

# Red Fox Flier



No. 41  
February 2002

MECC's student publication

## The rest is history:

By Amanda Clark —  
[aclark01@me1.vccs.edu](mailto:aclark01@me1.vccs.edu)

### Why we celebrate Black History Month

The year was 1963. An eloquent Baptist minister stood before a crowd that buzzed with both determination and discontentment. His eyes scanned the crowd, taking in the faces. Each was unique, yet all were bound by a common desire for equality. Taking a deep breath, the minister began his speech.

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the meaning of its creed: 'all

men are created equal.'"

The minister was Martin Luther King, Jr., and the



speech he gave was perhaps one of the most famous speeches in history. Although King was very influential, he is only one of the remarkable black Americans honored during Black History Month.

Americans have recognized Black History Month since 1926, when Dr. Carter G. Woodson launched Negro History Week to bring attention to the contributions of black people in American history.

Woodson chose the month of February because the birthdays of Frederick Douglass, founder of the NAACP, and Abraham Lincoln occurred during the month. Although both of these men made an undeniable impact on black history,

*See Black History, Page 2*

### Clubs donate to Red Cross

MECC students Heather Hand, president of the Lambda Alpha Epsilon Club, and Karl Gibson, president of the Technology Club, recently presented a \$500 donation to Dottie Havlik (center), Executive Director of the Mountain Empire Chapter of the American Red Cross.



Appreciating Diversity • Seeking Unity

# Mountain Empire



Community  
College

# Clubs encouraged to sell food

All MECC clubs are encouraged to sign up to sell food on campus, as fund-raising events.

Clubs wishing to set up a food vending area should see Carolyn Sumpter in G114 to reserve preferred date(s). Each month's calendar is posted outside G114.

"They just have to schedule [the event] with me to see if the date's clear," said Sumpter. "If I'm not here, they can leave me a note asking for a particular date. Then I'll leave a note in the club's box outside my door." Sumpter can also be reached by email at [csumpter@me.vccs.edu](mailto:csumpter@me.vccs.edu), or voice mail.

The reason that more than one club cannot reserve the same date, said Sumpter, is because "it takes a lot of effort to get a sale together, and if there's more than one club selling, that eats [no pun intended] into both clubs' profits. And that's a lot of work for half the profits."

# Quillen's poetry to be published

MECC English instructor and published author Rita Quillen will have five poems included in an upcoming anthology, *Women Writing in Appalachia*, due out from the University Press of Kentucky in 2003.

# Mullins joins RFF writing staff

**Name:** Justin Chase Mullins  
**Age:** 20  
**Hometown:** Clintwood  
**Graduated:** Clintwood High School Class of 2000  
**MECC:** 5th semester in General Studies program  
**Goals:** Transfer to university and major in English & Media Communications  
**Hobbies:** Basketball, running, watching movies, writing



Justin Chase Mullins

## *Black History, continued from Page 1*

there are many other people who also made a contribution.

Another notable historical figure was an Alabama resident named Rosa Parks. In 1955, Parks, a civil rights activist, was arrested when she refused to relinquish her seat to a white man on a public bus. Her arrest sparked a 381-day boycott of Montgomery buses to protest the segregated seating laws.

The case went to the Supreme Court, which declared Montgomery's segregated seating unconstitutional. It was a small victory, but a victory nonetheless.

Mae Jemison, another Alabama resident, also made a considerable impact on the world. Like King, Jemison had many dreams. She gained her M.D. from Cornell University, worked as a Peace Corps medical officer, and in the

late 1980s became the first black woman to become an astronaut.

Other noteworthy figures include Miles Davis, a jazz trumpeter, bandleader, and composer who influenced jazz steadily from the 1940s; U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, the first black officer to hold the highest military post in the U.S. as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Elizabeth Catlett, a renowned expatriate sculptor and printmaker.

Indeed, history has shaped our lives throughout the generations. While not every human being made a well-known contribution, each person has still affected the world in some way.

So let us honor some of these remarkable Americans as we celebrate Black History Month in the month of February.

**Check MECC's snow schedule by calling 523-7495.**

The Red Fox Flier is a monthly MECC student publication. Contributions to this publication should be delivered to R207.

### **Student Writers**

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If you would like to write for the Red Fox Flier, email [sfisher@me.vccs.edu](mailto:sfisher@me.vccs.edu) or [jrose@me.vccs.edu](mailto:jrose@me.vccs.edu).

