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a student publication

# The Montgazette

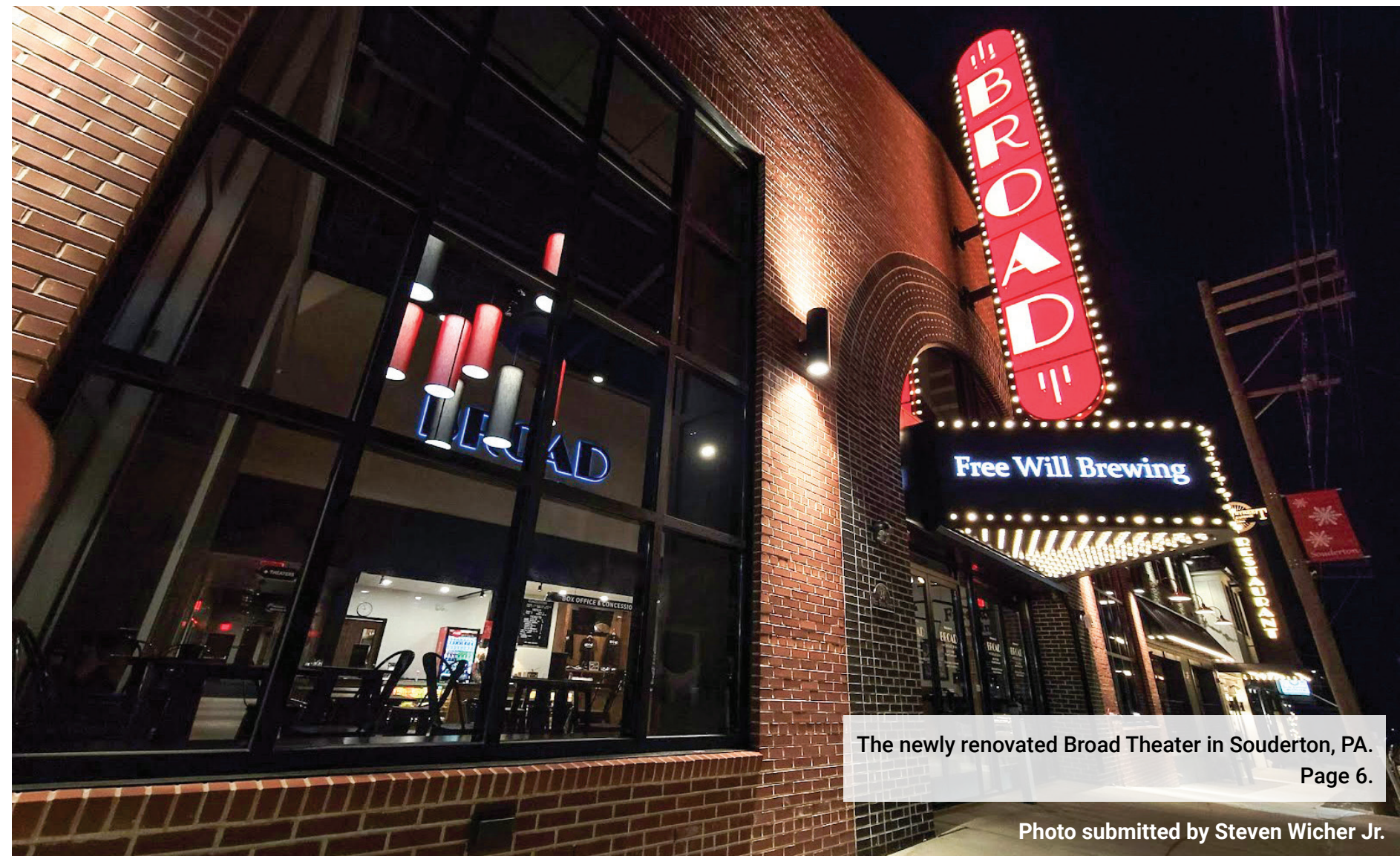
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The Students' Voice

Issue 89

Serving Montgomery County Community College and the Surrounding Community

April 2022



The newly renovated Broad Theater in Souderton, PA.  
Page 6.

