

BC breaks ground for new residential building

By Margaret Correll
Editor in Chief

Members of the Brevard College administration, faculty, community and student body held a groundbreaking ceremony to kick off the construction of a new residential building. On Monday, Sept. 14, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. attendees gathered in front of the Villages to break ground and celebrate the construction of a new building on the BC campus.

Brevard College's president, David Joyce, opened the event with a thank you to everyone who was in attendance. "It's a great day at Brevard College when we are growing," said Joyce.

This is one of the few buildings that Brevard College has built in the past 5 years. These newer buildings consist of Stanback Hall, a residential building that finished construction in

2016 and the new sports field house and facility, which is still under construction.

The reasoning behind the new residential building comes down to upgrading the Villages and adding new space to a growing student population and this building will hold 50 new beds. With Juan Mascaro, Vice President of Finance and Operations and Brevard College's Chief Financial Officer and Debora D'Anna, Vice President of Student Life and Dean of Students leading the building efforts, the campus is excited to start this project.

Representatives of the BC student body were in attendance to help with the ground breaking, Bethany Bryan, a sophomore on the Brevard cheerleading team and Scott Douglas, a sophomore men's soccer player from London, England.

Jimmy Harris, mayor of Brevard, N.C., attended the event to congratulate BC. "Today

is not just a good day, it's a great day in Brevard, North Carolina," said Harris. He thanked everyone for attending and thanked Juan Mascaro for doing all he does and Brevard College.

D'Anna was the last to speak at the ceremony. "It is always a good day when you get to celebrate a new residence hall," said D'Anna. D'Anna said she was excited for this new opportunity for Brevard to grow in size and add to the beauty of the campus.

After the speeches finished, Joyce, Harris, D'Anna, Mascaro, Bryan, Douglas, Burke Ulrey, the BC Director of Facilities, and members of the BC Board of Trustees did a simultaneous shovel dig into a pile of dirt, symbolizing the start of the new project.

The new Village residence hall is projected to be finished in the spring of 2021.



Courtesy of Megan Shina

Attendees of the ground breaking ceremony use golden shovels to kickoff the start of the new building construction.

Devastating fires continue on the West Coast

By Caroline Hoy
Staff Writer

2020 has been a year of wild and destructive fires and, currently, the West Coast of the United States is covered in extreme fires due to hot weather, lack of rain and climate change. In California, Oregon and Washington over the past month at least 24 people have died with the number continuing to rise, according to the New York Times. These fires have scorched millions of acres and have riddled much of the coast to a hazy, orange and red wasteland.

Oregon, along with most of the West Coast, is experiencing horrible air quality due to the fires, which is only starting to get worse. The air quality is so bad that some people can't leave their homes, leaving many towns to start to resemble ghost towns.

According to IQ Air, the air has been extremely hazardous this past week for those venturing outside. On Sunday, Sep. 13, Portland, Oregon was ranked number one on the worst air quality in the world scale.

Kristen Yoder, a student at Oregon State University, and resident of Hillsboro, Oregon saw the fires first hand. When asked if any of the fires were near her house she said, "There was one on the hill next to us so my mom and I had to be ready to go if it came close. Luckily, it was able to be controlled." This feeling of lacking safety is the case for many people in Oregon.

Yoder was also asked what it is like to live in Oregon right now, she said, "It's different. Not a

lot of people are working so everyone is at home or at the grocery store, even the place that I work has been closed."

Regardless of the fires spreading quickly across the state of Oregon, the protests in support of the Black Lives Matter movement have not stopped in Portland, Oregon. Although the protests have slowed down they continue to cast their support. Protests have been going on for 13 weeks now with no end in sight.

No one knows how long the fires across the west coast will last, but everyone is hoping they will end sooner rather than later. Everything depends on the weather and hopefully relieving rain will come soon.

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Photo from SkyNews

A hazy view of San Francisco's skyline while fires continue to burn on the West Coast.

Trump admits he downplayed COVID-19

By Margaret Correll
Editor in Chief

President Donald Trump was called out on Thursday, Sept. 10, 2020 during a White House press briefing by ABC News' chief White House correspondent Jon Karl after being caught in a lie amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Trump was asked, directly, by Karl after the revelations that he intentionally downplayed the virus in a new Bob Woodward book "Rage".

"Why did you lie to the American people, and why should we trust what you have to say now," said Karl. "I didn't lie," said Trump in response.

Trump admitted in journalist Bob Woodward's book, "Rage," that he downplayed the COVID-19 outbreak early on because he wanted to avoid public panic. He told Woodward in an interview in February 2020, that the virus was deadlier than a flu, even though weeks later he called the virus "like a flu".

