



The Renegade Rip

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BAKERSFIELD COLLEGE

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Recent school shooting brings calls for reform

By Melissa Puryear
Managing Editor

A local Bakersfield High School Democrat Club (Dems) student spoke on behalf of worried children, frustrated and concerned parents, families, school teachers and residents in Kern County on Feb. 19 at the corner of California Avenue and Stockdale Hwy at an assembled rally. Supporters rallied together to show solidarity in their demands for tighter gun law legislation, after Nikolas Cruz, a 19-year-old, took the lives of 17 children in a school mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida on Feb. 14.

Lucy Brown, a member of the BHS Young Democrat Club (Dems), was accompanied by her supporters on a two-mile stretch on Feb. 19, supporters holding signs that demonstrated their angst about current gun laws that make obtaining a gun easier than it should be, and allowing assault rifles, that do not serve purposes of self-defense, to be easily accessible and more commonly a weapon of choice against innocent children and people. The group made their way from the 4900 block of California Avenue to the corner of Stockdale Highway and California Avenue, where Brown addressed those in attendance.

Brown expressed her worries for the students who had suffered in Florida, for the safety of local students, including herself, her mother, and her unrelenting demand for legislators, to



MELISSA PURYEAR / THE RIP

Taft College student Ali Moore shows support for gun reform.

see changes in gun legislation laws that will lead to preventing senseless mass shootings.

"On Saturday morning when I woke up I listened to a very impassioned speech by Emma Gonzales and she was one of the survivors of the Florida shooting and it's hard to watch something like that on T.V. and watch people that are my age going through something so terrible and not put yourself in that situation. One of my favorite places to be is at

my school. Listening to how worried my mother was, dropping me off the Friday after the shooting, was one of the worst things I've had to listen to in a while. I shouldn't feel nervous going into a place where I'm supposed to learn safely," Brown said to the crowd.

She has every right to be nervous. It has been widely reported that AR-15-style rifles have increasingly appeared in American mass shootings, including Aurora Colorado, Newton Massachusetts, San Bernardino California, Orlando Florida, Las Vegas Nevada, Sutherland Springs Texas and recently Parkland Florida.

It's what motivated Brown to get the word out.

Brown's supporters had plenty to say about what kind of change they would like to see. They voiced their concerns about current gun laws which make school students vulnerable in their classrooms and they said "enough is enough."

They want legislators to be more proactive about gun legislation by making it harder for those who shouldn't have guns, to get them, and to make these kinds of assault rifles and other assault weapons unattainable.

Many of the students and adults who marched weren't opposed to owning guns. In fact, many were very open about being gun owners. They said they Fwant responsible gun laws. They want to see weapons that are designed to kill, like semi-automatic weapons, banned.



MELISSA PURYEAR / THE RIP

Women with Moms Demand Action at the recent gun rally.

Cheyanne Farley, a former Bakersfield College student who attended the rally demonstration and is a gun owner herself, demands responsible gun laws. She said, "as a gun owner I'm 100 percent in favor of hand guns, hunting weapons, long guns, but there is no need for any civilian to have maximum capacity ammo-mags and AR Semi-automatic rifles. Those are weapons of mass causality. They are not for self-defense. They are weapons of war. We've had too many

murders, all with semi-automatic, automatic weapons in schools. No more ARs."

As far as her thoughts about what triggered Cruz, the shooter in Florida, "It doesn't matter. It absolutely doesn't matter. He could have a broken heart. He can have a broken mind. He could be a broken child. He doesn't get to slaughter people in school."

Chris Crane, a BHS school educator and advisor for the Dems, who also attended the rally said that he was participating because his student [Brown] organized the event. He said, "they are scared," and he wants something to be done about it.

"As a teacher I hear it every day about how they're scared. This is the breaking point. We're done. Enough is enough."

Crane wants Congressman Kevin McCarthy to take action. That action to Crane would begin with addressing assault rifles and sporting rifle regulations. "They belong at the range."

He went on to say, "Democrats are not against home security, we understand people need hand guns and shot guns to protect themselves. But assault rifles need to go to the gun range. Republicans are inactive on any kind of gun policies. It's clear that we need some changes and this is not happening with McCarthy and it probably won't be happening with Trump for a while."

Kat Gontijo, a junior at BHS and

president of the Dems, said, "Going to school on Friday after what happened on Wednesday [in Florida] was terrifying and especially what happened at Foothill, with the bullets being planted in the sink and Kern High School District did not say anything about it or showing any concern for our students, very much worries me. We [Americans] fail to recognize that gun violence is a real issue in America and mental illness is one of the problems that also occurs in America. We need to focus on controlling everything that's going on and we should feel safe on campus."

She said that obtaining a weapon should require "more frequent background checks."

Sofia Lepe-koharchick, a Fruitvale Jr. High student said, "the shooting could have been prevented if we had gun safety, and if we had stricter laws on guns and have a higher background check. I think that we have failed to protect our schools by someone easily getting a gun and can just as easily walk onto campus and harm the students."

Alli Moore, a Taft College student said, "Violence in school is not okay. I should feel safe in the classroom setting. I shouldn't have to keep looking at the door making sure no one is going to shoot me. Change something. Do something. Stop letting people put money in your [legislators] pocket and sit idly

Please see GUN RALLY, Page 7

Career Expo helps students

By Miranda Defoor
Reporter

Kern County Career Expo held the first annual career event at the Rabobank Convention Center.

Thousands of students and their parents came out to the open and free event aimed at current students and recent graduates on Feb. 22.

The career expo was created to help students learn about different career options and fields with growing job availability in Bakersfield and Kern County. It also aimed to help students know what type of education they may need for a specific career or field.

The Kern High School District put together the event with assistance from the Bakersfield College Career Expo Committee.

The Career Expo focused on identifying one of 15 pathways in Kern County for students who are interested in different career fields, unlike a job fair in which attendees bring resumes and hope to leave with a job.

The career pathways available at BC are Agriculture and Natural Resources, Arts, Media and Communication, Business Management and Information Technology, Engineering and Industrial Technology, Health



The Rabobank Convention Center had booths and vendors during the first annual Career Expo.

Services, and Public and Human Services.

Different businesses and employers like Halliburton, Golden Empire Transit, American Airlines, Dollar General, California Highway Patrol, Bakersfield Police Department and Kern County Human Resources had booths set up at the expo. BC, Cal State University Bakersfield, Bakersfield Adult School, and Brightwood College had booths as well.

The idea was developed from Brian Miller, an administrator at the Kern High School District Regional Occupational Center, along with a professional development committee. The committee attended a Fresno career expo and wanted to bring that type of career exploration to Kern County, according to Anthony Cordova, program director for Careers and Technical Education at BC.

The concept for the career expo started in October 2017 and took three months of planning. The concept was followed by marketing and advertising for vendors through December and January.

"The intent is not to get jobs or for vendors to be hiring," Cordova said. "We want to have students explore what careers they may enjoy."

Along with the entire convention

center of booths and vendors, there were outdoor vendors and demonstrations like the Bakersfield Police Department SWAT and Kern County Fire Department fire truck, as well as activities and a workshop.

Each attendee was given a booklet with three activities: a scavenger hunt, a making connections challenge, and a career expo survey. By completing the activities, students were able to get raffle tickets to win prizes later. Students were incentivized to go to the workshop because they would gain another, extra, raffle ticket.

The 15 minute workshop about career preparedness was held in the Marriott, in a room that could hold 80 people for each session of the workshop.

During the workshop volunteers taught the attendees about making a good first impression. The volunteers explained the venue map and had suggestions for what students could ask different employers to make connections with them. Each career preparedness workshop taught the students how to have the confidence to make these impressions and connections with future employers or educators.

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Along with the entire convention

Local veterans invited to adopt and play with dogs at Paws for Patriots

By Jenny Brito
Web & Social Media Editor

"Paws for Patriots," a Veterans Dog Adoption & Resource Fair, gave veterans a helping paw by allowing them to adopt a dog for free on Feb. 17 on Union Ave.

Assemblymember Rudy Salas partnered with the Kern County Veterans Service Department and Marley's Mutts Dog Rescue to provide a space where veterans could discuss legislative issues while interacting with canine companions.

Veterans and active service members in attendance were able to play with dogs from Marley's Mutts and to adopt at no cost.

Marley's Mutts received a donation from Veterans Rideshare so that the adoption fee could be waived for veterans.

Brian Randall, from Veterans Rideshare, said that the primary goal of their organization is to help veterans get jobs and live normal lives. In addition to \$500, they donated 105 pounds worth of dog food to those

There were also several dogs from local shelters as well as others who are not yet ready to receive training. One of the dogs, Mocha, is expected to undergo training in the future. Training takes up to 50 hours, and it is provided by Sgt. Robert Villaneda of Marley's Mutts.

Villaneda spent five years in the marines. Now, he helps train emotional support dogs. He said that dogs made his transition from the military to civilian life more manageable.

After leaving the military, "a lot

of the things that the dogs needed

I needed myself. Like figuring out

how to adapt to society; that's some-

thing very important for the dogs and for veterans," Villaneda said.

He added that having a loving dog around can help anybody be better and be more balanced.

The event gave veterans and active service members an opportunity to meet Rudy Salas as well.

While he was at the center of the event, he explained that veterans were the main focus of the afternoon.

"Any time you have veterans dealing with like PTSD or any of those issues, having an animal at home,

somebody that they can relate to, actually helps them with their mental stability," Salas shared.

Throughout the event, veterans had the chance to connect with local support groups and assistance.

Organizations including Barks and Books, One Last Treat, and the U.S. Department of Veterans were present,

and they educated attendees about how they could receive help.

They also provided them with goodies and drinks. Lunch was provided by The Burrito Project.

Photo credit: JENNY BRITO / THE RIP

Mocha looks at the camera. He will soon begin his 50-hour training as an emotional support companion.

JENNY BRITO / THE RIP

Assembly member Rudy Salas smiles while he pets dogs at the Paws for Patriots event.

JENNY BRITO / THE RIP

Locals may be impacted by increase in gas taxes

By Melissa Puryear
Managing Editor

Bakersfield is already seeing an increase in gas taxes from last year's gas tax hike, and may be set to see more taxes in the coming years due to a federal gas tax and a local sales tax increase in its preliminary stages.

Already California ranks 6th in the nation for gasoline taxes. The national average according to the American Petroleum Institute (API), is 51.73 cents per gallon; That is if Congress approves a federal gas tax hike to repair infrastructure, roads and bridges, and if city residents support council members' potential proposal for a local sales tax increase.

Although California rank sits fairly high on the list of gasoline taxes for 2017, at 71.89 cents per gallon, California was not alone. Pennsylvania leads the gas tax at 77.10 cents per gallon, followed by Washington at 67.80 cents, Hawaii at 64.43 cents, New York at 62.70 cents, Michigan at 60.78 cents, and Connecticut at 57.70 cents, according to the American Petroleum Institute gas tax graph.

For Bakersfield, last November's gas tax hike signed into law by Governor Brown to address the widening gaps between infrastructure repair and California's lack of financial revenue coming in to address the repair needs, may now be added to President Trump's proposal to legislators, that a federal gas tax is needed to fund infrastructure repair needs across the nation, a federal gas tax that hasn't seen a facelift since 1983.

This would mean that Californians may see an even greater number of their dollars going to taxes in the months and years ahead, dollars which they may feel are being squeezed from their pocketbooks, given the most recent gas tax hike in California.

According to Bakersfield College student David Patty, 19, who commutes to BC and doesn't receive financial aid, is paying for his education working at a restaurant outside of the city limits.

He said, "the gas tax affects what you're spending and I feel like the tax doesn't properly go to where it needs to be funded. I think it's improper bureaucracy that's a major cause in the way our money is being misspent, being abused." Patty said that Trump's federal gas tax hike is, "horrible decision-making," pointing out the condition of Kern County roads, as proof of that. "Here we see horrible infrastructure. You see roads with potholes everywhere."

His solution to road repair, is to see results and responsible management of taxes being paid for the gas tax.

As far as potential increase in local sales tax, he said that the expense is unnecessary and that he believes council members are seeking to raise taxes to serve their special interests. If he has to pay increased gas taxes and sales taxes, he wants those taxes to be used for what they are intended to be used for.

Another commuter, BC counselor, Jonathan Shultz, 30, said he pays approximately \$350 for gas each

month. With two young children and a stay-at-home wife, any additional out-of-pocket expense for gas taxes is a concern. With commuting costs going up by \$50 with the gas tax hike in November, he is concerned that another increase could push his bill upwards of \$400.

BC Professor Richard Miles, also a commuter, supports the increase of federal gas tax. He said, "the infrastructure in this country is very important and there's a cost that has to be paid for that, given the condition of roads we have these days, obviously something needs to be done to improve them. I'm not a big fan of taxes, but this is one where I feel it's justified and would be supportive of doing, to fund better infrastructure in this country."

Miles was in favor of November's gas tax hike. He said, "just on the commute into campus here, the condition of the roads is really quite shocking and so there's a big expense that has been accrued because we just haven't taken care of our road maintenance. I'm glad to see something is being done even though it's not politically expedient for a lot of the politicians involved."

