science being ignored? To see progress being halted? Are you jumping with joy at the thought of a social and cultural devolution? Ecstatic knowing your fellow Americans will be living under a constant shadow of uncertainty and fear?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then you are what is wrong with America.

Not trans people. Not queer people. Not immigrants. America is not being destroyed by minorities trying to live their lives. It's being destroyed by close-minded, backwards thinking, selfish hypocrites like you.



Our America. Land of the free. Unless you're transgender, of course. Or queer in some way, shape or form. Or a woman. Or left leaning of any kind. Or any color other than white. Or poor. Or anything that our president looks at as less than human.

MCCC hosts Unity Peace March



Photo by Dana Fracalossi

Kojo Quartey, president of MCCC, speaks during the annual Unity Peace March on Jan. 24 at St. Mary's Park. The Unity Peace March concluded a week of events that honored Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy. See the related video:



Staying warm and safe on campus

Dana Fracalossi
Agora Staff

As temperatures drop, it's important to know how to stay safe in the snow and freezing temperatures.

Before leaving to come to campus, make sure to check Brightspace for any messages from your teachers. If you do have to come on campus, this is what I recommend for staying safe this winter.

Dress in layers to stay warm. Having layers you can easily take off can prevent you from overheating. It's important to also wear the proper shoes. Shoes with tread are best when the sidewalk gets slick. I don't want you falling and being the star of the next LifeAlert commercial yelling, "I've fallen and can't get up!"

In late January, there were a couple of days of single-digit temps. When the temperature gets that low, it's a good idea to keep at least a quarter tank of gas in your car to prevent your gas from freezing.

On Jan. 15, everyone attending MCCC was sent an email reminding us to not park our cars too close to the sidewalk so the ground



crew can fully clear the snow on sidewalks and not damage our cars in the process.

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Annual blues concert scheduled to return to campus

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Agora Staff

The 38th annual Big Gig! is scheduled to return to MCCC.

The Big Gig is set to take place at 7 p.m. on Feb. 22 in the Meyer Theater. This event is free and open to the public.

Performers include Rev. Robert B. Jones, Sr., George Bedard and the Kingpins, and Nora Jean Wallace and her band, according to a news release.

Jones said Monroe has embraced blues mu-

sic.

“Monroe, in its diversity, has really embraced this idea of blues, people get excited,” Jones said. “We’re going to start off with the idea of early urban blues before it became electrified.”

Jones said The Big Gig! has many different components.

“The Big Gig! will have a group that is looking at how blues and jazz fused,” Jones said. “So all of these different presentations have a cultural, educational, but obviously en-

tainment component.”

According to the Monroe County Library System’s website, other events will be playing, all of which are free and open to the public.

Rev. Robert B. Jones, Sr. and Bill Harris: 7 p.m., Feb. 11 at the Carleton Branch Library.

The Brothers Groove: 7 p.m., Feb. 18 at the

Bedford Branch Library.

Creole du Nord and Cedric Watson: 7 p.m., Feb. 25 at the South Rockwood Branch Library.

Nikki D & the Sisters of Thunder: 7 p.m., March 4 at the Ellis Library & Reference Center.



Photos by Reese Bowling

Rev. Robert B. Jones, Sr. performs at the 37th annual Big Gig! in Feb. 2024, hosted in the Meyer Theater. Jones is scheduled to perform again this year at the Big Gig! on Feb. 22, and on Feb. 11 with Bill Harris at the Carleton Branch Library.



Rev. Robert B. Jones, Sr. performs with Laith Al-Saadi at the 37th annual Big Gig! in Feb. 2024, hosted in the Meyer Theater.

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