Photo submitted by Steven Wicher Jr.

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**The Montgazette**  
The Students' Voice

# from the Editor

**Sufyan Davis-Arrington**  
**The Montgazette Co-Editor-in-Chief**

Students and faculty of Montgomery County Community College, welcome back! I hope everyone had a safe and festive Spring break. The spreading of COVID-19 was less prominent among our communities over the break. I hope those who either knew someone or encountered the illness made a full recovery. Luckily, the Omicron variant was said to be much milder in severity as opposed to previous strands. As we move through the spring semester, I am aware that we have new students who had not enrolled in the fall semester, so welcome to our community. The Montgazette is the school's student paper, where we invite current students to share their voices and write about topics that

pique their interests. If anyone has an interest in writing for the paper, feel free to contact me via my email, [sdavisarrington1151@students.mc3.edu](mailto:sdavisarrington1151@students.mc3.edu).

As intimidating as the spring semester may be, given that we are in school for roughly two months before spring break, do not let it discourage you. Teachers, tutors, and staff are here to help students who may be faced with a dilemma. Try not to let too much time elapse if you need assistance in class or life in general. It is important that you start off college strong, so the road ahead becomes more manageable. Sadly, this is my last semester at Montco, as I plan to transfer to Temple University in the fall. I can

honestly say the decision to attend a community institution, then transfer to a four-year university was one of the wisest choices I have ever made. Whether your decision to attend Montco was due to finances or indecision, rest assured that you will receive a great education,

from great professors. I want to tremendously thank my professors and peers, for making this experience fun and engaging. Most of all, I am honored that I was given the opportunity to serve as a co-Editor-In-Chief of this school's paper. Thank you!

### About The Montgazette

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# Montgomery County Community College starts spring semester remotely

Layla De Lorenzo

MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

With the rising number of COVID-19 cases in January, Montgomery County Community College opted to start the semester virtually. This decision was announced on January 4, weeks prior to the official start of the spring semester.

This original decision was set to be reevaluated on January 24. According to the College's Health and Safety update, "Montgomery County Community College will continue to operate remotely through February 15." The College reopened for all students on February 16.

For many students, this initially meant that they had to continue learning off-campus, where websites such as Blackboard and Zoom are utilized to host classes and connect students with professors and each other. The College offers computers and internet services to students who need them as well, so everyone can attend classes virtually with the least amount of disruption possible. Additionally, College services were still offered and available to students online.

Certain specialized courses were granted the ability to meet and have class in person. These courses tend to require high-tech equipment, labs, or are otherwise considered unable to be taught effectively virtually.

Online learning provides different learning experiences for

the College's student body. Erin Raftery, Criminal Justice Major at the College, said, "I don't mind online classes, but being at home can sometimes make it hard to focus during class." She continues, "I personally prefer regular in-person classes, but until that happens, I'm fine with online classes."