Miles addressed the alleged misappropriation of funds by legislators in previous years that has been said to create the disrepair of roads, he said that he would prefer a government with, "non-partisan structure between the level of the legislature that had some kind of oversight to the various regulatory agencies, and had binding authority, to call for improvements to be used for.

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MELISSA PURYEAR / THE RIP
Buyer purchases \$21 worth of gas at Circle K on Oak Street in Bakersfield. California ranks 6th in the nation for gasoline prices and the tax increase is still in its preliminary stages

and mandate what are too often mismanagement of funds and inefficient bureaucracies. Other countries do have this kind of oversight."

Miles also said that accountability for potential misappropriation of future funds from taxes collected depends upon people caring that it occurs.

He pointed out that government structures can be created, "but unless the majority of the general population care, these things go on."

As far as the potential for an increased sales tax in Bakersfield Miles said, "Nobody likes taxes, nobody likes having to pay more, but when you travel overseas and spend time in countries like Japan or countries in Europe and you see how they do provide a lot for what you're paying in taxes, there's so much benefit that can be seen if we just manage these funds efficiently."

It appears of the Americans that were polled by Gallup last year, they would agree with Miles on the federal gas tax increase to improve roads, bridges and infrastructure spending.

Americans largely supported Trump's federal gas tax that "calls for \$200 billion in federal spending over the next decade, combined with \$1.3 trillion in funds from state and local governments, as well as private partners."

If the federal gas tax is approved, it would raise a gallon of gas by 25 cents. The plan would increase the taxes on each gallon of gas at .05 cents, each year, for the next five years.

Energy Science Fair informs students

By Hector Martinez
Reporter

With the help of PG&E and Chevron sophomore, juniors, and seniors at Independence High School had an Energy Science Career Fair where they informed the importance of energy and careers to Lakeside School 8th grade students, the event took place at the high school on Thursday, Feb. 15 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

The sophomores displayed many carnival games related to energy and science in the gym. The games were entertainment for the 8th graders and helped the sophomores to teach them more about energy-related topics.

Sahil Bains, an IHS sophomore student, was displaying a game called "Need 4 Speed" at the gym. Bains explained that the game was meant for

the Lakeside students to learn about hydrogen fuel cells, which is an energy source.

How the "Need 4 Speed" game worked was that two players were needed. They both had to pick a toy car from several that were on the table. Next, after picking it they asked the players a question and if answered correctly the players could keep the car if they did not then they had to place it back on the table. Some cars had a piece of paper taped under it with a letter C written on it if any player got a car like that they had to put it back on the table. The player who collected more cars was declared the winner in the end.

Another game that was available for the Lakeside students was "True or False Toss." Romina Velasquez was displaying the game. "We painted water bottles black in order

to represent oil for petroleum," said Velasquez. The cap of the bottles had numbers written on to it, this was because each water bottle contained a different true or false questions related to petroleum.

"So let's say a player tosses a hoop on number five, we ask them question number 5," explained Velasquez. These were just two of the many games that the Lakeside students could attend in order to play and learn more about energy sources. IHS juniors had a different event going on for them. They were teaching the Lakeside students hands-on activities showing them the importance of energy and production in rooms 905, 906, and 909.

IHS seniors were displaying many expositions of energy-related careers that Lakeside students could obtain in the future and it took place inside the

cafeteria. Some Senior students explained the many different job options that they could have while working in PG&E. But one group was explaining the many different colleges that they could attend later on in their futures.

Harry Singh, Meredith Switalski, Harveer Singh were three senior that inform the Lakeside students about colleges. "We are just informing the 8th graders what community, public, and private colleges are and what the differences are," explained Switalski.

Switalski explained that her group had to research a little bit about many colleges in order to give the correct information. One of the colleges they were explaining about was Bakersfield College. Aaron Jacobson, teacher and the coordinator of the event, felt really happy that this event was taking place for the second year in a row. "We get a lot of help and support



HECTOR MARTINEZ / THE RIP
IHS teachers gives a warm welcome to Lakeside students at gym

from our community. People come and mentor our students and work with them, and it is just nice that our students do a little bit of the same for the 8th graders," said Jacobson.

Jacobson further explained that the Energy Science and Career Fair mainly focused to inform the students about energy sources and the careers that they could be able to find.

Bakersfield College's Department of Public Safety discusses increase in car burglaries near campus

By Jenny Brito
Web & Social Media Editor

A rumored increase in vehicle burglaries on Panorama Drive has had Bakersfield College students worried this semester. On Feb. 15, Christopher Counts, Director of the Department of Public Safety, shared his thoughts with the Renegade Rip on the matter.

Counts confirmed that there has been an increase in car burglaries since the Spring 2018 semester started. Most thefts, however, have been reported on Panorama Drive further west of the campus from River Boulevard to Manor Street.

According to Counts, as of February, "there have been two reported vehicle burglaries on campus and one petty theft from a vehicle where the student left the car unlocked."

He added that none of the incidents have occurred on Panorama Drive bordering the campus.

In addition, on-campus car burglaries have remained low. One of the reasons why campus parking lots continue to be safe, Counts shared, is that students and staff frequently report suspicious persons.

As soon as they are reported, officers rush to make contact with such individuals.

"I am pleased that our campus community is applying the saying, 'If you see something, say something, and let's do something about it.' With more of the community getting involved, suspicious activities and

crime will be reduced on campus," Counts stated.

Counts also shared that Public Safety is aware of the reported burglaries and are continuously patrolling the campus and surrounding streets.

They also stop more often and make consensual contact with people who do not appear to belong in the area.

Also, he commended Sonya Christian, the President of Bakersfield College, for her strong support of Public Safety and authorizing the hiring of two new positions within the department.

The two positions include a senior officer and an officer position.

"These positions will assist us with our primary mission of providing a safe educational and working environment for our community," Counts said.

When it comes to safety, there are several things students can do to enhance their personal protection. The first one is to be alert.

Counts encouraged students always to be aware of their surroundings, put phone calls on speaker while they walk to their car, and make eye contact with anyone who they feel looks suspicious.

He explained that, "By doing this, you will present yourself as being aware and ready for anything, and that yes, I see you and I won't let you sneak up on me."

Further, he reminded female stu-

dents that the department will be holding Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) training this semester.

Although trainers are only certified to teach women, next semester they will be certified to teach men, non-gender specific, and trans-women and men.

Regarding keeping their property safe, Counts added that people should always lock their vehicle and ensure windows are rolling up all the way.

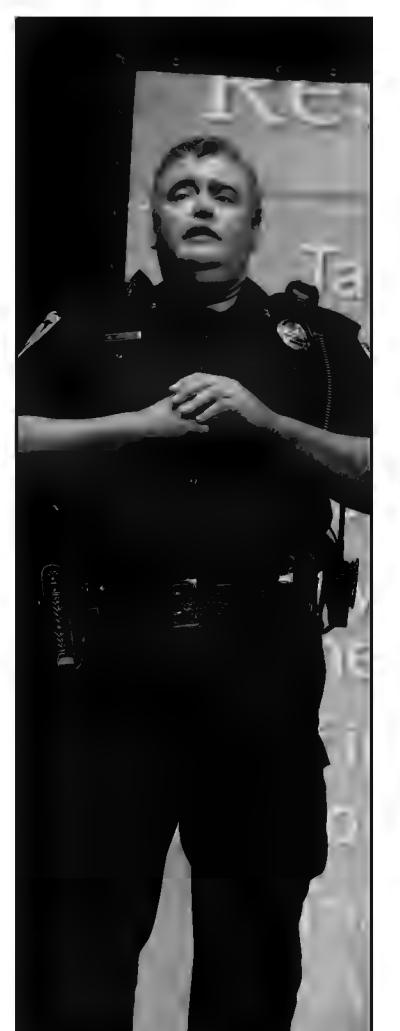
Also, he asked students not to leave books, backpacks, purses, sporting equipment, etc., in plain view.

"It only takes a few seconds for someone to break your window, reach in, and grab your property and walk away."

Thefts of opportunity are the most reported crime at BC. Although the increase in car burglaries has not affected BC's immediate surroundings, students must remain vigilant. Chief Counts recommended visiting the Public Safety website for more information, and he added that active shooter training will be offered in March.

"Since Jan. 1, there have been seven incidents with firearms in schools throughout the nation. That is an average one incident (not necessarily an active shooter situation) every six and a half days. Please join us at one of our Active Shooter trainings," he concluded.

For more information, students can call the Public Safety Office at (661) 395-4554.



ALEXANDRA APATIGA / THE RIP
Christopher Counts at one of the Active Shooter Trainings

Tastries Bakery wins court case

By Paige Atkison
Reporter

Judge David Lampe ruled in favor of Cathy Miller, the owner of Tastries Bakery on Feb. 5. The ruling allows Miller to continue denying wedding cakes to same-sex couples until the case returns to court in June.

The case garnered national attention after Cathy Miller refused to make a wedding cake for Eileen and Mireya Rodriguez-Del Rio's same-sex wedding. In 2017, the couple filed a complaint with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing. Following an investigation, the state of California filed a lawsuit on behalf of Eileen and Mireya Rodriguez-Del Rio against Miller.

The lawsuit alleged that Miller had violated the Unruh Civil Rights Act-a statute that prohibits discrimination on the basis of identity, such as race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Miller is represented by Charles Limandri, the president of the Freedom of Conscience Defense Fund, a conservative organization that provides pro-bono legal assistance to those in legal battles involving freedom of conscience. Lampe's ruling focused heavily on whether or not creating a wedding cake is a form of expression and therefore protected as freedom of speech.

"A wedding cake is not just a cake in free speech analysis," said Lampe. "It is an artistic expression

by the person making it that is to be used traditionally as a centerpiece in the celebration of a marriage. There could not be a greater form of expressive conduct."

"The difference here is that the cake in question is not yet baked," said Lampe. "The State is not petitioning the court to order defendants to sell a cake. The State asks this court to compel Miller to use her talents to design and create a cake she has not yet conceived with the knowledge that her work will be displayed in celebration of a marital union her religion forbids."

Lampe emphasized that this ruling does not promote or allow discrimination, stating "No vendor may refuse to sell their public goods, or services...based upon their perception of the gender identification of their customer, even upon religious grounds. A retail tire shop may not refuse to sell a tire because the owner does not want to sell because of race, religion, gender, or gender identification." Lampe continued to defend Miller, saying that she would sell pre-made products, but that she could not "design or create any custom cake that expresses or celebrates matters that she finds offend her heartfelt religious principles."

Since Lampe's ruling is on a motion for a preliminary injunction, it is not final. Miller may only continue to deny cakes to same-sex couples until the full case comes to trial in June.

The event “Global Connection” brings the world to Bakersfield College

By Jenny Brito
Web & Social Media Editor

Bakersfield College and the International Student Association will be celebrating world cultures and traditions in an event called “Global Connection” on March 13 at the Renegade Crossroads and Fireside Room.

The event will provide BC students, faculty, and staff with an opportunity to meet international students who are eager to learn about American culture as well as share more about themselves, their countries, and their traditions.

Shohreh Rahman, organizer and international students’ counselor, said that the annual event will bring the world to Bakersfield College community. It will also help international students meet local students outside of the classroom.

According to Rahman, the purpose of this event is to encourage and promote goodwill among students and to increase awareness and appreciation of other cultures.

“It is through education that we can promote cultural understanding and social development,” she added.

“Global Connection” will consist of two parts. The first part is the Cultural Group Exhibition, which will take place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Renegade Crossroads, Campus Center. Students will be representing their countries and share information with those who stop by.

Rahman encouraged students to attend what is expected to be a fun afternoon with trivia, games, dance, and international music. Students from different countries will be in charge of all the activities for the day.

As of 2018, “Bakersfield College’s international students served by the International Student Affairs Office represent 24 different countries and cultures,” Rahman said.

The second part of “Global Connection” will be dedicated to faculty and staff who have made a difference in the lives of international students.

The annual International Faculty Appreciation Dinner celebrates faculty who students feel have been particularly supportive during their stay.

“All international students have the opportunity to invite a faculty of their choice to this dinner and present them with a ‘Word of Appreciation.’ During this event, students will also have

a culture and country presentation,” Rahman shared.

Some students are excited for the opportunity to thank BC faculty, staff, and community for their support. Stephanie Silva, a student from Venezuela, shared that Bakersfield College has given her the chance to be another student and not an outsider.

“As an international student, I have always had issues with people because I am different, but at BC it’s different. I get to be myself,” Silva said.

The dinner is by invitation only, and countries that will be represented include Vietnam, Jordan, Palestine, Venezuela, Japan, Italy, and Turkey. It will be held at the Fireside Room from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Both local and international students are welcomed to stop by the Renegade Crossroads to spend some time learning about the world on March 13.

Rahman also encouraged those who wish to connect and host an international student to contact the International Student Affairs Office.

They can be reached at (661) 395-4652.



PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE SILVA / THE RIP

A group of Bakersfield College international students poses for a photo as they enjoy an outing.

Casino night rocks

By Hector Martinez
Reporter

The Women's Club of Bakersfield held a casino night in order to fundraise money to restore the Metcalf House at the Kern County Museum, on Friday, Feb. 16 from 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

The tickets to attend were priced at \$50 per person and all proceeds collected will go toward The Metcalf House. The president of the Women's Club of Bakersfield, Darleen Carpenter, explained that the tickets included dinner and \$300 in coins to start playing. According to Carpenter, this is the first time that they've had a casino night and were expecting a total of 100 people to show up.

Carpenter explained that the Women's Club of Bakersfield decided to help sponsor the event in order to get money to pay for the refurbishing of the house. She also shared two reasons why they decided to help fund The Metcalf House.

“We like the museum because it is in our neighborhood and seeing the history of Bakersfield is something we like. The second reason is that one of our members owned the house; her father built it and she lived there her entire life,” Carpenter said.

“We like the museum because it is in our neighborhood and seeing the history of Bakersfield is something we like. The second reason is that one of our members owned the house; her father built it and she lived there her entire life,” Carpenter said.



HECTOR MARTINEZ / THE RIP

The professional dealers prepare themselves before everyone begins to play poker later at the casino night.



HECTOR MARTINEZ / THE RIP

Audience at the casino night enjoy the food that was made for them by the Women's Club of Bakersfield.

Bakersfield College hosts panel about “Bridging the Racial Divide”

By Fitzgerald Graves
Reporter

Bakersfield College hosted a panel of law enforcement officials in the Norman Levan Center on Feb. 20 for a 2018 public forum about transformational policing entitled “Bridging the Racial Divide.”

This panel was coordinated and moderated by Public Safety/Criminal Justice Professor Dr. Tommy Tucson, in an effort to enlighten BC students and attending members of the public, about the initiative measures being implemented across the nation to build and re-establish the bridge of divide created by racism prevalent throughout various law enforcement agencies in California, as well as the rest of the United States.

The panel made it clear that the task of healing the amplified distrust of the police is extensive, advantageous and absolutely necessary.

The panel of law enforcement officials that participated in the public forum are Bakersfield Chief of Police Lyle Martin, Kern County Assistant District Attorney Scott Spielman, McFarland Chief of Police Scot Kimble, California Highway Patrol Commander Ron Seldon, and Federal Bureau of Investigation Special Resident Supervisor Agent Jose Moreno.

The panel of individuals were directed by Tucson to provide a brief

introduction to the attendees, which included each official’s name, current post or assignment, years of service in career, and their motivation to participate in the panel.

Tucson asked the attendees if they were aware that President Obama had established a President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing to address to citizen revolt occurring in cities and towns all over the nation.

Tucson said, “Many people are unaware that the 14th amendment was enacted due to slavery and for the purpose of solidifying the status of recently freed people.” This amendment most likely benefits millions of second generation Americans whose family may have been immigrants as well. After explaining the relevance of this and other amendments, being the cornerstone of Constitutional Policing.

Tucson dove into the discussion of transformational policing and the first pillar of this training, which is “building trust and legitimacy,” Chief Martin said.

“Police and the community is a statement of conflict. My goal is to remove two words ‘and the’ so that the community is the police and the police is the community,” Chief Martin said.

If you don’t have trust and legitimacy none of it is going to work and if people don’t believe in what your

doing then you won’t have legitimacy.”

McFarland Chief of Police Scot Kimble said, “When you get right down to it trust and legitimacy has to be there for a good strong relationship. That relationship we need with the community is so crucial.”

In reference to the first pillar of transformational policing, Chief Kimble and other participants of the panel discussed social opportunities to engage the public such as ice cream with the chief, coffee with a cop and other educational events in an attempt to enhance the public’s knowledge of law enforcement intent and operations.

The FBI SRS Agent Jose Moreno addressed the second pillar on Policy and Oversight and the importance this tier of the process plays in managing various issues in law enforcement agencies across the board. Moreno said, “If we interact with the public like they would want your family to be treated and consider all people innocent until proven guilty several issues would not arise, but remembering some people just don’t like us.”

CHP Commander Ron Seldon echoed his colleague’s statement, he also added that he himself had experienced law enforcement officers that used excessive force when interacting with him after being pulled over. This motivated him to become an officer,

along with his father who is now a retired police officer which Commander Seldon said, “I have a great relationship with my father, he was the best example of a good officer and I want to be just like him.”

He went on to discuss the Citizens Advisory Board that is made up of community leaders from the North and the South. They provide feedback by grading the departments practices and reporting to the state commission.

Commander Seldom said, “We have to look at several different things to make sure we are doing the right thing, it starts with our individual evaluation, we have to look at ourselves and make sure we are doing the right thing.”

“By starting all interactions with respect and dignity.” He said, “We must rebuild the public trust in law enforcement.” These collective agencies hope that implementing Transformational Policing will be beneficial for both, citizens and law enforcement officials by creating a culture of collaboration in an effort to create the safe productive communities.

Although some are hopeful that the current perspective toward police and other law enforcement agencies will change for those whom are law abiding citizens those who have found themselves or family members at odds with those agencies may never

reconcile. BC student Emily Edwards asked the panel, “Should those individuals who have been in a gang or committed crime (but would like to reconcile) have a pathway to do so?”

The panel had various responses, but Kern County ADA Scott Spielman said, “Yes there should be an opportunity for individuals to become contributing members to society again.” If they have removed themselves from criminal practice and interactions he further explained.

The panel participated in a Q & A after covering the majority of the pillars associated with Transformational Policing. They were asked by the moderator Dr. Tucson to leave the students with some strong words of wisdom as the forum came to a close.

Chief Martin said, “It starts at home, teaching the youth that dignity and respect has the capability to take you further than just having an education. Start with the kids.”

It is common knowledge that some communities have had a negative perspective on police or other law enforcement agencies and with good cause based on historical events.

The point made is that in order to build trust and legitimacy, the public demands discussion transparency and action for change that starts with communication with those agencies that the community views they’re in conflict with.

Self-love takes practice

Mental Health: For mental wellness and awareness

By Christina Benavides
Copy Editor

My journey with self-love has been difficult due to mental illness, but not impossible. I’ve learned a lot about myself the past few years. It took me growing into an adult, and finding the right mindset to achieve any form of self-love.

The best advice I have for someone who feels like they don’t love themselves is: It takes practice.

You don’t wake up one day, and love yourself. That is not how it works. I won’t sit here and lie to you all.

I have my doubts about myself all the time. There are days where I feel like I’m not beautiful enough or good enough. If you deal with a mental illness, then you understand how this might feel.

We have overwhelming feelings that lead to overthinking, questioning our worth, and emotional breakdowns. You can’t always avoid this happening to you. Sometimes crying is good for you, but if you’re crying over your self-worth, please reach out to a friend or family member.

I guarantee they can assure you of how worthy you are. If you have no one to go to, I recommend you call a mental health hotline. From my experience, they are incredibly helpful when you need that reassurance.

When I was going through all the self-hate in my teenage years and part of my adult years, there was one thing that did help me a lot.

I started to believe positive comments that others said about me. If someone said I was wonderful, then wonderful I was. It can be hard to find things you love about yourself, but write them down if you ever get doubtful.

What you do is create two lists. One side you write what you love about your physical appearance, and the other you write about what you love internally about yourself.

Making a list can be an eye opener. Do try to add to both sides though because it helps you realize what you do love about yourself at a time when you need the reminder the most.

Another thing I still do to this day is have “self-love days.” I call them this because it is a day I spend time on myself, whether I’m writing, taking bubble baths or bringing movies with a bowl of butter pecan ice cream.

If I need a little boost of confidence, then I’ll do my makeup according to the way I’m feeling. I wear makeup to express how I feel; don’t think you need to wear it to feel beautiful.

Feeling beautiful without makeup can also be tough however, you eventually get there. When I feel insecure without makeup I like to take care of my skin.

I noticed that drinking more water helps my skin more than anything. Also, invest in skin care products that make you feel refreshed. I recently started using rose water on my skin and it feels amazing.

These are all things I have done to make me feel better about myself. The most important part comes from within. You have to believe that you are beautiful and worthy of anything. If you have to repeat the words, “I’m beautiful and strong” when you are having a mental breakdown, then do so. I did. Do you think it worked? It sure did. I wouldn’t be giving advice on self-love if I didn’t love myself a little bit.

My journey with self-love is still going, but one day I will completely love myself.

I believe you will one day get to where you want to be with yourself. Remember it all starts with your mindset. You have the ability to love yourself.



Christina Benavides

Local author shares advice at writer's workshop

By Melissa Puryear
Managing Editor

The Writers of Kern (WOK), a local non-profit, which focuses on providing a support channel for writers to sharpen their writing craft, share their work, and network with other authors by attending monthly meetings, workshops and conferences, hosted member and guest speaker L.J. Martin, an accomplished writer and founder of Wolfpack Publishing. The workshop was held at Hodel's on Feb. 17. The subject of the workshop was Writing and Publishing Tips.

Martin, who was born in Bakersfield, graduated from Bakersfield High School and is a Bakersfield College alumnus who has authored western, historical, mystery and thriller novels, as well as nonfiction and screenplays. Martin shared advice from handling rejection letters, to how to host a successful book signing event, and how authors can sell themselves and their work by thinking outside of the box.

On rejection letters, Martin said, "If you don't get enough rejections you're not writing enough."

To Martin "Rejections are a funny

thing ... you think they [publishers] just don't like what you have to say, and that's very seldom the case."

He said most rejections have to do with inhouse publishing limitations. Things like a tight budget, "not having a slot" for an author's book, because the slots are filled through the year.

Yet, it's not the only helpful insight into the publishers' world. When it comes to getting a rejection notice and authors should take notice. When Martin sold his first book he received a rejection letter which read, "This book has no redeeming qualities."

Yet Martin, who admitted to sending his book to every publisher he could, said, that the very next day, he received another letter from a different publisher for the same book and it read, "This guy is the next Louis L'Amour." (L'Amour was a famous Western novelist with 89 novels to his credit, known as one of the best-selling authors of short stories, and whose stories caught Hollywood movie producers' attention.)

Different publishers responded to his work with two opposite opinions. Martin's point was that one publisher may overlook the potential of an au-

thor's work, while another publisher recognizes it, and so it goes, that the weight of the critique should always be balanced by submitting work to several publishers, and not to rest on one critic's assessment alone, as far as the value or potential of a writer's work.

Martin also shared some alternative tips on how authors can market their work. He employs both old-fashioned pavement work, coupled with technology, as well as reaching out to others who have expertise in a field that could gain him more exposure. He illustrated these points with some examples.

As an author he wanted to get his books into as many hands as he could, so he decided to approach Aafes [Army Airforce Exchange Service] with the proposition to do a book signing on a military installation. This bold move sold 500 books in one weekend.

The other example he shared was to enlist the help of an SEO [Search Engine Optimization] expert. Martin said that he offered this expert half of a percent of the sales he would make on his books in exchange for SEO exposure. After just two months, Martin

made 40 times the amount of sales in comparison to his exposure before SEO.

As far as the craft of writing Martin has some advice. He said, "The best advice to get started is just to write every day. You know if you write two pages a day in six months you got a book, that's two lousy pages a day. That's 500 words."

As far as submitting an author's book to a publisher, Martin said, "You damn well better be halfway into your second book when you submit your first one because they [publishers] don't want a 'one shot deal.' They don't make any money on one-shot deals ... They want that first book to do alright hoping that you will build an audience on your second book."

He said that the agent "better be convinced they can sell that book."

Martin admitted that he wasn't very patient when it came to waiting to hear back from publishers. So, against the advice common during the early years of his writing career, he submitted his work to everybody. This brought him to his advice on query letters. He said, "Writing a bri-

Please see KERN WRITERS, Page 7



MELISSA PURYEAR / THE RIP

L.J. Martin, a local author and publisher, speaks at Kern County Writer's Club workshop at Hodel's about writing and publishing.

South High School student's geometry art gallery Geometrix hosted at the Empty Space

By Issy Barrientos
Reporter

On Feb. 17, The Empty Space hosted a reception for South High School's Geometrix art gallery. Geometrix is the use of geometry to create art.

The reception was open and free to the public, but attendees could buy stills to support seniors taking the Advanced Placement (AP) Calculus exam.

For \$15, one could buy a star piece or a replica of the Wood Lion, or for \$10 one could buy a still.

Marti Hoyt, a math teacher said that this is the first art show, and that the reception was a chance for the public to meet with the artist.

She also noted that the public "usually just sees the artwork when there are plays."

When one thinks of the word art one might think of paints and canvases. The art in this exhibit was made with strings and nails, another art

piece was made entirely out of pencils and rubber bands, and there was a lion etched on wood.

Gregory Wattonville, another math teacher, commented on how the classrooms are art galleries so they, "moved an art gallery into an art gallery for the event."

Wattonville said that they want "to get rid of the stigma around math." He also said that "the art doesn't take away from the education."