# Campus Calendar

## February & March

To be prepared for MECC's spring semester events, mark your calendars today!

- February 12 **Lincoln's** birthday
- February 14 Happy **Valentine's Day!**
- February 14-15 Faculty/Staff In-Service — **NO DAY OR EVENING CLASSES!**
- February 18 **Presidents' Day**
- February 19 GAINing Excellence seminar, **In the Mood: Skills to Enhance Learning**, at 12:15 p.m. in G220.
- February 19 Patricia Johnson performs **Somebody's Child**, a program of original poetry, at 12:15-1:15 p.m. in the Goodloe Center.
- February 22 **Washington's** birthday
- February 25\* GAINing Excellence Math seminar, **Enhancing TI-83 Calculator Skills**, 1-1:50 p.m. in G225.
- February 26\* GAINing Excellence Math seminar, **Enhancing TI-83 Calculator Skills**, 12:15-1:15 p.m. in G220.
- February 26 Purim
- March 1 **LAST DAY TO TURN IN GRADUATION APPLICATIONS**
- March 5 GAINing Excellence seminar, **Interview Skills**, at 12:15 p.m. in G220.
- March 6 LENOWISCO's **Mobile Health Unit** will be parked behind Robb Hall from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- March 11-15 Spring Break — **NO DAY OR EVENING CLASSES!**
- March 17 St. Patrick's Day
- March 19 GAINing Excellence seminar, **Resilience: Not a Shampoo, A State of Mind**, at 12:15 p.m. in G220.
- March 21 Student Services workshop, **Stress Management**, at 2 p.m. in G143
- March 25 Last day to withdraw without penalty, or to change from credit to audit
- March 26 Claudia Stevens performs **An Evening With Madame F**, based on survivor accounts of music performance in concentration camps, at 12:15-1:15 p.m. in the Goodloe Center.
- March 28 1st day of Passover
- March 31 Easter Sunday

WATCH FOR GAINing EXCELLENCE SEMINARS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. Feel free to bring your lunch.

\* Must register to attend — see Jessica Genco in G216-B

## Selected commemorations in February

### February dates:

- |    |                               |    |                                                              |
|----|-------------------------------|----|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3  | Cordova Ice Worm Day          | 16 | Do a Grouch a Favor Day                                      |
| 4  | Create a Vacuum Day           | 20 | Hoodie Hoo Day ( <i>everyone shouts Hoodie Hoo at noon</i> ) |
| 6  | Lame Duck Day                 | 22 | Be Humble Day                                                |
| 8  | Kite Flying Day               | 23 | International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day                   |
| 9  | Toothache Day                 | 27 | International Polar Bear Day                                 |
| 10 | Umbrella Day                  | 28 | National Public Sleeping Day                                 |
| 11 | White T-shirt Day             |    |                                                              |
|    | Don't Cry Over Spilt Milk Day |    |                                                              |
| 13 | Get a Different Name Day      |    |                                                              |
|    | Dream Your Sweet Day          |    |                                                              |
| 14 | Ferris Wheel Day              |    |                                                              |

February is also National Blah Buster Month, Return Carts to Supermarket Month, Creative Romance Month, and International Twit Award Month.

(Culled from <http://library.thinkquest.com/>)

# Time & Learn

By Amanda Clark  
[aclark01@me1.vccs.edu](mailto:aclark01@me1.vccs.edu)

## IT'S A BIRD, IT'S A PLANE, IT'S... CUPID???

Ahhh, it's nearly springtime. This is the time of year when the minds of both young and old are captivated by one single thought: pollen. (Have you ever noticed how much of that stuff floats around?) No, not pollen! LOVE!

People have begun to think more about love, due in part to the approach of St. Valentine's Day on February 14.

Have you ever wondered why people tend to celebrate holidays without asking questions about their basic elements? For example, although Valentine's Day is actually based upon the legend of St. Valentine, a little guy named Cupid has become more commonly associated with the holiday. I, for one, have a few questions about this fact:

### 1. Why IS Cupid so commonly associated with Valentine's Day?

Do the candy companies think their products would sell better with a picture of a cute cherub on them than with a picture of an elderly man? Maybe. Of course, let's

not discount the popularity of Orville Redenbacher.