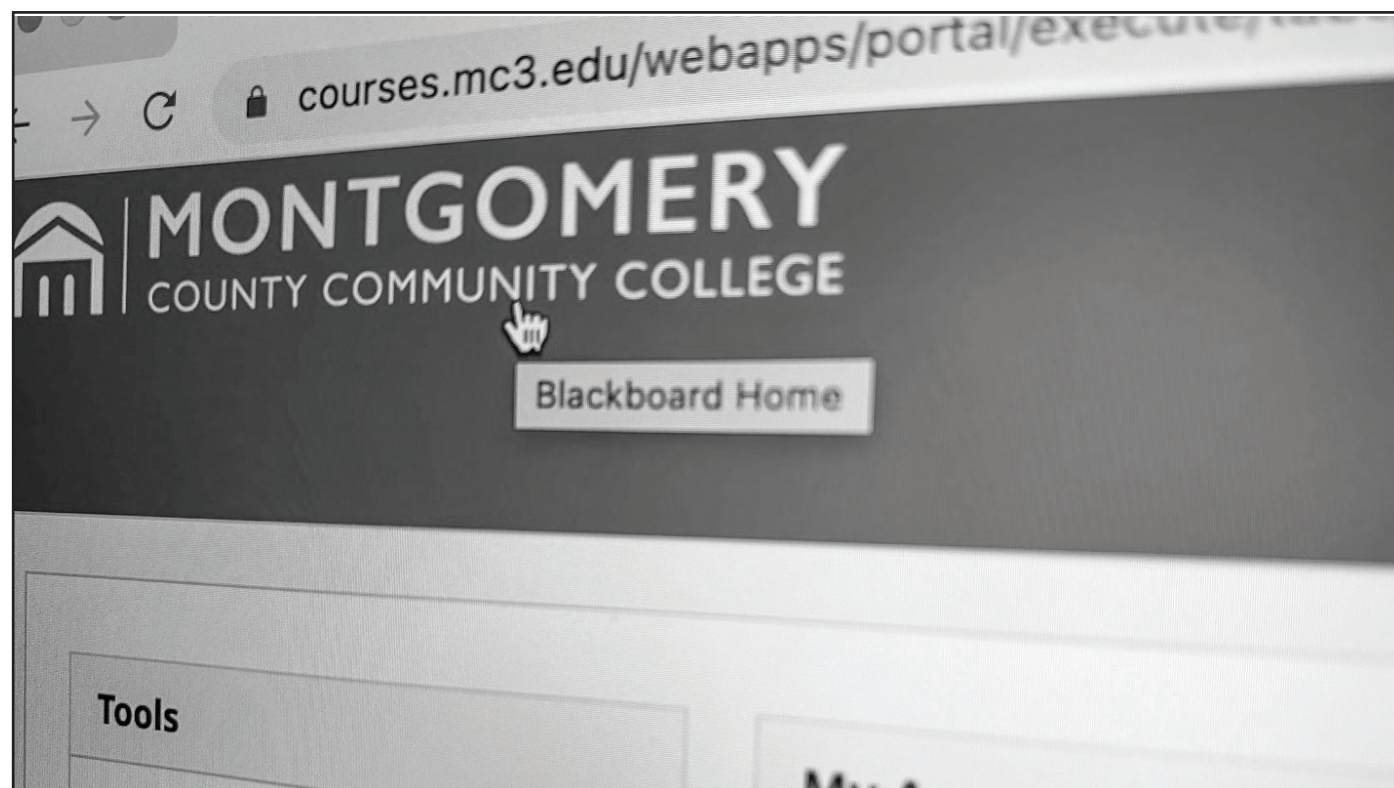
The majority of the College's students have undergone virtual learning since the start of the

pandemic. Most students are already accustomed to virtual learning and classes as the pandemic has stretched on since March 2020.

Online learning also alters the social aspect of the college experience, since students are not able to interact with one another in person on campus. Virtual learning can also make it challenging for students to familiarize themselves with their classmates, though many students

expressed optimism that coming back to campus would help relieve some of that anxiety.

The College says it prioritizes the health and safety of its students and faculty, and their families. The College also encourages its students to get vaccinated if they wish by offering vaccine clinics on designated days. Additionally, wearing masks was mandatory in buildings on campus, until March 7.



The College's Blackboard home page.

Photo by submitted by Layla De Lorenzo.

# Anxiety in today's society

Anne Kastelein

MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

Tensity, restlessness, having a sense of panic or doom: These are all signs when discussing anxiety, and as time goes on, the feeling grows to be more common.

HealthDay reporter Cara Murez says, "A new study from researchers in the United Kingdom and Canada found about one-third of first-year college students have or develop moderate to severe anxiety or depression."

In her article, Murez states that the first year of college should be about experiences and making memories as a freshman, but for some the transition can be difficult. Students face so many tasks that there is never enough time to fully digest what is going on.