A few members of the community were present such as Jennifer Folkert who purchased a pointy star. She plans to put her memento on her patio where the flowers have not bloomed yet.

Kathym Merris, another member of the community, heard of the event through Facebook. She said that, "it's a great idea. It's awesome."

John Kennedy heard about the art gallery through the Californian. He said that he would have bought a geometrix painting of Vincent van Gogh without hesitation, but the

stills of that piece were all sold out. Another piece he had his eye on was 'Frozen Heart,' but the stills for that art work were also sold out.

He commented on how he would still be able to walk out with one because it is the piece that is on the flyer for the event.

Lisa Krich, public information and communication manager for the Kern High School District, was also present at the exhibit. She was accompanied by her two sons.

She brought them to show to how to "use something like math to create something beautiful. Brings a new perspective."

The art gallery is the first step for a more ambitious plan. This plan is to be a non-profit organization. Hoyt wants to start off this endeavor at South and eventually branch off to other schools.

The plan, Hoyt explains, is to go beyond AP exams and maybe college applications or unexpected fees. She said that, "we can do a lot of good."

Journalist Mark Trahant speaks about Native Americans at CSUB "Walter Presents" series

By Diana Coronado
Reporter

On Feb. 13, California State University Bakersfield's "Walter Presents" series welcomed their students, faculty, and community members with guest speaker Mark Trahant. He touched base on his thoughts and knowledge about the state of health care for Native Americans.

Trahant is an independent journalist who is a member of the University of North Dakota as the Charles R. Johnson Endowed Professor of Journalism.

He is also a member of Idaho's Shoshone-Bannock Tribe as well as former president of the Native American Journalists Association.

With his former experiences and observations, he shared with the audience members his outlook on the way Native Americans have faced the concept of health and illness throughout the years and in recent times.

He expressed his thoughts on how people are treated unfairly because of where they come from or how they look.

"For years, Indians have been seen as less important than Americans, they feel Indian lives are less valuable than Americans," he said.

An audience member asked about the benefits that native casinos have to offer their communities.

Trahant answers that where he comes from, they provide job opportunities along with health care benefits for them and their families.

Trahant also shared how even though death happens globally each and every day, news breaks worldwide mostly for a situation happening in America.

He brought up how congress is in charge of where and what money is used for and sometimes it is done unfairly.

He also mentioned a positive outcome of how the number of deaths has gone down over the past few

years in India.

He explained that in order to keep that number as low as it has been recently and for years to come is to educate native people about health budgets and affordable health care.

Toward the end of his speech he takes a turn into talking about how journalists are changing as technology changes.

"It was hard and expensive back in the day. 20 years later, stories were written through people's phone, yes it was faster and, in a way, a good thing, but people didn't realize old fashion papers were going out of business," he said.

He wishes to open up his own business one day to educate and help build up young journalists in their careers.

Trahant expressed his thoughts of how happy he was with the outcome of the lecture and how he hoped to educate more people about the topic of Native American healthcare and wellness in future discussions.

Renegade Struggles: Gregorio Castro

We all have a struggle, and every person has a different story. Each issue of The Rip will feature a student overcoming certain struggles to gain an education and better their life.

By Miranda Defoor
Reporter

In the summer of 2017, current Bakersfield College student Gregorio Castro, 35, tried to enroll in summer courses for the first time, after being incarcerated for decades.

Castro was incarcerated from age 16, when he was tried as an adult, until age 27, when he was free for a free month.

He was reincarcerated until age 33. During his time out, he lost his brother and was shot multiple times.

It wasn't until Castro met James Tompkins, another BC student who helped create the group on campus called Free on the Outside (FOTO), at an anger management course, that he thought things could change.

Although Castro's time trying to enroll at BC was a difficult one, he said after meeting Tompkins and becoming involved with FOTO, it became much easier.

FOTO is a small group with only seven members, but they are tight-knit. FOTO keeps in contact closely with each other and even go to check on one another when someone is absent from school.

"Some of us may have previous alcohol or drug abuse issues," and

some of them are on parole or probation, Castro said, so they keep tabs on each other and help keep each other motivated.

When Castro was released the second time, at 33, he wanted to change. He said nothing but strong will and inspiration from within will help to keep people from doing the wrong thing and staying off the street.

His inspiration this time around was his son, who is now 4. "If I fail, he suffers," Castro said.

He wants his son to be able to look up to him and he doesn't want the same life he led for his son and his family. Castro wants to be a positive influence for those around him.

"It is easier to give up than to do the right thing," according to Castro, saying that he has to have a lot of self-motivation to succeed because of his past.

"You have to overcome self-doubt and thinking you can't do it."

But no lack of motivation or self-doubt has stopped him or anyone he knows from FOTO.

"We have a lot more to prove to ourselves and to others. There is a fire lit under us," Castro said, "If we mess up, we go back to jail," he said.

Though there are people who don't want to see Castro succeed, as well

as those who think he can't do well based on appearances.

He said there is a stigma attached to being in FOTO and to being previously incarcerated.

Even one of his professor's shared with Castro that he didn't expect Castro to do well in the class when they first met.

When Castro started his first semester at BC there was a big culture shock. After being incarcerated for a long period of his adult life, and losing his brother after being released, he had a lot to get acclimated to.

"It was awkward for the first couple weeks," Castro said. "I stick out with my tattoos, and I'm tall."

But, he started to get involved in activities.

"Being involved on campus is a big thing. It keeps me from being on the streets. All the effort I put into getting into trouble [before], I put into doing positive things."

Castro is an activities leader for the Student Government and Activities, an Inter-College Council representative and said being involved turned into "a snowball, but in a good way."

Castro hopes to be a counselor for at risk youth and help younger students who may be in the position he was once in.



MIRANDA DEFOOR / THE RIP
Gregorio Castro, 35, Bakersfield College student and member of Free on the Outside (FOTO) stands in the BC courtyard after sharing his struggles about becoming a student after incarceration.

HBCU Caravant promotes diversity and academic opportunity for BC students

By Alexis Pedroza
Reporter

Historically black colleges and universities were in attendance at Bakersfield College campus on Feb. 12 in order to promote and provide BC students with diverse academic opportunities.

The Renegade Crossroads was filled with over 21 prestigious academic institutions during the HBCU Caravan that aimed to help not only African-American students, but all students as well.

Students were able to bring a copy of their transcripts to see if they could get accepted on the spot and even get scholarships.

There to help ensure the event went smoothly was HBCU Caravan helper, Johnathan Swindell who assured students that anyone can apply to these colleges and universities.

Swindell was also there as a part of an information booth called the HBCU Hub, where students could download an app available to both android and iPhone and take a quiz that places them in a college that would



Jackson State University recruiter engages in a conversation with BC students at HBCU event to provide academic opportunities.

best fit their interest.

This application also provides information on how to apply and list

important dates and requirements in order to better help applicants succeed through the process.

According to Swindell, one of the many advantages HBCUs have is that they provide an intimate education.

"They're very diverse," Swindell said. This gives students a higher chance of completing college and earning their degrees. Most admission personnel there were able to vouch for their universities and say that they have a family atmosphere for students.

The professors are experienced in interpersonal social skills and always reach out to their students in hopes to achieve their academic goals.

Swindell also went in depth with his current college experience, since he is originally from California he understands how some students might feel leaving home for the first time.

This event was open to the community including high school students and other college students. Gabriela Ariano, a nursing student and sophomore here at BC, shared her experience during the event. "It's a pretty good event so far," Ariano said. Although she doesn't plan on attending an HBCU she appreciates having other options that help her.

Another BC student, Christina Coloto, was there seeking information, "I recommend anybody interested in transferring to attend this event," Coloto said.

Coloto is also a nursing student and hopes to gain knowledge about HBCUs.

The representatives from the colleges were able to admit some students during the event. One notable student even got a full ride scholarship to one of the HBCUs, which was received with a round of applause and cheers from students and faculty in attendance.

The HBCU's provide numerous programs with a wide array of hands on experience that helps students build up their skills.

The event helped many Bakersfield College students learn and engage with these universities, many of which have a culture rich campus life. Since most HBCUs are located out of state it's crucial for students to feel welcomed and campus advisors help create a safe environment for all those who are admitted.

A live act

Professional Wrestling Culture: From a fan's perspective

By Karla Gutierrez
Photo Editor

When I was younger I always watched wrestling thinking how cool it would be to go to a wrestling show live instead of watching it from my television. Then that thought became a reality and I went to my first wrestling show back in 2009.

I went to a live taping of their show "Friday Night Smackdown" and it also included other shows like "WWE: Superstars" and "WWE: ECW." I was 11 years old at the time and I can still remember like it was yesterday that I got to see my favorite wrestler CM Punk go against The Great Khali.

Knowing that, I'm going to mention the pros and cons of going to a wrestling and how to prevent the cons from happening.

A pro of going to a wrestling event is going there to have fun. Professional wrestling is like live theatre and it gets us yelling and boozing at people who are playing a character.

The energy in the arena is electric from beginning to end. It's something a person can go to, and not think what's going on in the world or personal lives.

A con to this though is that it always depends on where the shows are at.

Usually Bakersfield has a very stale crowd, which I witnessed on Feb. 13 when WWE came for Smackdown Live. I got to see how the crowd reacted from the top seats for once, and I noticed that people at the top don't go as crazy as the people that have ringside seats.

Last summer, I went to a different wrestling company's show in Long Beach called "New Japan Pro Wrestling: G1 Special USA," and both days the crowd was never dead no matter how long the show was.

Cities like Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Chicago, or Las Vegas are where people want go and actually feel the excitement.

The second topic is seating. I have been from the very front to the very back to now the very top of an arena. I love watching and feeling the energy up close, so I always try to score front row ringside seats because no one is in the way of my view, and I'm close enough to be lucky in getting a picture with some of the wrestlers.

If that's not possible, I would rather get the top seating because the seats are inclined and it's actually not a bad view.

For example, when my brother and I are ready to get wrestling tickets and start getting seats like "Row D, Seat 5-6," we refresh the page or look for another section that is not as popular. Secret revealed!

It works very differently in other companies that rarely come here to the U.S because it feels like a first come first serve bases. If someone didn't get tickets, well they're out of luck.

For insistence, the company that is based in Japan, New Japan Pro Wrestling (NJPW), they are having a show at Long Beach in March that sold out in less than eight minutes with a capacity of 8,500 seating.

I felt like the Hunger Games when trying to get tickets. Luckily enough, my brother and I got tickets to the show.

Another thing is the people that go to the show. A pro about it is that most wrestling fans are some of the nicest people I have ever met. I've never been a very social person, but socializing with wrestling fans has made me meet people from Japan, England, New York, and Los Angeles.

A con to wrestling fans is that some fans are very stuck up, the wrestling community calls them "smarks." Those fans are the ones that think they know it all. They are the people that will not admit when they're wrong about a piece of wrestling history.

I always try to avoid them when going to an event because they can be jerks to people. As wrestler Zack Sabre Jr. would say "Wrestling is for everyone."

Reggie Williams hosts Gadfly Cafe discussion about "War: Causes, Consequences, and Costs"

By Sabrina Lopez
Reporter

Students, faculty, staff, administrators and the public attended the Gadfly Cafes event on Wednesday, Feb. 14. The event began at 12:30 P.M and was held at the Norman Levan Center, for a lively open discussion concerning this month's chosen topic, "War: Causes, Consequences, and Costs." This is the first of three open discussions that will be occurring throughout the semester and the topics differ from, "Truth: Objective, Invented, and Esteemed," to "Beauty: The Pursuit, Privileges, and Pressures". The host of Gadfly Cafes, Philosophy Professor Reggie Williams, opened the discussion with four main points. The first two points Williams spoke on concerned people and wars.

For example, he presented facts how "123 million people were killed in the 20th century alone, cause of death being directly from war alone." Professor Williams then specifies how "22 United States Veterans per



Professor Reggie Williams hosts an open discussion between those in attendance.

day on average commit suicide." His last two discussion points covered the amount of money being spent and war. He stated, "the UC systems ten campuses in total, including the

medical schools and facilities, annual budget for the 2011 and 2012 year was about 22 and a half billion dollars... and how the second U.S war in Iraq cost us two trillion dollars."

Which led to questions that Professor Williams mentioned would arise on a theoretical level. When is war justified? When is it not? What wars make sense to enter? What wars are implausible upon reflection, and why?

Those in attendance were quick to chime in and offer their opposing views on each and every question he pitched, which presented a dynamic dialog. The Gadfly Cafés was launched ten years ago by Professor Williams with some help from his two colleagues Jack Hernandez and Renee Trujillo. It has continued over the years due to their ongoing support. Any and all pupils interested on current and past issues alike are encouraged to join in and let their voice be heard.

"The point is NOT to judge, but to be respectful and honest, and put some different views out there, and then in a nice friendly and supportive way subjective the scrutiny," Professor Williams said. The following roundtable discussions will take place in the Norman Levan Center, on Wednesday March 14th and on Wednesday April the 11th.