2. **How did Cupid become a blonde cherub, anyway?** The legend of Cupid actually originates from Roman mythology. If he had existed, he would have lived in a geographic area in which people are not usually blonde but are olive-skinned brunettes. Cupid was also believed to be a fully-grown demigod. How he morphed into a cherub is anyone's guess.
3. **If there is a scantily dressed cherub flying around, doesn't he know that indecent exposure is illegal in most states?**
4. **Does Cupid have a hunting license?** Cupid's m.o. (modus operandi) is said to be the shooting of magic arrows. Magic or not, if Cupid possesses a weapon illegally, he'll be in court faster than he can say "lawsuit."
5. **What happens if Cupid hits the wrong target?** Anyone can have an off-day. What would happen if he missed his intended target and hit someone (or something) else instead? Let's just hope he passed Archery 101.

Perhaps, though, these questions should remain unanswered. Instead of focusing on legends, maybe we should focus on letting the people we love know how much we care about them. You can choose to do so traditionally (with candy, flowers, poetry, and such) or in your own unique way.

## Deadline for graduation applications set for March 1

Graduation applications for Spring 2002 and Summer 2002 are located in the lower right hand corner of the rack beside the first window at Enrollment Services/Registrar on the first floor of Godwin Hall. The Graduation application deadline is March 1.

Submitted by Debbie Pippin  
MECC Admissions Office

## No classes!

No day or night classes will be held Thursday & Friday, February 14 & 15. These two days will be Faculty and Staff In-service Days.



# My Take On It

By Shawn Paul Williams  
[swilliams@me1.vccs.edu](mailto:swilliams@me1.vccs.edu)

## BACK TO OUR ROOTS: APPALACHIAN LITERATURE

In the past, Appalachians have had a tendency to be looked upon by outsiders as incompetent, insignificant, and uneducated. People have typically been stereotyped with terms such as “hick,” “hillbilly,” and “redneck.” Recently, however, it appears that southern Appalachian literature is growing rapidly with popularity. A large part of this popularity is owed to authors such as Lee Smith, Adriana Trigiani, David Baldacci, Robert Morgan, and MECC’s published writers Rita Sims Quillen and Tami Penley.

The first example of this popularity is David Baldacci’s *Wish You Well*, a story of a young girl who leaves New York City to live with her great-grandmother in 1930s Dickenson County, Virginia. While Baldacci’s previous novels (including best-sellers *Absolute Power*, *Saving Faith*, *The Winner*, and *The Simple Truth*) were stories based on law, *Wish You Well* was based on his mother’s stories of growing up in the mountains of southwest Virginia. The story is ironic. The main character transforms from a young girl hating the Appalachian Mountains to a woman author who is inspired to write about them. This seems to be a growing reality.

Adriana Trigiani’s debut novel *Big Stone Gap* gave the world an inside look at the quiet little town as well as its people. “*Big Stone Gap* was a great book,” said MECC student Jillian Watson, who holds a bachelor’s degree in English from Tennessee Wesleyan College. “This book hits closer to home. While most Appalachian literature is based on people from the mountains, Trigiani wrote about the people in the valley.” Trigiani published a sequel to *Big Stone Gap* titled *Big Cherry Holler*.

Appalachian poetry is also becoming a highly appreciated art. MECC’s own Rita Sims Quillen has published a poetry chapbook titled *October Dusk* and a collection of poetry titled *Counting the Sums*. In

addition to *Counting the Sums* and *October Dusk*, Quillen has written *Looking for Native Ground: Contemporary Appalachian Poetry*, in which she interprets and studies Appalachian poetry by Robert Morgan, Jim Wayne Miller, and Fred Chappel.

Printed on the back sleeve of *Looking for Native Ground*, Richard Marius (Director of Expository Writing at Harvard University) states, “Quillen has written a wonderful book, the only full-length study of Appalachian poetry I know and bound to be the best for a long time to come.”

With such talented authors, it is no wonder that the southern Appalachians are quickly becoming one of the most appreciated regions in this country. According to MECC English instructor and novelist Tami Penley, southwest Virginia is a “cultural time warp.” Besides teaching, Penley also edits for a New York magazine, has published several short stories, won short

story contests, and has been a literary agent.

Even with recent authors such as Baldacci and Trigiani, the Appalachian Mountains are rarely written about. Perhaps this is because only very few writers, such as Robert Morgan (author of *The Hinterlands* and *Gap Creek*) and Lee Smith (author of *Fair and Tender Ladies* and *Oral History*), are talented enough to capture the beauty of the mountains with words.