But what was the anxiety caused by? "Many factors," says Harvard health enthusiasts Nicole Leblanc and Luana Marques. Throughout their "Anxiety in College" paper, the pair discuss that its anxiety can be caused by a sense of loneliness. If it's a student's first time away from family or the student is antisocial, that feeling can predict mental health problems.

Another cause for anxiety is sleep deprivation: "Drinking excess caffeine and pulling all-nighters is associated with increased anxiety among college students." But more common factors can relate back to academics and school stress.

Soon-to-be-college freshman Kyle Knause says, "what I remember the most from high school that stressed me out was the lack of communication I had with my teachers." Knause discusses certain moments in high school that built a lot of tension and anxiety in the classroom; "It got so stressful to the point where I didn't even like school anymore. It was just something I had to do, not something I enjoyed."

Although his experiences in the academic field revolve around the high school curriculum, Knause says he looks forward to the new level of teaching when joining the college in the fall, "I just hope some teachers actually look at their emails."

College can be a challenge, and there are ways

to cope with the feelings of anxiousness. However, some students cope in the wrong way. In Leblanc and Marques's article, they state that in order for students to cope with anxiety they avoid the stressors, "skipping class, staying in bed all day"

Other students have trouble maintaining healthy eating habits, getting appropriate amounts of sleep, and sometimes taking care of their hygiene.

Junior college student at Penn State Lotte Kastelein says, "I used to have that problem. I had trouble sleeping, I never ate, and I did my best to put all my energy into my classes. But it wasn't healthy."

Discussing the struggles of her freshman year at Penn State, Kastelein says, "I eventually found that making a schedule for myself was the best way to go. I mean, I finally got a good night of sleep."

When it comes to college, the practice of self-care seems nearly forgotten. Students may be stressed to the point that classes are all they can think about.

There are a number of healthy ways to maintain a clear head when the anxiety of college starts to sink in. According to Leblanc and Marques, "Set a consistent bedtime and wake-up time each day. Avoid using your bed for activities other than sleep, like studying. Limit caffeine in the evening and limit alcohol altogether, as it interferes with restful sleep."

Some other ways Leblanc mentions to help with one's anxiety is to talk about those feelings with someone, eat much healthier foods, exercise, and begin to think positively. She believes that eventually, a progression in one's mental health will be seen.



Textbook clutter.

Photo submitted by Anne Kastelein.



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# The Broad Theater marks one year of new movies and memories

Steven Wicher Jr.  
MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

On November 27, 2020, the Broad Theater in Souderton opened its doors amid a global pandemic. Yet it was a challenge that owners Kyle Hoff and Charlie Crown saw necessary to take on.

They believed the community needed a place that could unite everyone during the COVID-19 crisis. Hoff said, “The support from our customers proved that reopening a movie theater in a pandemic was the right decision.”

In opening their theater, Hoff and Crown took a gamble on an industry that has been on the decline since 2020. According to Forbes, national theatrical revenue saw a decline from \$42.3 billion in 2019 to \$12 billion in 2020.

Even with the return of major blockbusters onscreen, the year 2021 still put out problematic figures. According to Variety, the domestic box office in July of 2021 reached \$1.05 billion in ticket sales, down 81.3% from July of 2019.

The dramatic decrease in ticket sales is not the only concern for theaters. HBO

Max has a unique service called Same Day Releases. As a new movie from Warner Bros. enters theaters, it also goes onto their streaming platform.

This is what differentiates Hoff and Crown’s business from its corporate competitors. The Broad Theater does not have to solely rely on the newest Disney films and blockbusters. Every month sees the return of Hollywood’s greatest hits on the big screen.

In October, it was Halloween-themed films, such as “Beetlejuice” and “The Rocky Horror Picture Show.” Christmas came early with showings of “Elf” and “The Polar Express.” “Magic Mike” and “Some Like It Hot” are the main attractions for Valentine’s Day.