BC Theatre Department produces a Valentine's Day performance

By Alexandra Apatiga
Editor-in-Chief

Students at Bakersfield College were given a surprise Valentine's Day Pop-Up Performance, courtesy of the BC Theatre Department on Feb. 14 on stage at the campus center.

The seemingly impromptu performance had students from THEA B2A and B2B, Elements of Acting, show off their acting skills in front of a crowd as part of their course curriculum.

Kimberly Chin, BC Theatre Professor for both B2A and B2B, oversaw the performance as she was assessing her students' skills while also helping "backstage" by providing cues and handling the music.

Chin explained that the pop-up, while at first glance seemed improvisational, had actually been rehearsed and planned as far back as January during the first week of the semester.

"When planning the syllabus, I realized our pop-up would fall on Valentine's Day and it just seemed like a perfect opportunity to give our students a gift of sorts for this day," said Chin.

According to the theatre professor, she had her students select monologues and song quotes that represented "love" in the form of heartbreak and joyous love. However, Chin emphasized that there are many types of "love" that exist.

"You have love between a child and parent, sibling love, love between friends, unconditional love, and so on," said Chin.

"What I had my students try to achieve though was the deep love you

might find between two individuals, and demonstrate both the good and bad – heartbreak and joyous love – while also sending a message that it's not the end of finding love."

Chin went on to explain that for her students, some who will be going on to pursue a career in theatre or acting, the pop-ups will serve as a huge benefit to help them develop experience away from the comfort of the classroom.

"I thought it was very brave of them to go out and do this," said Doepl, "I know I wouldn't be able to do this and perform in front of people, but I'm proud of my peers for doing this."

The class that did the pop-up performance, which ran for nearly an hour, will be doing another pop-up on March 14 in the BC Campus Center. Chin will once again be directing the performance.

"It's crucial that they learn to perform in any environment they might find themselves in or else they will be at a severe disadvantage when auditioning or performing," Chin explained.

The students who participated in the pop-up outside on the campus center stage read aloud quotes from well-known names like Socrates, and lyrics from songs such as "Baby Come Back."

During the event, students watching the pop-up like BC student Brian Ruiz thought the Valentine's Day themed performance was an interesting.

"There's always something going on at the Campus Center, it's a very busy area of school," said Ruiz, "Every few months there'll be some kind of performance going on."

Another BC student who happened to be present when the pop-up began,

Madison Doepl, shared that she had no idea that the pop-up was a planned performance.

"We were all just sitting here when people started coming up on stage and started performing," said Doepl.

As the performance continued, Doepl expressed greater interest in the themes and the student's performance.

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The Element of Acting singing "All You Need Is Love" by The Beatles in their Valentine's Day Pop-up performance.



The Valentine's Day Pop-Up Performance taking place in the Campus Center to entertain the crowd on Valentine's Day. More pop-up performances are planned in the near future at Bakersfield College.

KARLA GUTIERREZ / THE RIP

Movie Review

"Black Panther" was a success

GOOGLE IMAGES

By Alexandra Apatiga
Editor-in-Chief

Marvel Studios just released its newest addition to the Marvel Cinematic Universe. "Black Panther" debuted over the President's Day weekend to an astounding success, not that anyone is surprised.

"Black Panther" is a true gem in a sea of action movies and comic book

films that rely too heavily on unnecessary drama or action to move to plot forward. Normally character development is pushed to the side in favor of flashy fight scenes or diabolical villains that don't hold any weight for the audience. "Black Panther" is different in that it provides the audience a truly authentic world, with action that makes you hold your breath and a story that does justice for the

film's message and characters.

Even the antagonist of the film Erik Killmonger, played by Michael B. Jordan, plays a monumental role, as it is his actions that push the story forward. His message and ideas of how the world operates deeply affects both the characters and the audience in a way that I've not seen done in a very long time. Despite being the villain our hero needs to defeat, Killmonger comes off more as an anti-hero, believing his actions will help people. Sentiment audience members couldn't help but agree with given the evidence he had to validate his claims.

In short, the "Black Panther" presents themes, ideals, characters and views in a way that hasn't been done in a Marvel film in years, and respects the audience in presenting those ideas and trusting us to figure out what it all means for ourselves.

And that isn't even pointing out the fact that this is Marvel's first film featuring a predominantly black cast, with the main character T'Challa, being played by Chadwick Boseman, ruling as king over the fictional African nation of Wakanda. The world that director Ryan Coogler breathes life into is one filled to the brim with cultural significance, strong and memorable characters, a story full of tension and excitement, and themes that deeply resonate with issues our world, and our society, face even today. The film depicts the vibrant culture of Africa with colors, language, art, and designs that were inspired by real-life nations and cultures. Even more impressive was how positive and respectful the film was in presenting these elements, showing a way of life and detailing the history of a continent long viewed as "desolate." Since its release, the film has dominated pop culture and given rise in the empowering and positive portrayal of Africa and those of African heritage. The amount of representation in the film doesn't just stop at being black, however, but extends

to show a number of strong, solid female characters and parental figures who serve as an example for audience members.

A personal favorite of mine was T'Challa's younger sister and the princess of Wakanda, Shuri, played by Letitia Wright, whose brilliant mind shines as she holds the title of lead scientist within Wakanda.

All of the technology within the film was designed and built by Shuri, and we are shown just how creative and clever this young teenager is with every new trinket she builds. Everyone in the movie, even the supporting cast, has their own ideas, goals and attitudes towards Wakanda and the world, everyone save for the only two white characters. But this is no accident, in fact if I may be so bold, I would say the way these two were written to mirror the way many black characters have been treated throughout Hollywood's history; playing supporting roles to help the main white characters achieve their goals, while serving no other purpose in the film.

A brilliant and ironic comeback that works narratively and structurally, while also addressing Hollywood's problem of including people of color in their film when they aren't even important to the overall story.

Overall, "Black Panther" is a revolution not just for Marvel, but for Hollywood as a whole. It proves that people want characters that can stand out on their own, stories that hold meaning and relevance, and even villains that can affect and challenge heroes to hold themselves to a higher standard. Diversity in films is, even in 2018, still lacking but with the instant success of "Black Panther," it spells hope that the film has set a new standard for film makers to achieve. One that includes POC, an engaging story, and a celebration of ideas and people that connect with those of us who've seen so little representation in media. Wakanda Forever!

★★★★★

CD Review

Xeno-T satisfies my ears with joy

By Karla Gutierrez
Photo Editor

Xeno-T, formerly known as Topp Dogg, have made adjustments since their debut in 2013. They went from having 13 in the beginning. Now they have 5 members looking for a new start, starting with changing their name as of Feb. 20. The company gave them the name "Xeno-T" by connecting Xenogeneic and Top-Class together.

Their music consists of rapping and singing. A plus to that is their flamboyant choreography and style. No matter how many members Xeno-T has/had, they seem to make it work 100 percent of the time.

Presently they have three singers: Hojoon, Sangdo, and B-Jyu. Then have two rappers, Xero and Sangwon, that add the spice to the songs.

"First Street" by Topp Dogg came out in 2016 and it was huge difference in style of music when I heard it at first because this album has a lot of melody and some upbeat songs. In comparison to some of their other albums, their music was more aggressive and upbeat. At the time "First

Street" came out, they were down nine members in the group.

The CD includes a photo album and a collector's card. I got the album on Amazon, which was mentioned by reviewers on Amazon that a person can get "lucky" if they get the collector's card.

One of their most popular songs in this album is called "Rainy Day," which is a sad love song about a guy that is being emotional from his past relationship. He describes love as "a monsoon that comes and goes" according to the translation. In the song, the rain is a metaphor to describe the woman. For insistence, in the lyrics it says, "when rain falls on my lips, it feels like I can catch you..."

The song does go on saying that he hates the rain because it keeps reminding him of her and that's what he is trying to do.

A song that sounds like Topp Dogg is "Monologue." This song is very groovy and it always makes me want to dance. Although, reading the lyrics, it seems like the listener is listening to a guy's thoughts. In the song, it's very direct like, "You're just smiling, girl. Why am I the only one trembling?"

The physical copy of Topp Dogg's 1st Original Album "First Street" comes with the CD, a photo album, and a collector's card. I got former Topp Dogg member A-Tom.

What is this? Who are you to do this? You keep doing this to my heart."

When I got this album, I didn't know what to expect because "First Street" can only be available just by CD and I didn't want to spoil anything for myself when I got it. Though, the only song that I knew from this album was "Rainy Day."

Listening to it through a couple of times, I have to say I like their more aggressive and upbeat sound; for me, that's the Xeno-T [Topp Dogg] sound.

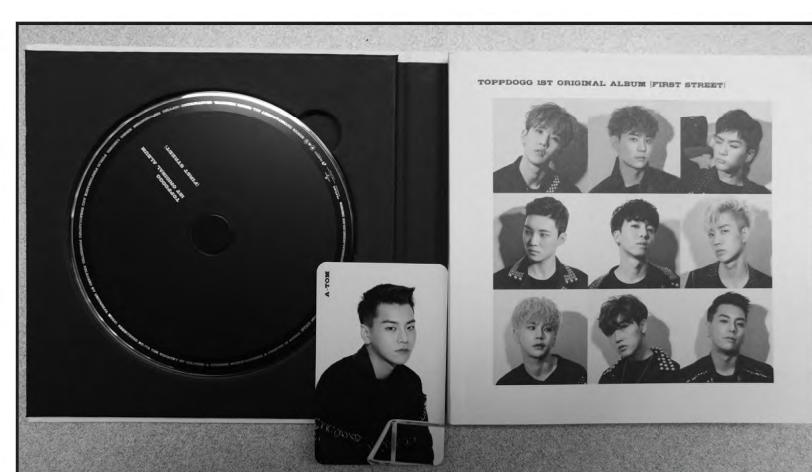
However, I absolutely love this album because I can distinguish the singers and rappers voices from each other in a group of nine instead of a group of 13.

It been since 2016 since Xeno-T has created music for their fans "Top-Klass." Nevertheless, Xeno-T never

stop trying to expand themselves in any way possible. All of the members took place in a show called "The Unit," a reality show, where only two of them made it. Hojoon and B-Jyu didn't make it to the finals, but showed their talent on The Unit.

Xeno-T is currently planning to have a comeback around the beginning of March in Japan for their "New Start" [that is what they are labeling it]. I'm sure that "ToppKlass" are going to be supporting them every step of the way.

★★★★★



KARLA GUTIERREZ / THE RIP

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Renegade Events

News

Bakersfield College is now smoke-free, and people are no longer allowed to smoke tobacco on campus.

Campus Events

- Mar. 01 - Sept. 30:** Partial Closure: CSS Building
- Mar. 02:** Active Shooter Response Training in the Edward Simonsen Performing Arts Center (Indoor Theatre) from 1-2 p.m.
- Mar. 03:** 2nd Annual Bakersfield College STEM & Pre-Health Conference in the Indoor Theater from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Mar. 03:** The Greatest Show in Bakersfield: Chamber Singers Broadway Dinner at Fireside Room and Cafeteria from 5-7 p.m.
- Mar. 06:** Spring Orientation at Forum 101 from 5-7 p.m.
- Mar. 06:** Tejon Tribe: Past and Present at BC Fireside Room from 3-4 p.m.
- Mar. 06:** Active Shooter Response Training - Multiple Sessions being held at the Edward Simonsen Performing Arts Center (Indoor Theatre) happening all day
- Mar. 08:** Reimaging Equality: Inclusive Communities in Post-Obama America at the Edward Simonsen Performing Arts (Indoor Theater) from 7-8 p.m.
- Mar. 09:** R.A.D. Women's Self-Defense Program at the Fireside Room from 1-7 p.m.
- Mar. 12:** Film: Dolores: Rebel. Activist. Feminist. Mother. playing at the Levan Center for Humanities & Delano from 6-8:30 p.m.
- Mar. 14:** Gadjfly Cafe discusses "Truth: Objective, Invented, Esteemed" at the Norman Levan Center from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.
- Mar. 15:** From Dream to Discovery: Inside NASA at the Planetarium: Math-Science 112 from 7:30-8:30 p.m.
- Mar. 16:** Spring Serenade: BS Concert Band and Orchestra at the Edward Simonsen Performing Arts (Indoor Theater) from 7-9 p.m.
- Mar. 19:** Spring Fling Easel Event: Frida Kahlo at the cafeteria from 6-7:30 p.m.
- Mar. 20:** Spring Orientation at the Forum 101 from 5-7 p.m.
- Mar. 20:** Future Teachers Open House at the Fireside room from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- Mar. 21:** Active Shooter Response Training - Multiple Sessions being held at the Edward Simonsen Performing Arts Center (Indoor Theatre) happening all day
- Mar. 22:** Distinguished Speaker Series: Dr. Lydia Otero - Mexican American Women and Historical Preservation at the Fireside Room from 6-8 p.m.
- Mar. 22:** Dynamic Earth Planetarium show at the Planetarium - Night Sky from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- Mar. 23:** Last day to withdraw and receive a "W"
- Mar. 26-31:** Spring Break (NO SCHOOL)
- Apr. 13:** Arte a la Fresco at Noche de Cultura hosted by BC M.E.Ch.A at the Outdoor Theatre