Along with the shocking revelations surrounding Trump's denial of the severity of COVID-19, "Rage" includes 18 interviews of Trump by Woodward from December 2019, to July 2020. Many of the interviews were recorded, including the one discussing COVID-19.

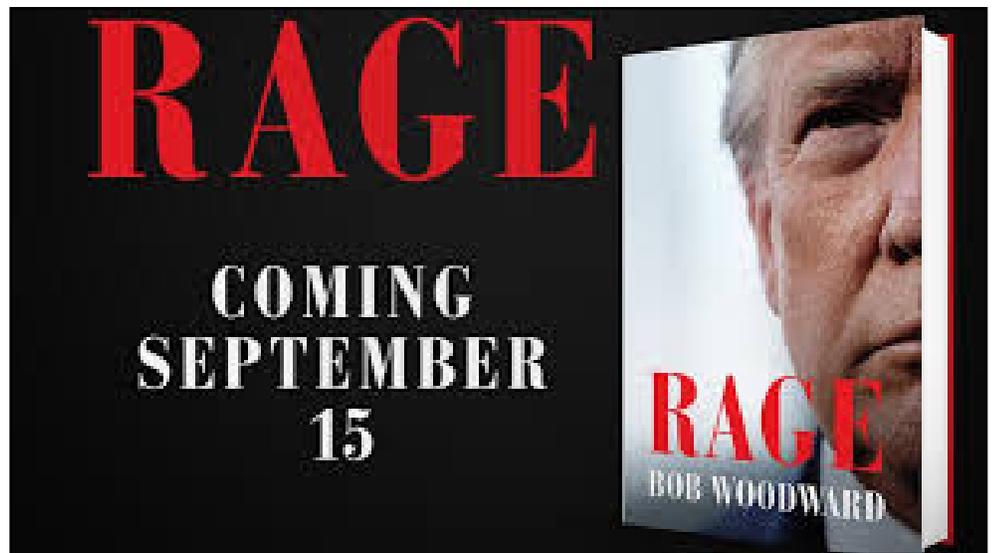
The book also details assessments of Trump's presidency by some of his former top national security officers. These assessments include statements made by former Defense Secretary James Mattis, former Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats and former Secretary

of State Rex Tillerson. All three provided damning statements, including one by Coats which called Trump "dangerous" and "unfit" to be commander in chief.

Anthony Fauci, the administration's top infectious disease expert is also quoted in the book, criticising Trump and his administration. Fauci, told others according to Woodward that Trump's leadership was "rudderless" and that his "attention span is like a minus number". In a Fox News interview on Wednesday, Sep. 9, Fauci was not sure if this quote was entirely accurate.

Trump responded to "Rage" by confirming the fact that he did not want to make a panic. "Well, I think if you said in order to reduce panic, perhaps that's so," Trump said. "The fact is I'm a cheerleader for this country. I love our country. And I don't want people to be frightened. I don't want to create panic, as you say, and certainly I'm not going to drive this country or the world into a frenzy. We want to show confidence. We want to show strength."

Bob Woodward's book, "Rage", will be released on Sept. 15, 2020.



Navajo Nation reports 15 new cases of COVID-19

Joyfully, IrishCentral reported on Sep. 11 that the Navajo Nation had had zero new COVID-19 cases since March. At the beginning of the pandemic in the United States, the Navajo Nation was hit particularly hard by the virus and received virtually no help from the government. The Irish and the Navajo Nation have a long lasting friendship that dates back to the 1800s when they helped them during the potato famine. Many Irish people even contributed to the Navajo Nation's GoFundMe.

Unfortunately, as of Sep. 13, The Salt Lake Tribune published an article saying that Navajo health officials have reported 15 new

COVID-19 cases but no new deaths. The latest numbers have risen to 9,969 cases total and 530 deaths.

Most of the vast Navajo Nation that spans across Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona has been closed since March. Tribal officials are extending partial weekend lockdowns and daily curfews through September to control the spread of the virus.

— Aia Andonovska



Members of the Navajo Nation wearing masks.

COVID-19 threatens Halloween

By Kellen McGeorge
Staff Writer

In a relatively normal year, everyone has fun on Halloween. From trick-or-treating to costume parties, Halloween has had something for everybody to enjoy. With COVID-19 sweeping the nation so quickly, it's important to know what will happen to trick or treating.

In many states and counties, events involving Halloween have been postponed or cancelled. The first states that have confirmed to have cancelled Halloween events are California and Massachusetts.