Combining old and new cinema under one roof allows all community members to enjoy the theater at low prices. Tightwad Tuesdays invites customers of any age to see any movie for the ticket price of \$5. Montgomery County Community College

student Tyler Kratz said, “I went to see the new ‘Spider-Man’ movie with two friends and got a large popcorn all for under \$20.”

As streaming platforms grow, experts have predicted a grim future for movie theaters. However, Hoff and Crown invested not in a theater, but in the sense of community. Hoff said, “The influx of theater customers will hopefully continue to spur more restaurants and retail businesses to open in Souderton.”

The Broad Theater stresses on their website that they “Provide health and safety measures in accordance with CDC and Pennsylvania guidelines.” These measures include disinfecting theaters after every show, placing hand sanitizer throughout the building, and installing ultraviolet lights in the theater ductwork to kill germs.

For more information about the Broad Theater, please visit [www.broadtheater.com](http://www.broadtheater.com) or call (215) 721-3530 for showtimes or private theater rentals for birthdays and corporate events.



Lobby view of the Broad Theater.

Photo by Joshua Woodroffe.



Interior of theater at the Broad Theater.

Photo by Joshua Woodroffe.

# Disney's "Encanto": Tearfully Enchanted

Nina Lima

The Montgazette Co-Editor-in-Chief

I'm not a big cryer. Honestly, my resolve can be a bit stone-like when it comes to sad things, but every time I watch "Encanto," I cry through the whole movie. From the opening sequence with little Mirabel sitting on her abuela's (grandmother's) lap, to the big musical finish, I'm either teary eyed or a blubbering, sobbing, snot-nosed mess. And the worst part about it is I can't figure out why. Join me as I review "Encanto" and attempt to get to the bottom of this strange crying phenomenon.

Disney's 2021 animated musical adventure, "Encanto," tells the story of the Madrigal family and their magic candle, which bestows upon them a beautiful, living house called Casita and wonderful powers that they use to help the community. When Mirabel, our main character, has the chance to accept her gift from the candle, she is given nothing, without an explanation. Despite the rejection and her grandmother's disappointment, however, she is perky and bright and supports her family from the sidelines as best she can, as they help grow their beautiful town hidden in the mountains of Colombia. When her family's magic inexplicably begins to fade, Mirabel takes it into her own hands to save her family and her home.

The plot seems fun and cheerful enough, right? Is wholesomeness the reason why I cry through the movie? Probably not, considering I watch plenty of cute, animated movies without tears, since that's one of my favorite genres. To be fair, the animation is vivid and fluid, with its strong points showing in the musical

sequences. However, I wouldn't consider them enough to make a grown woman cry. Maybe the music is the reason for my tears?

The mind behind the music in "Encanto" is Lin Manuel Miranda, who is famous for writing the music for "Moana," "Hamilton" and "In the Heights." The way he fuses Colombian music genres like bachata and cumbia with hip-hop and pop is seamless and bridges the gap where Western audiences who aren't familiar with Latin music might have trouble relating to the film score. As of February 25th, "We Don't Talk About Bruno," the film's big ensemble number, has maintained its number one spot on the Billboard Hot 100 for four straight weeks, a record that has not been broken by any Disney film since "The Lion King" was released. This could certainly be where my tearful problem lies. Luisa, Mirabel's older sister, laments in her song "Pressure," about the burden she carries as the person everyone in her family relies on. Isabela, Mirabel's other sister, breaks into song when she finally shakes off the feeling that she must fulfill her duties to her family, even when they aren't true to what she wants or who she is. Because family is such a central part of Latinx culture, these songs recount very common struggles therein. The music from this film hit home for me, then, as these are problems I can relate to, coming from a Latinx family myself. However, music doesn't play throughout the

whole film, and I cry from the very beginning, so this can't be the only reason. Perhaps, the themes in the film are responsible

Even though the whole film takes place in Colombia, "Encanto" is very much a story about first-generation immigrants. Mirabel's grandparents were forced out of their home with their three young children due to the violence caused by the Thousand Day War, which ended up taking her grandfather's life. Mirabel's abuela was then given a magic candle, which is often referred to as "the miracle" throughout the film, and a safe place to live to protect her and her people from the violence.