In his ironically titled poem, “The Gift of Tongues,” Robert Morgan explains how most of us can only take in the breath-taking atmosphere of the mountains and its surrounding valleys:

“Later, standing under the high and plain-sung pines on the mountain I clenched my jaws like pliers, holding in and savoring the gift of silence.”



Shawn Williams and Rita Quillen

# President Suarez to help MECC move ahead on existing, new goals

By Amanda Clark — [aclark01@me.vccs.edu](mailto:aclark01@me.vccs.edu)

The arrival of the spring semester brought new situations for students and faculty alike. As students adjusted to their new classes, Dr. Terrance Suarez was making his transition into his role as MECC's president.

Suarez, a native of Florida, is no stranger to the community college system. In 1972, after graduating from the University of Kansas at Lawrence with a Ph.D. in chemistry, he did post-doctorate work at Virginia Commonwealth University. A year later, he obtained a position as a founding faculty member of J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College.

After spending six years working in the chemistry department, Suarez transferred to Wytheville Community College. There, as a division chair, he helped to develop programs in Dental Hygiene and Physical Therapy and later served as the Dean of Instruction and Student Services.

When Suarez heard about the opening for the position of MECC president, he knew he'd gotten lucky. "I'd been looking for such a position for two or three years," he revealed.

Suarez stated that he is "highly impressed" with the programs MECC offers as well as with the people here. "I haven't met many students yet, but the faculty and staff members are very friendly and capable," Suarez praised.

Suarez believes that attending a small college definitely has its advantages. "The faculty has more of a chance to get to know the students. In turn, the students benefit because they have more of an opportunity for individual attention," Suarez explained. "The college can also be a community resource."

Unfortunately, smaller colleges may not be able to offer as many classes as desired. "We can't offer as broad a spectrum of classes and opportunities as we'd like," Suarez mused, "but distance learning is helping us to overcome this problem."

However, this is not all Suarez would like to accomplish. "Generally, I want to help MECC move ahead in the goals it has already established, such as providing service to the community," he said. Indeed, community service is something with which Suarez is familiar. In Wytheville, he participated in activities such as the arts council, church, and the Kiwanis club. He also intends to be very involved in this area. "It's important for everyone, not just someone in my position, to be able to give back to the community," Suarez said earnestly.

Suarez also wants "new and exciting" things to happen on campus and, above all, for students' experiences at MECC to be positive. "The college strives to provide opportunities for its students. Take advantage of these as much as possible," he advised. "They will help enrich your experience here."

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## Mountain Empire Student Diplomats

*are available throughout the year to give campus tours for community groups or prospective students, assist with special college events, and represent the college at various functions. To schedule the Diplomats to help with an activity, contact **Carolyn Helms** in the Student Services Office, in **G139**.*

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## Interested in advancing your career in the Criminal Justice field?

A bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Old Dominion University prepares students for a variety of jobs in law enforcement, corrections, and probation and parole. Courses are offered at MECC, and financial aid is available. **For information, call 523-8294 or email: [ttnmecc.odu.edu](mailto:ttnmecc.odu.edu).**



By Justin Mullins —  
[jmullins0001@me1.vccs.edu](mailto:jmullins0001@me1.vccs.edu)

Wondrous souls search for a visual book aka a movie to captivate their imagination, to inspire their hearts, test their wits, and to share the sensation with their significant other, friend, or even just for the sheer pleasure for themselves. The outside is beyond frigid so we tend to migrate towards heat and

hopefully that shall lead to a theater of your liking.

I have recently watched two movies that will forever imprint an impression on my way of life. *Ali* is one of them. The movie stars the charismatic Will Smith, the clever Jon Voight, and the witty Jamie Foxx. The rating is R and the genre is action and drama. The film captures the essence of the boxing legend and delivers Muhammad Ali on the pedestal that he deserves. All three actors give arguably their best performances ever. **A-**

Another cinematic masterpiece is *A Beautiful Mind*. It is directed by Ron Howard and stars Russell Crowe (as John Nash), Ed Norton and Jennifer Connley. The film is based on real events and was nominated for several Academy Awards. The rating is R. The film thieved my mind and focused it completely on the big screen for 146 minutes, then it imprinted its genius throughout my body and stimulated my wits. It is undeniably one of the greatest films that I have viewed with the organs that I refer to as my eyes. **A+**

*Orange County* and *Lord of the Rings* are two feature films that I hope to witness within the next month. *Orange County* stars the humorous Jack Black. He portrays the hell-raising, stoned brother of Shaun Brumder (Colin Hanks) who in reality is Tom Hanks' biological son. They embark on a road trip so that Shaun can get into Stamford in this all out comedy. The rating is PG-13 and *Entertainment Weekly* gives it a **B+**.