Los Angeles County, in California placed a ban on trick-or-treating this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. This was later lifted on Tuesday, Sep. 15, 2020. The ban

will not be enforced but will still be strongly recommended. Many other cities and counties are also considering cancelling their activities, though they have already implemented a not recommended to prevent the spread of the virus.

Many cities and counties have issued health warnings to people with chronic conditions to avoid any festivities as well as children with conditions that may increase their chances of getting infected. The CDC has already made it clear that they believe it would be best to cancel all Halloween activities for kids with complex health conditions, but they have not said it should be enforced and have even said that guardians should at least talk to their child's health care professional before going out to trick-or-treat.

Each state and city will have different guidelines for how they will try and prevent the spread and what events will be considered high risk for infection. Some of the most high risk events that have been identified are events like haunted houses, where people will be in enclosed spaces and more likely to be exposed. Halloween parties and events will most likely change to accommodate anyone who might be out and attempting to enjoy some Halloween fun.

It's safe to say that Halloween this year will be much more risky for everyone. This can be a sad thing to see the holiday under threat of being completely cancelled for such a threatening pandemic.



Photo from Newsweek

Many people worry that due to COVID-19, Halloween and trick-or-treating will not happen this year.

Asheville writer Danny Bernstein publishes book on the history of DuPont

By Aia Andonovska

Arts & Life Editor

Asheville writer but Brooklyn native Danny Bernstein released her latest book this past Labor Day. It was published by Arcadia Publishing and The History Press. It details the history of DuPont Forest, a subject that the author says has not been touched on much. "I found out there's very little written on the history of DuPont Forest, which is both good and bad," Bernstein said. "It's good because hundreds of books haven't been written on it, like the Smokies; but it's also unsettling that there are very (few) official records."

The book, called *DuPont Forest: A History*, details the operation of a silicon manufacturing plant in Brevard, North Carolina in the 1950s but focuses mainly on the 12,000 acre state recreational forest that features six waterfalls, lakes, and 100 miles of hiking trails.

Lack of history caused Bernstein to interview former DuPont company retirees. She gathered her information through talking to people on hikes as well as North Carolina legislators. "It kind of kept gnawing at me, especially when I realized that all of these retired people weren't getting any younger, so I started interviewing them, and one person led me to another and another," Bernstein said. "It's a life history about people that are still around."

Bernstein tells it all in her book, noting that most tourists that come to enjoy the forest don't know the drama that began there in 1997. The DuPont company sold part of its land, including the silicon plant and three waterfalls, to a company called Sterling Diagnostics, a company who produced clinical lab products. After this, the land was sold to a private developer who was planning on building luxury vacation homes.

The public outcry was immediate and loud. The developer's plans were stamped out in 2000, when the state reclaimed the property. Bernstein commented on development saying, "Developments are only coming because private people are selling to developers," she said. "I wish that the public would understand that. Developers are not stealing land, they are buying land. You only hear about who is developing the land; you very rarely read who sold the land."

Bernstein has four other books she has written about her visits to state parks and her experiences hiking the trails of Southern Appalachia.

OPINION

Are we too trustworthy?

By Isaac Ford

Staff Writer

If a thousand voices speak to you all at once, each informing you of what is "wrong" and what is "right," how do you know what to believe? Who can you trust? Who, or what, do you turn to for the final say? The answer is simple; while the increasing convenience of technology has, along with scientific, political, social, and civil advancements, leveraged the woes of human existence, we still have not quite yet mastered the art of leveraging one thing – our own self-righteousness.

In the masked face of uncertainty, we will trust what we know. In the ugly face of opposition, we will trust that what we already believe is true and "right," and we will defend our beliefs until the sun implodes.

We look to that which confirms our beliefs. We turn to those who think like us. We read the same articles about the same things from the same websites. We fill our feeds with what we like to see or hear – and with what we like to be outraged by.

This is effective. This is conducive. This is appropriate for a nation splitting at the seams. After all, it takes more effort and time to sew or patch something up than it does to continue ripping it apart.

Distrust is a sign of the times. President Donald Trump, during White House press conferences, has repeatedly downplayed the threat of the coronavirus, ignoring infectious disease expert Anthony Fauci, and general data. Additionally, those who believe the virus is a hoax do not trust the "data," thinking it is a fabrication. Others write the virus off as not "dangerous" and do not take precautions, potentially catching or spreading it to others.

Schools, businesses, and restaurants have reopened, spurred on by a country that has placed more value on monetary gain than human health and wellbeing.

The killing of George Floyd on May 25. marked a refocusing to the Black Lives Matter movement, returning police brutality to the nation's attention, and leading to a substantial decay in the public trust of law enforcement. Discord has replaced discourse; I am right, you are wrong, and that is the end of the story.