Off Campus Events

- Mar. 01:** Cinema Macabre: What Ever Happened to Baby Jane starting at 5 pm.
- Mar. 01:** Read Across America in the Ballroom at Four Points by Sheraton Bakersfield from 8-10 a.m.
- Mar. 02:** Caroline Cobb Bakersfield House Show from 7-10 p.m.
- Mar. 03:** Wild Child - A Jim Morrison & The Doors Celebration at the Elements Venue
- Mar. 03:** Future Teachers Open House from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 1450 Timmons Avenue in Delano, CA
- Mar. 10:** Sydney Bound Benefit Concert for the BC Chamber Singers at the Bakersfield Music Hall of Fame; the matinee starts at 5-9 p.m and the evening performance starts at 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
- Mar. 14:** 2018 Kern County Economic Summit at The DoubleTree by Hilton from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.
- Mar. 16:** Immigration and the Ethics of Sanctuary Politics at CSUB BDC 401D from 3-5 p.m.
- Mar. 21:** Counseling and Advising (Available in Wasco) happening at Wasco Independence High School from 2:45 to 5:30 p.m.
- Mar. 22:** Public Safety Open House Weill Institute at the Weill Institute from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Apr. 11:** 25 in 24 Tour at the Shafter Ford Theatre from 7-9 p.m.
- Apr. 21:** The 3rd Annual Medieval California Festival at the Kern County Fair Grounds

Compiled by Karla Gutierrez
Photo Editor



First place for newspaper in 2011, third place in 2013, 2014, 2015 for CNPA General Excellence

Ninth place for newspaper in 2016 for national Best of Show contest by Associated Collegiate Press

Second place nationally in 2016 for website publication by Associated Collegiate Press

The Renegade Rip is produced by Bakersfield College journalism classes and is circulated on Wednesdays during the fall and spring semesters. The newspaper is published under the auspices of the Kern Community College District Board of Trustees, but sole responsibility for its content rests with student editors. The Rip is a member of the California Newspaper Publishers Association, Associated Collegiate Press, and California Colleges Media Association.

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Letters should not exceed 300 words, must be accompanied by a signature and the letter writer's identity must be verified. The Rip reserves the right to edit letters, however, writers will be given the opportunity to revise lengthy or unacceptable submissions.

If an organization submits a letter as a group, it must be signed by only one person, either the leader of the organization or the letter writer. Anonymous letters will not be published.

How to reach us

- Address: Bakersfield College,
1801 Panorama Drive, Bakersfield, CA 93305
- Phone: (661) 395-4324
- Email: ripmail@bakersfieldcollege.edu
- Website: therip.com

CONTINUED

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The Renegade Rip | www.therip.com

Thursday, March 1, 2018

GUN RALLY: After the Florida school shooting, Bakersfield holds rally for new gun reform

Continued from Page 1

by:

She said that the greatest mistake we have made in America is to allow things to happen instead of changing things when they do happen. She said that people believe that mass shootings will stop, that "something will change."

But her solution isn't to sit idly by. It begins with policy change, not apathy.

"We have to do something different. I think it's definitely getting attention [at the rally] and attention is definitely going to change McCarthy or someone's going to see it and they're going to be like, 'ok, the people care, so we should start caring at least and start to do something.'

That something may be found in the Gun Violence Restraining Order (GVRO) law. The GVRO law is now undergoing some scrutiny and possible revision. Assemblyman Phil Ting, D-San Francisco will reintroduce the law with some updated provisions, to provide a wider coverage of safety reporting by others, when a dangerous individual is identified. The current GVRO permits only law enforcement and family to seek restraining orders against individuals who may pose a physical harm to themselves and others, and gives authorities legal possession of weapons that the individual may have in their possession.

But now the law will go even further should it be approved, to permit high school and college staff and faculty, classmates, employers, co-workers, even mental health professionals license to seek a GVRO against someone they suspect as being a danger to public safety through

their behavior, actions and/or threats, provided reasonable evidence can be submitted to support their claims.

It is the hope of California legislators that by adding additional members of society who are in direct contact with someone who may pose a threat or exhibit dangerous signs and tendencies, that tragedies like the one that happened in Florida can be averted in California.

But Ting is not the only trying to revamp existing laws. The original cosponsor of the Assault Weapons Ban, Congressman Don Beyer, who represents Virginia's 8th District, last week reemphasized his stand on gun legislation. He said that he supports "a wide array of gun legislation," and he will be reintroducing the Assaults Weapons Ban "in the coming weeks."

In an email Congressman Beyer wrote, "What is so different right now is that America's young people, those directly impacted by the tragedy, are speaking out to demand action from their leaders. To those of us in Congress who have been fighting for gun reforms for years with little to show for it, this change has shown a ray of hope."

Congressman Beyer has also co-authored the Gun Violence Restraining Order Act, which would give families and law enforcement a major tool to act on the red flags the perpetrators often display before making the decision to kill.

He explained, "Some experts argue that a law like this one could have prevented the shooting in Florida. This measure could also go a long way toward preventing suicides by enabling families to keep loved ones

from getting guns when they are in a time of crisis. Connecticut, California, Indiana, Washington, and Oregon have all adopted variations of this legislation."

He concluded, "Gun violence restraining order are saving lives, according to a Duke University School of Medicine study, without violating gun owners' due process rights, and I believe we should expand them nationwide. This idea has drawn recent support from conservatives, gun advocates, and members of both parties. The Gun Violence Restraining Order Act is something that I hope and believe Congress could actually pass. I will continue working to build support for this and other measures which I believe could save American lives."

Many of those who attended the rally could be heard saying that this is just the beginning.

They have no intent on backing down from the long legislative process ahead, to hold legislators responsible for making sure that when people are harmed or killed by assault rifles, they take action and push for change that will prevent those who have the ability to get these weapons are unable to get them, and then use them with the intent to harm others.

It appears that with Congressman Beyer and other legislators, this time, this tragedy just might stand out as a definable moment for laws and actions that can carry more weight for the people, that these legislators have been hoping for, and could carry the nation a step closer to protecting children, teachers, and communities, from those who could pose a threat.



MELISSA PURYEAR / THE RIP

Participants at the gun reform rally in Bakersfield had people on both sides come together for the goal of gun reform.

BC hosts YES Conference to help empower foster youth in Bakersfield

By Fitzgerald L. Graves Sr.
Reporter

The Youth Empowering Success or YES Conference returned to Bakersfield College for its third annual colloquium on Feb. 23. The event commenced at 8 a.m. in Forum 102, welcoming foster youth, foster parents, staff, facilitators, administrators and all advocates of youth. The conference focused on services and support for Foster Youth throughout Kern County for elementary school, middle school and high school.

In a collective effort to change the stigma associated with a child being in the foster-care system, organizations have been formed to tutor, mentor and provide strong genuine family/community support and resources. Youth who are identified as a ward of the state or under some form of judicial restriction or regulation, such as probation are selected to participate in events, meetings and activities like YES. The hope is that these types of engagements will change the trajectory of their lives from an At-Risk-Youth to a Youth Leader.

Curt Williams, the Foster Youth Director for Kern County Superintendent of Schools, along with many others, such as Ian Anderson, coordinated this event for 2018. Williams has dedicated his life to serving and creating a difference in this demographic of youth.

Williams who appeared pleased with the turnout and engagement that occurred at YES said, "We must first acknowledge that Foster Youth are the communities' children and that 'we' (meaning all of us) are responsible for providing them the love that they need (that they don't receive

from family-parents) to grow into contributing adults."

He also discussed the ongoing legislature/policy to assist and protect this vulnerable group of kids such as STRTP or Short-Term Residence Therapeutic Program. Youth needs are assessed and placement, as well as time frame is determined based on collected data. This step will prevent more vulnerable foster youth from being housed and instead being placed in a home.

The first activity on the itinerary was a lecture/open discussion, with keynote speaker Mark Anthony Garrett, who is a renowned youth advocate, motivational speaker and educational expert on various topics within Child Welfare and K-12 industry for the past 20 plus years. Anthony grew up in the inner city of Dayton, Ohio as a foster child, and like many of the student attendees at the conference, he faced poverty, neglect, homelessness, abandonment and abuse, both physical and sexual.

Anthony was not defeated by these adversities after being encouraged by his 3rd grade special education teacher "to never give up on life and always strive for excellence" he set a goal to get an education that would allow him to do the work that he know needs to be done for the future of every At-Risk-Youth. Mr. Anthony said, "Life begins with a breath and ends with a breath. If you can breathe you can win. He also shared his motto of HOPE or Helping Other People Excel/Help One Person Every day. After an empowering message and jovial interaction with attendees, students were released for a break and would later attend the workshops that they previously registered for.

There were many success stories shared during the keynote address that may inspire those in the audience to strive toward any goal set.

Tanaija Henderson, a West High student and recipient of a 4-year-scholarship to New Mexico Highland University, said, "Going through the foster care system changed my life on collected data. This step will prevent more vulnerable foster youth from being housed and instead being placed in a home.

Henderson briefly described the challenges she faced in Long Beach, Calif. while living with her biological mother, which seemed to be relatable to many in the audience who faced similar scenarios of neglect/abuse. Henderson's resilience allowed her to meet these obstacles and stay on track as she hurdled forward in life. At 18 she has a remarkable personality and confident mentality that will be of great use as she ascends to a higher education opportunity. When asked who inspired her the most throughout her educational journey she said that her school counselor Mrs. Coughlin was that "one caring adult."

The YES Conference is designed to provide a continuum of support to foster youth as they transition from one phase of education to the next. Securing the support these youths require come from many agencies and people who advocate for foster youth.

A few of those entities are Foster Youth Services, Kern County Superintendent of Schools, Kern High School District, Families Formed with Love, Quality Parenting Initiative, Kern County Department of Human Services and Bakersfield College. These and clubs like ART (Amazing Resilient Talented) from Delano give kids within the foster system an equitable opportunity to succeed in the face of adversity.

KERN WRITERS: Workshops, resources and guidance available for aspiring writers from author in Kern County

Continued from Page 4

lant query letter" is an absolute. It's what gets one's foot in the door.

On advice about author's getting their work edited, send out "lots of free books."

He said that it's what he did and he didn't copyright any of his work, because he wasn't afraid of his work being stolen.

"I love people when they stole my work, they can steal every book I have ... as long as they didn't take my name off of it. You have a market of 7 billion people ... you just can't imagine touching them all. If your book gets out there and you get some word of mouth off of some of it and somebody steals it, let 'em steal it. Anybody that gets your work out there is a good thing."

For authors who are timid in approaching people about their book, Martin's advice was to get a book into someone's hands and then follow that with, "...may I sign that for you?"

Martin wasn't short on helpful guidance. He said that a writer needs to finish the chapter with a great ending that pulls the reader to the next chapter, otherwise a reader will have the impulse to put the book down and that's not what an author wants when someone is reading their book.

Martin also said that he likes to check his work for repetitive words, words like "that" which he considers "the most overused, unnecessary word in the English language."

Janet Skibinski, the secretary for WOK said that this was a surprising tip for her but very helpful.

Brent Gill, a member of WOK and also an author himself found the workshop very useful. He said that he is working on a novel at the moment. One question he posed during the workshop was how an author who may lack salesmanship can find ways that suit them better in order sell a book during a book signing event. Gill said many writers find the thought of having to sell their own books "terribly, terribly difficult, it's not in their nature and if we are going to create a saleable item, we're going to have to sell it ... We're going to have to learn to use the methods that he [Martin] spoke of."

Joan Raymond, President of WOK said she "really appreciated Larry's honest advice about how we as authors, must be willing to be creative in marketing our work. I think it's good advice to break a novel into sizeable bites. Anything to get across that writing doesn't have to be a grueling experience, one just needs to commit 'either time in chair or pages on a regular basis,'" as Martin pointed out in his workshop.

WOK's next event is Writers of Kern Annual Spring Conference, hosted on March 17, at Hodels. The all-day event which will feature screenwriter Dave Congalton, publisher Ernie Zarra, revisionist Rebecca Langston-George and poet Brendan Constantine.



Paige Atkison
Reporter

Letting go of the idea of perfection

Student Sucess: Tips, tricks and practical advice for students

Paige Atkison
Reporter

My name is Paige and I am a perfectionist. I spend hours each day thinking about how I can be more efficient with my time, how I can do more with my academic career, and how I have fallen short of each of my self-imposed goals.

Each day I strive to reach perfection and each day I spend an unsavory amount of time in self-flagellation for my "failures."

But the truth is, the ideals I am trying to reach do not exist. There is no such thing as perfection.

Each person has their own version of what perfection is and those standards of perfection can vary within each person.

My own standard of perfection changes frequently, and yet I still continue to strive for perfection as if it is an objective standard.

One semester my goal may be to achieve straight A's, but once I've reached that goal I am no longer satisfied. So my standard of perfection will change from earning straight A's to ensuring each grade is above 100 percent.