The adaptation from book to film has been a successful one for the *Lord of the Rings* franchise. Critics all over America have been extremely impressed with the effects and quality of characters from this feature film. Entertainment weekly gives it an **A**.

Check out <http://www.gocinemacentral.com/> for times and locations of movies in the Tri-Cities.

## Lonesome Pine Short Story Contest Rules

Sponsored by Lonesome Pine Arts & Crafts, Inc. • Big Stone Gap, Virginia

- Stories will be accepted in three **categories**:
  1. **Adult**

1st Place - \$100
2nd Place - \$50
3rd Place - \$25
  2. **High School** (Grades 9 – 12)
 

1st Place - \$25
2nd Place - \$15
3rd Place - \$10
  3. **Middle School** (Grades 5 – 8)
 

1st Place - \$25
2nd Place - \$15
3rd Place - \$10
- Only **one** (1) submission per author is allowed.
- Maximum length: **1,500 words**. Typed copy preferred (no binders).
- *Deadline for submission: 4:30 p.m. March 15, 2002*
- **Winners** will be invited to accept their awards at the **John Fox, Jr. Festival on Thursday, April 11, 2002**, at 10 a.m. in the Fugate Auditorium located in Dalton-Cantrell Hall on the Mountain Empire Community College campus.
- **A cover page must accompany the story.** It should include:
  1. **Name** (Your name should appear *only* on the cover page)
  2. **Address**
  3. **Daytime telephone number(s)**
  4. **Title of the story** (Should also appear on the first page of the story)
  5. **Number of words** in the story, and
  6. **Category** (adult, high school, or middle school)
- If you would like a copy of the winning stories, or would like your story returned, please include a large self-addressed stamped manila envelope. The printed stories are usually six pages, so please include adequate postage.
- **Mail to:** Lonesome Pine Short Story Contest  
MECC Foundation  
P. O. Drawer 700,  
Big Stone Gap, VA 24219-0700.
- **Contact:** Ms. Jamie Buckles – 276-523-7466;  
Email - [jbuckles@me.vccs.edu](mailto:jbuckles@me.vccs.edu)

# New Diabetes Club not just for diabetics

By Shawn Paul Williams  
[swilliams@me1.vccs.edu](mailto:swilliams@me1.vccs.edu)

Diabetes is a growing danger in today's society. According to the American Diabetes Association, there are over 16 million diagnosed cases of diabetes. However, there are approximately 5 million people who have the disease and do not know they have it.

At Mountain Empire Community College, there are several students and faculty members who have, or know someone who has, diabetes. For this reason, there is current discussion to create the MECC Diabetes Club & Support Group (DCSG).

The idea came from a discussion the I had with Nicole Johnson (former Miss America and spokesperson for the American Diabetes Association) at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Luncheon for People with Diabetes. Johnson explained there were support groups from many local areas,

including a club/support group from Lee High School. I realized that MECC did not have any type of diabetes club or support group, and felt it would be a great idea for someone to found one on campus.

I am not a diabetic, so at first I didn't feel that I should be the one to found a diabetes club. I soon came to the realization that I should still try to found the club because I have several family members who have diabetes. However, I also felt I should also find someone who is a diabetic to help as a cofounder.

I felt that by having two people (one with diabetes and one without), this would help break down the barriers and encourage people without diabetes to help with those who do. After much thought, I decided to ask my friend Meg Whitt to be a cofounder, and she agreed.

"I agreed to help with the DCSG because I wanted to be able to share my knowledge

and experience with people who have diabetes," said Whitt. "I want everyone to know that you can lead a normal, healthy life with this disease."

Whitt also chose to help with DCSG because she has a large background helping promote diabetes awareness. "I also decided to help because I am a Diabetes Day Health Promoter. I have had the opportunity to work with several other diabetics, including Nicole Johnson, Danielle Stapleton, and Autumn Hines in other organizations throughout Lee County."