This aspect of the story is particularly personal for me, considering my mother emigrated from Brazil (Colombia's neighbor), and my grandmother on my dad's side emigrated from Cuba. All my relatives who have immigrated to the United States have recounted their stories to me, told me what they sacrificed to be here and how hard it was to leave their homes, their families and friends. Hearing this from a young age put pressure on me to do well in school and in my career, to make their sacrifices worth it. This is an experience that countless first-generation Americans share, and I had yet to see it depicted in film in such an honest way. But still, the part of the movie that emphasizes this isn't revealed until near the end. Maybe I was touched by the dynamic of the Madrigal family and how it mirrors my own family?

What makes "Encanto" such a special film is its big cast of characters. All characters are given a moment in the spotlight, either with their own song or through many fun and silly interactions. The character's gifts reflect an aspect of their personality and the role they play in their family. For instance, Julieta, Mirabel's mother, can heal anyone of anything by feeding them the food she cooks. But also, when Mirabel is struggling emotionally, Julieta expresses her love and pride in Mirabel, lifting her spirits and momentarily "curing" her bad feelings.

What's more, the Madrigal family aptly represents the diversity often seen in households across Latin America. This part of the world is a melting pot of different ethnicities and cultures, which is reflected in how Mirabel and her sisters are lighter in skin color than her cousins but are still darker than her grandmother. Many representations of Latinx families are shown as monoracial, but Encanto embraces the idea that people do not need to look alike to be considered family.

Now, this could be part of the reason why this movie makes me emotional. My family looks eerily like the Madrigals. I often joke about how in family pictures my cousins and I look nothing alike, since some of them have darker skin or redder hair or light-colored eyes.

**Continued on Page 10.**



# The Philadelphia Flyers historic losing streak, a perspective

Austin Diachynsky  
MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

On January 29, 2022, the Philadelphia Flyers captured a 4-3 overtime victory over the Los Angeles Kings. The win snapped a franchise-high 13-game losing streak and is the lone win for the entire month of January for the Flyers.

This 13-game losing streak follows a previously snapped 10-game losing streak, which the team suffered back in November through December. In the past five seasons, the Flyers have dropped three double-digit losing streaks, and frustrations have begun to boil over in Philadelphia.

The Flyers are a historic franchise with 55 years under their belt. Every generation in the Flyers fandom has had a unique perspective on the team's triumphs and struggles over the decades.

The Flyers in the 1970s captured two Stanley Cups and went on many playoff runs. Throughout the '80s, '90s and early 2000s, the team only missed the playoffs in consecutive seasons one time.

Michael Diachynsky, a Flyers fan since the '70s, has seen the team flourish for a very long time but is now apprehensive for the team's future. He says, "I think they have to completely reconstruct the team to be faster, like the rest of

the NHL. They can't win as the Broad Street Bullies anymore," referencing the infamous, and Stanley Cup-winning team of the 1970s, famous for their physical playing style.

For the new generation of Flyers fans, these struggles have become routine. Ryan Leflar, a local college student, has followed the team for the past five seasons and said, "I love this team, but it's a necessary

wake-up call. The Flyers have been stuck in mediocrity for a good part of the past decade and nothing is working to get them out of it."

Every team will rise and fall. The Flyers are breaking team records for most losses in a row, and every generation of fans feels it. The team will most likely be missing the playoffs for the second straight season, and this will be only the second

time in franchise history they've missed the playoffs two seasons in a row.

The next generation of Flyers hockey could be a struggle for fans, but the passion in Philadelphia will live on as fans hope for brighter days. "I believe these two losing streaks are a blessing in disguise and show there needs to be a lot of personnel changes in the Wells Fargo Center," said Leflar.



Wells Fargo Center jumbotron.

Photo submitted by Austin Diachynsky.