In my own life, I am able to reach my standard of "perfection," but only for a time.

One semester I may manage to achieve above 100 percent in each class, but the next semester I will be so exhausted from over exerting myself that my grades begin to suffer.

Maybe you've experienced this too, whether it be taking on too many responsibilities because you've convinced yourself you have to or procrastinating on an important assignment out of fear that you won't be able to complete it perfectly.

We all may be able to continue in these unhealthy behaviors, but not for long. Eventually, we will fall short of our standard of perfection and begin to feel inadequate. This cycle continues until we reach the inevitable end: burnout.

The end result of chasing perfection as if one's life depends on it is not indeed perfection. The end result is self-hatred and failure.

Spending each day ruminating on how you've fallen short of perfection is not only unhealthy but counterproductive. Eventually you will convince yourself that you really have failed and that you ought to stop trying.

From grade school to college, I've fallen into this trap numerous times. Which is why my goal this semester is to let go of perfection.

Letting go of perfection may mean different things to different people, but for me it means trying my best without obsessing over the outcome.

If you're anything like me, this is a tough task to undertake. What if I try my hardest to study for a test and I only receive a B? What if my best isn't good enough? What if I cannot achieve my goals that way? Frankly, I believe that trying your best without preoccupying yourself with the results is the only way to achieve your goals.

When I look back on my life and tally how much time I have spent hating myself for not reaching perfection, I am overwhelmed by how many days I've wasted.

The time I spent deriding myself for "failing" never once led me to achieve perfection. It never even led me to achieve mediocrity.

The time I spent wishing I was perfect only kept me stagnant and too afraid to work toward anything. Perfectionism is paralyzing.

I'm fed up with being paralyzed by the fear of failure. Maybe you are too. Your path to abandoning perfectionism may not match mine- and it doesn't have to. But my path is simple, I'm going to let go.

CSUB professor performs in front of audience

Diana Coronado
Reporter

On Feb. 15 California State Bakersfield Music and Theatre Department welcomed former professor Cameron O'Connor as he shared his love for music through his guitar performance.

O'Connor is now the music professor at Oregon University

He opened up about how he had writer's block during his high school years, but as soon as he entered college, his level of confidence rose up, and he was able to write.

As he began his performance, he kicked things off with his personal favorite, "Prelude from E Lute Suite

BMV 1006A" by Johann Sebastian Bach. The audience reacted positive to the piece because of how soothing the melody was.

He continued with his next set, two scenes from the opera "Lohengrin" "Elsa and Ortrud Duet" and "Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral" by Richard Wagner.

The story took place in Germany during the 10th century in the middle of a wedding ceremony. With combinations of slow and steady beats, O'Connor brought the performance to life through his music.

His next set he dedicated to the famous Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco who wrote the music for the play "Rondo, op. 129" "Tonadilla on

"Segovia" and "Tarantella."

He mentioned how Tedesco was a Jewish man who fled Florence to come to the United States. He also shared that this upcoming summer it will be the 50-year anniversary of Tedesco's death.

He expressed how honored he was to have met his grandson a few years back.

O'Connor brought a few songs of his own. He explained how he likes to write in his free time.

They were a combination of three songs that are from "The Northwestern Scenes," "Fall in Corvallis," "Rain in the Old Growth Forrest," and "Winter Sun Again."

He then continues to express how

these songs remind him of home, Los Angeles. He shared how a big inspiration for these songs were thanks to nature.

He ended his performance with "Vals de la Primavera Maxixe" by Agustin Barrios.

He found it funny how Barrios wrote these songs in a Brazilian form/wording in order to please Brazilian people.

Jim Scully, the host of the event and a music teacher at CSUB, shared how amazing of a teacher O'Connor is.

"Students are very lucky to have him as a professor and it was pleasure to have worked with him in the past," he said.



FATIMA LOPEZ / THE RIP
Cameron O'Connor performs at CSUB on Feb. 15.

Comeback stopped short by Moorpark defense, with 9-6

Naythan Bryant
Reporter

The Renegades baseball team was defeated 9-6 by Moorpark College on Feb. 20. Moorpark's Leighton DeMello and Dominic

Ruggiero crossed the plate in the top of the first with the help of Ruggiero's single to left field. In the same inning, Renegades player Kamron Willman earned an RBI and set up Zach Williams to score on an error by the Raiders third baseman.

Moorpark extended their lead in the top of the third, driving the score to 7-2 by the end of the inning. Daniel Luevano and Jason Hyman each earned an RBI while Ruggiero's single to center field brought in two runs for the Raiders.

The game stayed scoreless for two innings until Moorpark's Luevano tripled to right field, earning his second RBI of the night.

BC's scoring drive in the eighth inning brought the Renegades close to a comeback but was stopped short by

Moorpark's defense. Konner Dodge, Colby Freeman, Ryan Darbee, and Brycin Hernandez all earned an RBI in the inning, bringing the final score to 9-6. BC pitcher Taylor Burns was credited with the loss, allowing seven runs, six earned. Moorpark player Jordan Berg was awarded the win. He faced five batters and struck out two with zero runs allowed.

BC currently stands at 5-10 in league and are set to play at Fullerton in their next game on Feb. 20 at 2:00 p.m.



Bakersfield College player Ryan Darbee, swinging for the fences in their game against Moorpark.

Bakersfield College takes the game against Santa Barbara College with a close-call score of 2 - 1 in last inning

By Miranda Defoor
Reporter

The Bakersfield College softball team won against Santa Barbara with

a 2 to 1 score on Feb 22. Pitcher Kylee Fahy is the current winning pitcher with three hits and eight strikeouts. Haleigh Hutton helped bring the team to victory after the tough game

against Santa Barbara.

The next Gades softball home game is March 1 against Ventura and the next away game is March 3 at Porterville.



Kaylee Hutton, BC Renegade softball player gets ready to swing against Santa Barbara.

BC wins conference game against Pierce

By Alexandra Apatiga
Editor-in-Chief

The Renegades faced off against LA Pierce College's Brahmas to play the conference opener on Saturday, Feb. 24, where Bakersfield College won 7-3.

This game brings their overall season to 6-11 and starts their baseball conference at 1-0.

The game's offense was led by Hector Ruvalcaba and Brycin Hernandez, with Ruvalcaba making one RBI and hitting at the plate 2-4.

Hernandez also made an RBI and hit at bat 1-4, with both players making

ing scoring a run.

The game saw BC Renegade Nathan Ortiz as pitcher for 7.2 innings as he faced 34 batters. This game marked his second win as pitcher (2-1).

Fellow pitcher Adam Brown also made his first save of the year as he covered 0.2 innings with no hits or runs.

The Bakersfield College Renegades are set to play against Los Angeles Mission College at home Tuesday, Feb. 27 at 3 p.m. Their next conference game at BC will be against West Los Angeles College on Tuesday, March 6 at 3 p.m.



ALEXANDRA APATIGA / THE RIP
Bakersfield College's Nathan Ortiz pitches against an LA Pierce College batter in the eighth inning.



NAYTHAN BRYANT / THE RIP

Bakersfield College pitcher Kylee Fahy warms up with catcher Naizemarie Ubay before their double-header against Taft College.

BC victorious in double-header vs. Taft College

Naythan Bryant
Reporter

The Bakersfield College softball team was victorious in a double-header against Taft College on Feb. 20.

The first game brought in a win with a score of 3-1, in favor of BC, as BC pitcher Kylee Fahy shut down Taft's offense.

Fahy faced 24 batters and only allowed a single run with 11 strikeouts.

Taft's single run came from Allie Dobbs' homerun in the top of the

second inning.

BC player Saidee Banuelos earned the Renegades only two RBIs of the game.

Doubles from Banuelos and Naizemarie Ubay propelled the Renegades to score two runs in the bottom of the sixth inning, which brought the final score for the Renegades, 3-1.

BC kept the bats swinging into game two in which Bakersfield College won by a score of 8-0.

Fahy pitched again for BC, this time with three strikeouts and zero runs allowed.

She was awarded the win, bringing the starters' overall record to 10-2. Ubay's homerun was accompanied with three RBIs as BC drove the score up in the third and fourth innings. McKenna Valencia had two RBIs of her own along with Ashley Hernandez, Haleigh Hutton, and Fahy who each earned one RBI.

Taft's pitcher Jocelyn Reyes was credited with the loss after allowing four runs.

The Renegades currently stand at 13-4 in league and are set to play Santa Barbara on Feb. 22 at 2:30 p.m.



NAYTHAN BRYANT / THE RIP

Bakersfield College player Aryka Chavez prepares for a pitch against Taft College on Feb. 20.



ALEXANDRA APATIGA / THE RIP

In the eighth inning, Nathan Ortiz throws ball to Hector Ruvalcaba to tag out a player at second.

WWE Smackdown wrestles it out in Bakersfield

By Karla Gutierrez
Photo Editor

"WWE Smackdown Live" on the USA Network had a television taping happen at the Rabobank Arena on Feb. 13. The doors opened with a near full audience at 3:30 p.m. This show included wrestlers like the current WWE Champion AJ Styles, current WWE Women's Champion Charlotte Flair, Randy Orton, etc.

The show started at 4:50 p.m. with a dark match [a non-televisioned match] with the "Perfect Ten" Tye Dillinger vs. "The Miracle" Mike Kanellis.

A dark match hyped up the audience before the actual show begins. That match ended with Dillinger being the winner.

Greg Hamilton then started the countdown of when they were going live on the USA Network.

Then the lights dimmed; they showed the promo that is always in the beginning of the show "Then. Now. Forever."

The show started off with WWE Superstar Dolph Ziggler, who has been off TV for about a month after a return in the Royal Rumble pay-per-view, waiting to face his opponent Baron Corbin for a chance to be qualified in a match for the WWE Championship at an upcoming pay-per-view called "Fastlane".

When suddenly Corbin didn't show up for his entrance and was shown on the big jumbotron being attacked backstage by Kevin Owens and Sami Zayn. After they were done attacking Corbin, they went after Dolph Ziggler. Owens and Zayn brawled with Ziggler all around the audience. Unexpectedly, Corbin showed up and put up a good fight, but wasn't suitable enough to handle Zayn and Owens.

It was later announced by Smackdown Live commissioner Shane McMahon that Baron Corbin was going one-on-one against Kevin Owens and if Corbin won the match he would enter the triple threat match for the WWE Championship, making it a fatal four way; that is four competitors in the same ring. Same stipula-



Akira Tozawa (black and white attire) tied up in an octopus hold by Mark Andrews (yellow tights).

KARLA GUTIERREZ / THE RIP

tion was applied for Ziggler's match against Zayn.

The WWE Championship match at "Fastlane" is a very important match in the card because whoever walks out of "Fastlane" as the champion will have a guaranteed spot at the biggest event of pro wrestling, WrestleMania.

After that segment ended, it was time for the women's action where Sarah Logan, being accompanied by the Riott Squad [which consist of Liv Morgan and Ruby Riott], faced off against Charlotte Flair. Though, Flair didn't come alone either. She was accompanied by Becky Lynch and Naomi.

The match went back and forth, but at the end Flair finished Logan off with her finisher "Natural Selection"

getting the one, two, and three.

Baron Corbin vs. Kevin Owens was the next match. Both of these men play a "heel" character, but the audience was cheering Corbin to win the match. This has not happened considering the fact that Corbin has been playing a bad guy since the beginning of his career.

This match had very high points that were getting the crowd into it. Corbin and Owens were alternating shots and moves. It wasn't until Corbin was thrown to the ropes by Owens and he stopped himself. Owens went to give him a "closeline", which got ducked by Corbin, and Corbin gave Owens his own finisher "End of Days" getting the win and entering the WWE Championship match at "Fastlane."

The next segment didn't come "outta nowhere" as Bobby Roode, the current WWE U.S. Champion, was looking for someone to defend his championship in his "U.S Open Challenge." Though he wanted someone in particular, Randy Orton. "The Viper" Randy Orton came out and had a stare down, that was until Jinder Mahal with Sunil Singh [valet] interrupted.

Mahal was just stirring the pot with Roode and Orton to get Roode on Orton's bad side. That wasn't until Orton had enough and did an "RKO" out of nowhere to Sunil Singh. A brawl broke out and was ended with Mahal giving Orton his finisher "Khallas." Mahal standing tall between Orton and Roode.

The crowd was more interested in

the segment with the New Day, a tag team that consist of Xavier Woods, Kofi Kingston and Big E.

The segment started with the New Day having more than four stacks of pancake trays, then have Big E partake in eating them in less than eight minutes to break a record. The segment was intervened by another tag team of Shelton Benjamin and Chad Gable.

Benjamin and Gable were trash talking to the New Day and saying that they don't take anything seriously. Then Gable offended them by throwing a pancake on the floor. Gable saying "Nobody likes pancakes." Shelton adding, "From now on, we're eating waffles," throwing the tray of pancakes off of Big E's hands.

They had a short match that ended in a celebration of pancakes as the New Day took the win in the match.