The club's goals are to be a support group for people who have diabetes, to help people without diabetes learn to about the disease, and help people learn how to care for those who have been diagnosed with diabetes.

Anyone interested in helping get the club started should see cofounders Shawn Williams and Meg Whitt; or the club's sponsor, Penny Dockery, in G131.

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## Testing Center to close on Feb. 14 & 15

The Testing Center in Student Services will be closed on Thursday and Friday, February 14 -15, as there are no day or night classes on those dates due to Faculty and Staff In-Service.

All tests for video or web courses, or any make-up tests, should be scheduled before February 14th or after February 15th.

— Bill Buckles  
Testing Coordinator

**"The more we know, the more we think the less we know — because we know that we don't know. But the less we know, the more we think the more we know — because we don't know that we don't know."**

— Ray Stevens  
Singer and Songwriter

By Jessica Genco

[jgenco@me.vccs.edu](mailto:jgenco@me.vccs.edu)  
GAIN Program Counselor

# Ask a Counselor

Jessica Genco, Program Counselor for the Student Support GAIN program, writes this column to address issues related to current mental health, your questions and answers regarding mental health, and discussion of ways mental health impacts your academic success. The "Ask the Counselor" forum allows students to submit questions, with the questions and answers posted sans the identifying information.

Genco is a Licensed Professional Counselor in Virginia and a Nationally Certified Counselor. If you would like to submit a question, please email her at [jgenco@me.vccs.edu](mailto:jgenco@me.vccs.edu). Questions remain confidential. They may be used for a question and answer format, but with names omitted, of course.

## THE ABCS OF CATCHIN' ZS

### Question:

I am having a serious problem sleeping. I can't go to sleep at night and once I do, I wake up a lot or very early. I am not depressed and I don't think I am a worrier? What could be wrong? What can I do to help get better sleep?

*Sleepless and Sleep Deprived*

### Counselor's response:

Sleep is vital to our well being. It is a time of recharging, restoring, and refreshing the body and mind. Difficulty sleeping can be extremely frustrating. Insomnia and sleep deprivation over a period of time can cause irritability, depression, relationship problems, and even physical problems such as increased risk of heart disease and gastrointestinal distress. Academically, it can result in decreased attention span, memory lapses, and a decrease in overall work performance — not good for the GPA! Prolonged sleep deprivation interferes with reaction time and the overall ability to remain alert. As you might imagine, serious consequences can result in operating machinery, including driving a vehicle.

A common cause of insomnia in winter is a mild, seasonal depression called Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). SAD is caused primarily (not exclusively) by the decreased daylight hours which interferes with the circadian rhythms (one is the internal clock which regulates the sleep-wake cycle). As a result certain chemicals (neurotransmitters) in the body cause the symptoms of mild, seasonal depression.

Since you say you are not depressed or worried (and assuming you do not have a physical problem causing insomnia), taking a look at sleep habits or more formally termed, *sleep hygiene*, may reveal some of the inhibitors of quality, restorative sleep.

#### \*\*\*\*SLEEP HYGIENE BASICS\*\*\*\*

- \* Most adults require 7.5-8 hours sleep per night. Try to sleep on an eight-hour schedule and see when you *naturally* fall asleep and when you *naturally* awaken. This is your optimum sleep requirements so modify your schedule accordingly.
- \* Maintain a regular sleep schedule even on weekends and days off work or school.

- \* There is no such thing as "catching up on sleep" so do not sleep in on days off or nap to make up for lost sleep. Maintain a regular sleep schedule and the body will respond by facilitating sleep at the right time of day.
- \* If possible, get approximately 30 minutes of midday sunlight. This helps the body produce melatonin, a neurotransmitter (brain chemical) which helps induce sleep.
- \* There is debate regarding napping. As a general rule, naps interfere with night sleep.
- \* A warm bath (not a shower!) before bed makes going to sleep easier.

### What to Avoid

- \* Avoid caffeine within four-six hours before bedtime. These are stimulants and they work against sleep!
- \* Avoid the use of nicotine near bedtime.
- \* Avoid alcoholic beverages four - six hours before bed. While alcohol may initially cause relaxation and drowsiness, it has a rebound effect. When this occurs the person awakens in a hyper alert state several hours after going to bed. Falling back to sleep after this happens is very difficult.
- \* Avoid going to bed on an empty stomach. A light snack is recommended, but not a meal.
- \* Avoid strenuous exercise within six hours of bedtime.