SPORTS



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# Running through the pandemic

Gabriel Madden

MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

COVID-19 has permanently changed runners' way of life and routine. With the countrywide lockdown in 2020 and through Delta, Omicron, and any other variant that will occur in the future, many put a new emphasis on getting outside and running, especially as it is a solo sport that can be done with plenty of social distancing.

"It's been bizarre, to say the least. I check the COVID-19 numbers every day, like we all do, and decide what kind of run I can get in today," says Hanna Myers, a runner hailing from Flourtown, who loves to hit the pavement six days a week and to compete in races locally and abroad.

For Myers, the worst times during COVID-19 were lockdowns. "I was scared to go outside, and guidance about outdoor activity varied in the beginning. Then, I got the virus in April of 2020 and it took me, a pretty healthy person, over a month to get better and get running again, but it took months even after that to feel 100% strong. The virus doesn't mess around. I'm vaxxed and boosted, but even now, well, we still have to be cautious, don't we?"

Myers admits that many of her running habits have changed. She runs at night to avoid other people, instead of getting out there any time of the day when the mood strikes. She hates to wear a mask so in "surge times" she stays away from the gym.

"Honestly, it's kind of an approach that applies to each day of the week. Until this pandemic becomes the 'new normal,' like the flu, and we can live

with it, everything I do as a runner is a risk assessment. But getting out there, whenever and however I can, is how I'm mentally getting through this crazy time. I absolutely need it. I guess I'll just keep adapting as it goes on,, I can keep running."

The pandemic has given a fitness silver lining to runners who don't need a goal and just like to run whenever they want.

"In the first year of the pandemic, I got very out of shape, being stuck inside, but then, I decided to really focus on it," states John Hart of Philadelphia. "And ever since then, the pandemic has actually made it possible for me to run more during the day because I'm working from home. So, in the beginning, COVID-19 was sabotaging my fitness, but now, it's kind of a positive. Running has become a more consistent part of my week."

There has been a documented uptake in "casual runners" since the pandemic started, in runners like Hart, who have made getting outside for a quick one-, two- or three-mile jog around their neighborhoods a permanent part of the work-from-home existence.

"I definitely just run to be healthy," Hart says. "I don't think I would ever run in a race, although I think my wife really wants me to. I'm not a gym guy, either. I like being outside and getting away from my kitchen office set up," he continues. "I like that I'm getting fresh air, as I don't have to wear a mask to run anymore, but I do still keep my distance out there. I think even after COVID-19

ends, I'll keep up this running habit."

Runners can't predict when the pandemic will be over or when another variant might strike and force everyone back inside and into isolation. It seems that even the experts do not know when COVID-19 will truly become a part of the past, instead of everyday awareness, a life-changing reminder that being healthy is a gift that

should not be wasted sitting on a couch, or seven hours in front of a computer, or just doing nothing and being lazy.

Getting outside to run, or walk, for six, four, or even three days a week, for 150 minutes a week, is a good long-term habit that can help everybody through these next months or years (months, hopefully) of this global pandemic.



Running is important, even through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Photo submitted by Gabriel Madden

# Bridgeport Trophy Company

Alexis Moore

MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

A family-owned business in Bridgeport, Pennsylvania, has been serving its community for over 45 years with the goal of 100% customer satisfaction. Bridgeport Trophy Company has always been in Bridgeport and started from “humble beginnings,” as co-owner Lauren Lattanze, said.

The business started when Lattanze’s grandfather, who was a jeweler, expanded into the trophy business. Lattanze’s uncle and father took over for him and made the business into what it is today.

The products the company has to offer have expanded since then and now include plaques, trophies, glass awards, acrylic awards, desk sets, and gift items, in addition to an apparel side of the business with embroidery work.

BTC caters to little leagues, corporate clients, public schools, private schools, universities, colleges, and those in public services, like police officers and firefighters. They welcome anyone and value good customer service. Lattanze said, “Wee want our customers to feel comfortable enough to

talk to us about their needs and to trust us enough to provide for that need in a timely fashion.”