The story? We cannot talk (and humans love to talk) to each other without itching to threaten someone, insult them, or write them off completely. We are one nation, divisible – a house divided against itself.

We are conditioned to be this way. The media wants us to be. Even we want to be because it feels good to be outraged. Of course, that is not

to say that outrage is inherently bad; it serves its purpose for tackling what is unacceptable, such as police brutality. Without action, outrage is counterproductive. If we, the citizens of the United States, are committed to each other, then our relationship is crumbling because we cannot communicate with each other.

When difficulties arise in a serious, committed relationship, it is not me against you. It is not us against them. It is us against the problem – whether it be racism, police brutality, bigotry, misinformation, the virus, or ineffective administrations. If we cannot trust each other, if we cannot work together, and if we remain divided at the core, then our shared American house will fall.

Learn to value opposition to your beliefs and values, as much you may hate it or find it painful. Value discourse. Do not value arguments.

Humans are not infallible. I make mistakes, and so do you. I have my own biases, and so do you. Consider, just for a moment, that you are wrong about everything you know, and the self-righteousness will fade. But you could never be wrong, could you? Know this: there is nothing cowardly about changing your mind; if America is the home of the brave, it is the bravest thing you can do.

Osaka and Thiem clutch US Open titles

By Margaret Correll
Editor in Chief

The US Open concluded on Sunday, Sep. 13, 2020 at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York City with a multitude of winners. Even with the lack of crowds attending the tournament because of COVID-19 restrictions, there was still a lot of excitement to be had over the course of the past two weeks.

Securing the wins for Men's Doubles on Thursday, Sep. 10, in the Arthur Ashe Stadium, were Mate Pavić from Croatia and Bruno Soares from Brazil. This duo dominated the team of Nikola Mektić from Croatia and Wesley Koolhof from the Netherlands with a final score of 7-5, 6-3.

The Women's Doubles final concluded on Friday, Sep. 11, in the Arthur Ashe Stadium, with the winners, Laura Siegemund from Germany and Vera Zvonareva from Russia defeating Xu Yifan from China and Nicole Melichar from the United States. The final score for this match was 6-4, 6-4.

During the race to the finals for Women's Singles Serena Williams from the United States, 23-time Grand Slam winner and former world number one for women's singles, lost to Victoria Azarenka from Belarus, two-time Grand Slam winner and former world number one for women's singles. The final score for this semi-final match was 6-1 in the first set for Williams with a major comeback for Azarenka in the second and third sets with scores of 6-3, 6-3.

The opposite match, competing for a spot in the final for Women's Singles saw Naomi Osaka from Japan, three-time Grand Slam winner, defeat Jennifer Brady from the United States. The final score was 7-6, with Osaka securing the first set after winning a tiebreak of 7-1, Brady winning the second set with a score of 6-3 and Osaka finishing the match with a third set win of 6-3.

For the Men's Singles semi-finals, the first matchup was Daniil Medvedev from Russia, seven ATP title winner and Dominic Thiem from Austria, the second highest-ranked Austrian player in history. The final score for this match had Thiem sweeping all three sets with scores of 6-2, 7-6 with a tie breaker score of 9-7 and 7-6 with a tiebreaker score of 7-5.

The second Men's Singles semi-finals match was Pablo Carreño Busta from Spain versus Alexander Zverev from Germany. The final score during the long five-set match started with Busta winning the first two sets with scores of 6-3, 6-2. Zverev came back and won the last three sets with scores of 6-3, 6-4, 6-3.

The 2020 US Open final for Women's Singles matched Azarenka and Osaka in the Arthur Ashe Stadium on Saturday, Sep. 12. Azarenka successfully secured the win in the first set, getting a number of points on Osaka with a score of 6-1. Unfortunately, Azarenka's success was short-lived and Osaka came back with a dominating second and third set score of 6-3, 6-3. This was Osaka's second US Open Title, and she used her win and her appearance in the tournament to raise awareness and support for the Black Lives Matter movement in the United States.

The US Open final for Men's Singles saw Thiem versus Zverev in a match on Sunday, Sep. 13. In an epic showdown that lasted about four hours, Thiem reigned victorious over Zverev in a whopping five-set match. Zverev had Thiem in the first two sets, winning those 6-2, 6-4, but Thiem did not give up, winning the next three sets 6-4, 6-3, 7-6 and a tiebreaker score of 8-6. Thiem took home his first Grand Slam title, being the second Austrian to do so after Thomas Muster who won the French Open in 1995.



Azarenka (left) and Osaka (right) stand with their trophies following their finals match Saturday, Sep. 12



Thiem stands with his first place trophy after a long five-set final.