### Building a Good Sleep Environment

- \* Minimize light and noise in the sleeping area.
- \* Avoid temperature extremes in the bedroom. Some researchers recommend the bedroom be several degrees cooler than other rooms because sleep is induced when the body's core temperature falls.
- \* Use "white noise" such as a fan to block sounds that may disturb sleep.
- \* Associate your bed with relaxation and sleep. Homework, laptop computers, food, and paperwork do not belong in bed.
- \* Do not watch television in bed or better yet, do not have one in the bedroom.

If none of these suggestions work, seek professional help to rule out a physical disorder or for referral to a sleep center.

For further information, go to [www.thesleepsite.com/hygiene](http://www.thesleepsite.com/hygiene) or [www.asda.org/hygiene](http://www.asda.org/hygiene) (this site offers a search of sleep centers by state).

*Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care  
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath  
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,  
Chief nourisher in life's feast.*

William Shakespeare

# Go to class, join the Navy, get a degree

By Shawn Williams — [swilliams@me1.vccs.edu](mailto:swilliams@me1.vccs.edu)

Are you a student torn between going to college and joining the military? If so, then you may be interested to know that MECC and the United States Navy have joined forces to offer an Associate Degree in Engineering Electronics Technology to students who enter this joint training program.

This agreement allows students to begin classes at MECC in the Electronics program while enlisted in the Navy in an electronics training program, and receive their Associate Degree in EET from MECC.

Participating students complete 25-26 credits at MECC, which are stated in the Articulation Agreement, and then enter the U.S. Navy as sailors. The student will receive a sailor's pay, when he/

she enrolls in the two-year electronics training program.

The Navy's electronics engineering training fulfills the remaining course requirements that the student would have taken at MECC to obtain the EET degree. Upon completion of this training, the student submits documentation to MECC and is then eligible to receive the degree. Tuition for classes at MECC is not paid by the student for the courses fulfilled through Navy training.

For more information about this program, see Roger Greene, Betty Domjahn, or Dr. Richard Phillips (all located on the first floor of Dalton-Cantrell Hall). Specific program content is outlined in the official articulation agreement addendum, available from the MECC Office of Admissions on the first floor of Godwin Hall.

## *Automatically generate a MS Word Table of Contents*

*NOTE: These tips apply to Microsoft Office products, such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc. Not to Microsoft Works products.*

Tables of Contents in Word are one of the more commonly misunderstood features. To understand them, you must first understand Heading Styles, because Tables of Contents are produced from Heading Styles. If you are trying to add a Table of Contents to an existing document that does not use Heading Styles, you must go through the entire document and add them manually. However, if you add them as you produce the document in the beginning, the Table of Contents will be a snap to produce.

Try this: Open a blank new document and go to the Style box at the left end of your Formatting toolbar (the toolbar that includes your bold, italic, and underline buttons). The Style box, by default, should say Normal. Click on the dropdown arrow at the right end of the box and choose Heading 1, then type a word or two.

Hit the Enter key on your keyboard and go back to the Style box. This time choose Heading 2 and type another word or two. Now, hit Enter again and go to the Insert menu and choose

Break. When this box comes up, make sure Page Break is selected and click OK.

You should now be at the top of Page 2. Choose Header 1 again from the Style box and type a word or two. Hit Enter and add another Heading 2 entry, then hit enter and add a Heading 3 entry. Now, hold your Control key down and hit your Home key to move you back to the very top of your document and go to the Insert menu and choose Index and Tables. Click on the tab at the top that says Table of Contents, accept the default settings and click OK.

How's THAT for easy?

Hang in there!

Linda

*Tutorial by MS Office expert Linda Johnson. Her site is located here: <http://personal-computer-tutor.com/>  
View Linda's tips online at <http://newbieclub.com/>*

**Due to Faculty In-Service,  
Wampler Library will close  
at 4:30 p.m.  
on Thursday, February 14**

# MECC to initiate arts contest, magazine

Artistic students at MECC will soon have a new opportunity to share their gifts. In the next few weeks, guidelines for submitting photography, artwork, and creative writing to the new MECC arts magazine, *Explorations*, will be announced.

MECC's Summer Governor's School launched a Creative Writing section and published a literary magazine featuring the Governor's School students' work for the first time two years ago. That will continue, with the high school students' publication now called *Summer Explorations*. For its first year, the college edition of the magazine will only be published online, but in the future, *Explorations* would appear online and in print.