The main event was up and it was "do or die" for Dolph Ziggler. If he didn't win this match, he was, not only going to miss an opportunity at the WWE Championship, but also miss out of WrestleMania.

Sami Zayn v. Dolph Ziggler did have some people off their seats. The anticipation of who was going to win was felt throughout the arena. Then one little mistake by Zayn and it was all over. Zayn going for "Helluva Kick," which is where Zayn goes to one corner of the ring waiting for the right opportunity to give his opponent a big boot to the face. Ziggler dodges under Zayn, getting Zayn stuck to the turnbuckle and then hits Zayn with a big superkick.

Ziggler gets the win over Zayn. Pointing at the big WrestleMania sign after his win knowing that he will go on to "Fastlane" to fight for the WWE Championship in a fatal-five way.

The last match of the night was Tony Nese vs Drew Gulak. These two had a lot of chemistry and were battling for their spot.

Eventually, Gulak took charge in the last minutes of the match and was dominating over Nese. Gulak ended the match a dragon sleeper on Nese. Gulak looked determined as got out of the ring and held the vacant WWE Cruiserweight Champion.

Visit the www.therip.com for more.

a mix tag team from Raw [the other brand], playing the guitar. It was interrupted by the fan favorites Rusev and Lana, from Smackdown Live, where the fans chanted "Rusev Day."

This match lasted 20 minutes with some very crowd drawing moments. There's a moment where Lana grabs Elias' guitar and wanting to break it, but Rusev insist that she should break it and puts it down. The little thing that Elias did got the crowd laughing, which was he checked if his guitar still was in tune.

The match ended with Bayley going for a "Bayley-To-Belly" off the top rope and then Lana sliding under Bayley and dropping her on the rope. Lana getting the pin and her first win in WWE ever.

The crowd started to leave after the Mixed-Match Challenge, even though there was still one more show to go. 205 Live is a show that is for wrestlers that are 205 lbs. and under. Also considered to be called the Cruiserweights and known to do all the high flips.

The show started off with a qualifying match to see who will go on to finals to face off for the WWE Cruiserweight Championship at WrestleMania. It was Akira Tozawa clashing against Mark Andrews.

This match went back and forth between the two knowing what's at stake.

At the end, Andrews going for a "shooting star press" [180-degree flip from the top rope], but Tozawa moving out of way. Tozawa kicking Andrews on the head and going for the pin, but was reversed by Andrews; therefore, giving the Andrews the victory.

The last match of the night was Tony Nese vs Drew Gulak. These two had a lot of chemistry and were battling for their spot.

Eventually, Gulak took charge in the last minutes of the match and was dominating over Nese. Gulak ended the match a dragon sleeper on Nese. Gulak looked determined as got out of the ring and held the vacant WWE Cruiserweight Champion.

Visit the www.therip.com for more.

BC Women's Tennis Team has close call with SB Community College, 5-4

By Alexis Pedroza
Reporter

The Bakersfield College Renegade Women's Tennis Team went up against The Santa Barbara Community College on Feb. 13. The SBCC

won overall against BC in their tennis matches with 5-4 decision.

The renegades were able to pull off some wins in their single matches.

Kayleen Sanchez won her first game 6-4 and her second 6-1 against SBCC player.

Serena Contreras defeated opponent Gabrielle Goss 6-1, then again in third their third game with the same score 6-1.

BC player Brandi Borjon won two games with a score of 6-4, then 6-3. Chasidy Sotello lost her games to op-

ponent, Julie Kollandsrud, winning 6-1, then again 6-0.

The Renegades next home game will be on March 13.



ALEXIS PEDROZA / THE RIP

Brandi Borjon waits steadily for her opponent to serve.

Renegade Men's Tennis Team play single matches against SBCC, losing 5-4

By Alexis Pedroza
Reporter

The Bakersfield College Renegades Men's Tennis Team lost against the Santa Barbara Community College on February 20. The SBCC Vaqueros won with a 5-4 victory in their tennis matches.

The Renegades won four of their tennis matches; BC player Manrico Cabaloza, defeated opponent Johannes Bunse in a single match.

Ivan Rivera also won against his

opponent, Kyle Wells, in their single match.

In their double matches the Renegades fared better with teammates, Caleb Johnson and Cabeloza winning against SBCC Vaqueros Albert Chami and Sebastian Moenster.

Then again BC players Conrad Dalton Alec Slykerman pulled off an outstanding win against opponents Bunse and Wells.

The next home game for the Bakersfield college men's tennis will be on March 20.



ALEXIS PEDROZA / THE RIP

Caleb Johnson lands intense hit mid-air in his single match.

A story of mayhem, mystery, intrigue, and a successful escape at Bakersfield Escape Room

By Alexandra Apatiga
Editor-in-Chief

When I think of a fun day out, I think of going out with my family to eat somewhere, or hanging out at a friend's place playing board games, eating junk food and just chatting the day away. Never in my wildest dreams would I think escaping a confined room within a set time limit "fun," but that's exactly how it went.

I had the opportunity to participate in a popular puzzle adventure game known as an escape room, which are basically life-sized puzzle rooms littered with clues and riddles. The overall goal of an escape room is simple enough and in the name itself; you need to escape the room. The idea is straightforward, but it's the way escape rooms are presented and built that make them so exciting and mysterious. And trust me, once you've done an escape room, there's nothing else like it.

Here in Bakersfield we have a few escape room attractions, but the one I participated in was the Bakersfield Escape Room.

There are dozen if not hundreds of escape rooms across the United States, all with their own unique themes, rules, level of difficulty and charm. But it's the basic formula that all escape rooms follow which keep people interested.

Normally, an escape room consists of a single room outfitted with clues, riddles and puzzles that need to be solved or unlocked in a specific way or order.

Strategy is key when you're confined in such a small space, and the room itself encourages players to coordinate and be as flexible as possible, because any one action or clue could change the entire dynamic of the room.

Keeping a checklist of priorities, assigning roles to players, and focusing on a single task to complete before moving on can mean the difference between a successful escape or failure.

Another key component is teamwork, because let's face it, if anyone of us were alone in a room we'd all probably fail the first time.

All escape rooms require some level of teamwork and depending on the level of difficulty, you need more people all with different ways of thinking to help figure out how to escape.

Some of the most outrageous and seemingly unrealistic ideas can be the key to solving the entire puzzle. To put it simply, the more people the better, and it makes the experience all the more fun!

Keeping an open mind and putting yourself in the mindset of your room's location is also important. Most escape rooms have a specific theme or are set in a real-life or fictional locations, this effects the puzzles, what items or resources you have, how clues are presented, and the goal of escaping.

They also provide players a story to engage themselves in and makes them that much more invested in escaping.

Most escape rooms are horror

themed or involve some sort of deadline or threat that needs to be dealt with if you want to survive.

Just remember to place yourself in the shoes of someone who might actually encounter the environment of the escape room, and be on the lookout for clues on the lore of the room to help better understand how the room can be solved.

The most crucial component of an escape room is time. All escape rooms incorporate a set time limit for players and it serves as both a motivation and a warning on how much time players have left in order to solve the puzzle.

But don't be too worried, because most rooms aren't really "solved" until the second-half of the room's time. The majority of your time will be spent finding clues, collecting information, identifying puzzles, exploring the room, and analyzing everything. It's once you've found all the things you need to complete that you can actually start getting done to business.

Also know that some puzzles will reveal more puzzles, so it's important to be prepared for additional obstacles and prioritize the simpler task and work your way to the harder ones. Some advice, assign someone to occasionally check your time so that you're never caught off guard!

And most important of all is to remember that, no idea is too silly or stupid! The whole point of the game is to have fun, and many rooms encourage players to be creative and throw around their thoughts and ideas on the room.

Keeping an open line of communication is critical and helps ideas flow better among players.

So, if you find yourself short on time with only one puzzle left and you have an idea on how to solve it, try it! It could be the final move that carries you and your players to victory.

So now that we have down what an escape room is, it's time to take about an actual escape room.

The Bakersfield Escape Room here in town has multiple rooms all with their own levels of difficulty and stories for players. From pirates, MI6 agents, to disarming a bomb, when I had to go online and actually chose a room, I couldn't decide because I want to try all of them!

In the end I decided on the "Private Detective Agency: Knight and Rook Investigations" room, because who doesn't love a classic detective mystery.

The story behind the escape room was just as intriguing, with the players taking on the role of investigators trying to solve the case of a missing person. Roger Knight, a former investigator who'd gone missing trying to solve the same case, left clues all over the office room for someone else to find and solve.

Our goal was to find the clues, find the missing person's location and contact the authorities to go rescue them. We were given an hour to crack the case, or else meet the same fate as Roger Knight. Spooky right?

While I was doing research on the room online, I saw that the room al-



KARLA GUTIERREZ / THE RIP

Alexandra Apatiga is baffled over whether or not she escaped the Bakersfield Escape Room. She successfully took over the ongoing investigation that Roger Knight had begun, before suddenly disappearing. Knight left clues for her to finish the investigation.



KARLA GUTIERREZ / THE RIP

Alexandra Apatiga, Editor-in-Chief, attempts the last combination code before opening the case. After several failed attempts with her friend Karla Gutierrez, she was thrilled when she finally got it to open. Her finishing score was 4 minutes and 10 seconds. A worker from the escape room gave them tips on a TV screen.

lowed up to six people and had a success rate of only 30 percent! It had me thinking that, "If six people have half a chance to escape, what chance did I have?"

Despite that the excitement drowned out the dread of the situation, and I and my fellow editor Karla, who would be taking pictures, ended up going to the Bakersfield Escape Room.

Because we would be reporting on the room and taking photos, I thought it would be wise to contact the business before booking to let them know we would be documenting our experiences. And boy am I so happy I did.

I ended up explaining our plans to

one of the employees there, Christine, who was super helpful explaining the rules and what the room we'd be playing in was about. Eventually she passed me over to the manager, Jesús, who also gave me insight on the room and how we could document the room without revealing too much.

In the end, we were given total control of what we took pictures of and what to talk about, as long as we don't reveal anything about how to specifically reveal the puzzles. Fair enough!

But the real icing on the cake was how generous both Christine and Jesús were, because by the end of the

conversation Jesús offered the entire room free of charge for both Karla and I to explore. So not only were we able to play at the escape room but had the entire room to ourselves. Major win.

We ended up booking a time and day over the weekend, and around 4:20 p.m. I arrived at the location ready to play. We actually ended up arriving only a minute before our appointment, so even before entering the room we were nervous.

Christine greeted us when we arrived, and after signing some waivers and receiving a neat little bracelet for our participation, she gave us one last run-down of our goal: Find the location of the missing person before time runs out, or suffer the same fate as Mr. Knight.

I was absolutely pumped and anxious at the same time. What would happen if we failed? Would we be able to find all the clues? How would we know if we won?

Nevertheless, after being lead down a hallway to our room, I noticed all the other doors as we walked by. Behind them I could hear excited chatter and shouts, no doubt from other players who were facing similar challenges like the one we were about to face.

It was around 35 minutes into the escape room when we had run into another problem. One of the locks on the cabinets was a directional lock and we couldn't figure out how to unlock it. With less than 25 minutes left, we wasted a good deal of our time trying and resetting the lock before we finally opened the cabinet.

At 10 minutes left, I began to falter in our chances of getting out of the room, but Karla and I made one final push and finally, after so many missteps and confusion, we were able to find the final clue.

The safe, which held the whereabouts to the missing person and our success, needed a four-numbered combination to open. Over the course of the escape room we tried multiple times to open the safe to no avail.

After some trial and error, we found what we thought was the final combination. There was only one hiccup.

The safe had a number of attempts available before the going into a 30 second reset. As we ran up to the safe and began inputting the code, we realized that the safe wasn't responding.

With only 5 minutes left, we had no choice but to wait for the safe to reset before inputting the code. It felt more like an eternity, time which was working against us the entire hour and slipping through our fingers so quickly, was now moving at a snail's pace.

As I held the number code in my hands though, I began to realize that once we opened the safe, we would win. That alone made the agonizing wait much more bearable.

Finally, I inputted the code and screamed in joy as the light on the safe turned green and I heard a "click" from inside.

I swung the door open and grabbed the files inside just as the timer on the TV monitor froze. I looked up and saw our time, 4 minutes and 20 seconds left on the clock.

What happened next is just as blurred but I can assure you it was filled with jumping and screaming.

Christine came back to grab us and guiding us back to the front, where she congratulated us on escaping the escape room.

The experience was definitely worth it, and I can say with a hundred percent confidence that everyone need to do an escape room at least once.

Nothing beats the pride you feel for yourself after solving what is essentially a life sized Rubik's Cube, and I will definitely be making room in the future to go again.



KARLA GUTIERREZ / THE RIP

Alexandra Apatiga finds a clue in a book that helps put the investigation together that Knight couldn't. Apatiga reads the clue and soon after, she realizes it connects to another clue.



KARLA GUTIERREZ / THE RIP

Alexandra Apatiga tries several combinations until she finally opens the drawer. Apatiga is successful with a combination and finds a clue to help her further investigate the case of a missing person.