According to Lattanze, “The pandemic hit us very hard. Clients were canceling events they already ordered products for. Upcoming events were not happening. There was no Little League. We lost a lot of revenue.” So, BTC adjusted how they provided their service and started to offer delivery and shipping options.

To new business owners and entrepreneurs, Lattanze has this advice, “It takes a lot of work and usually does not happen overnight. Be prepared for a lot of ups and downs. Make sure that you are well versed in all aspects of business management, including financial. There is a lot of behind-the-scenes preparation that takes place. There is the business itself and then the running of the business. All the little things have to happen for you to have a business and keep things running smoothly.”

Find BTC at their website [btcawards.com](http://btcawards.com) or phone number 610-275-7677.



Bridgeport Trophy Company storefront.

Photo by Alexis Moore.

## “Encanto”

Continued from Page 7.

After analyzing so many aspects of the film, what could possibly cause me to have such an emotional reaction to it? Is it truly that inspirational of a movie to warrant my eyes turning into faucets? Well, I’ve come to this conclusion: From the moment little Mirabel appears onscreen in her abuela’s lap, I see for the first time in my life a Disney character who looks like me.

Before the movie even came out, my friends and family would send me pictures or YouTube videos with Mirabel’s face, claiming a striking resemblance between us. Strangers have even pointed it out upon seeing me. What’s more, the role Mirabel plays in her family parallels the role I play in mine — as a peacemaker who supports and encourages every member of her

family.

No other Disney film comes close to telling a story so near to my own, from the plot to the themes, to the music, to the family dynamic, to the character design. For the first time, I can watch a Disney movie and see myself represented. If that’s not a good enough reason to cry, I don’t know what is.

LOCAL



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# Local garage keeps community safe in the cold

TJ Corcoran  
MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

Winter was here and cold temperatures had set in. With that comes the inescapable need for snow and ice removal. For one local garage, this is just what the doctor ordered.

Billy Kopf, native of Conshohocken and a senior at Penn Charter, runs the garage year-round to store equipment for his landscaping business. Stocked with lawnmowers and weed whackers, the equipment required for the job shifts a bit once the temperatures drop.

BK Landscaping, as his enterprise is known, is responsible for a plethora of businesses when the snow falls, requiring Bill to always be prepared for the worst of nature's winter elements. "I've invested a lot into the snow and ice removal for the season. Even though it hasn't snowed as much as previous years, I'd rather be prepared than left in the dust," said Kopf.

Over the final weekend of January, a half-foot of snow dropped onto the greater Philadelphia area, and Billy was ready with

his shovel and salt in hand. With almost 40 properties to cover, including a mix of commercial and residential, an early start was needed.

Hitting the road at 4:30 am, Kopf strapped as many shovels as possible to the back of his jeep, fitted with a plow, and got to work. Businesses like Guppy's Good Times, Bar Sera, Conshohocken Veterans Association VFW and Super Fit received plowed parking lots, shoveled sidewalks, and enough salt to melt an iceberg.

Joe English, one of Kopf's many helping hands throughout the year, was happy to be out making money. The cold temperatures and tedious shoveling were an afterthought for English, who ended up working a 12-hour day with Kopf on Saturday.

"While it is not at all glamorous, it gets the job done," says English, "I would rather be out here making money than sitting in my room on my phone."

By midnight on Sunday, all the properties

on Kopf's watch were shoveled and salted. Now he's responsible for checking up on the properties as the snow around them melts and freezes, and distributing salt where needed.

"It is good to get out and work again," Kopf said. "Months like this, where the grass does not grow, business gets slow,

and all I can do is sit around and wait. Wait for snow, wait for spring, and I don't like to wait for anything, I like to get out and work. It was nice to feel that feeling again this weekend."

With most of the snowfall done for the winter, Kopf now looks forward to servicing his summer lawns in Conshohocken and surrounding areas.



Owner of BK Landscaping, Billy Kopf, helping a snowblower.

Photo submitted by by Bob McGuire.



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