The magazine and contest sponsor is English instructor Rita Quillen. "I helped do something similar at Northeast State, and I know how rewarding it can be for the students and the college community. And I know from my work the past two summers with the Governor's School students, as well as my wonderful Creative Writing class I taught last spring, that there is tremendous talent here and an interest in writing. Add that to the tremendous work that Bill Harris in photography and Alice Harrington in visual arts do with their students and you've got some real potential here."

## EXPLORATIONS



For this first year, Quillen said, the contest is open to current and past MECC students; divisions are Color Photo, Drawing, and Writing. The Writing category will have subcategories: Short Fiction, Poetry, and Essay. The number of contest categories will increase as time goes by.

Quillen hopes to follow the Northeast State model, with cash prizes in all categories and contest judges who are well known in their fields. Watch all the usual outlets and start getting your entries ready; the contest will open in the next few weeks.

*Submitted by English instructor and sponsor Rita Sims Quillen ([rquillen@me.vccs.edu](mailto:rquillen@me.vccs.edu)) and student writer Shawn Williams ([swilliams@me1.vccs.edu](mailto:swilliams@me1.vccs.edu))*

## Why is February so different?

The purpose of a calendar is to reckon time in advance, to show how many days have to elapse until a certain event takes place in the future, such as the harvest, your birthday, or the release of new videos or software. The earliest calendars, naturally, were crude and tended to be based upon the seasons or the lunar cycle.

The calendar has undergone many changes over the millenia, with none exactly accurate, and different cultures still use a variety of calendars, so that, often, we may be not only not on the same page, but not even in the

same century. The calendar that most Westerners rely upon is the Gregorian Calendar, with the banking industry relying also upon Julian dates (the number of the day in the current year: Feb. 24= Day No. 55 of 2002).

The ancient Roman calendar year was divided into ten 20-35-day months, beginning in March. Inevitably, the seasons no longer matched the calendar. January (29 days) and February (23 days) were added to take up the slack. Another adjustment was eventually needed the months' lengths were adjusted according to some

undoubtedly arcane criteria.

Every so often, however, another day or so was needed, and the Romans got in the habit of making these adjustments during the "Month of Purification," February, adding needed days after the 23rd, traditionally the last day of the year.

Even in our time, leap year is observed with a 29-day February. So, to historical purists, "leap day" would be February 24, not February 29.

*Compiled from sources found on the Internet.*

## MECC at the General Assembly



Bob Varner, Tony Russell, Ann Riggs, Delegate Bud Phillips, Lynda Garrett, Donna Stanley, and Dr. Terry Suarez



Dr. Terry Suarez, Ann Riggs, Tony Russell, Delegate Terry Kilgore, Lynda Garrett, and Bob Varner

Several representatives from MECC attended the 2002 General Assembly on January 22 and 23 as part of Community College Day.

MECC's legislative team included students Lynda Garrett and Tony Russell; faculty member Jim Bates (who was the photographer); board members Ann Riggs and Bob Varner; President Dr. Terry Suarez; and Foundation Director Donna Stanley.

The group presented Delegates Kilgore and Phillips framed Tim Cox photos of Powell Valley in appreciation of their ongoing support for MECC, the Virginia Community College System, and education in general.

MECC, as well as all of higher education, is facing a severe budget reduction due to the significant downturn in state revenues.

You may contact legislators using the toll-free Constituent Viewpoint Hotline number at 1-800-889-0229. A person will answer your call, take your message, and deliver it to your legislator(s).

### 'Somebody's Child' planned for Feb. 19

Patricia Johnson presents an hour-long performance, *Somebody's Child*, a program of original poetry from her books, *Spirit Rising* and *Stain My Days Blue*. Johnson moves from childhood with poems about cornmeal mush and snow cream, through race relations from slavery to driving while black. She then turns to love and the joy of transcending the personal to arrive at redemption.

### 'Madame F' set for March 26

"An Evening With Madame F" explores the life and death experience of music performance in concentration camps, drawing upon survivor accounts, including that of Fania Fenelon, who performed in the Women's Orchestra at Auschwitz. After having written a "best seller" on the subject, an elderly survivor confronts herself and the audience in dealing with this complex moral issue.

*Performances begin at 12:15 p.m. in the Goodloe Center.*