New Landscape, New Landmark, New Look on Farmingdale Campus

By Connie Shakalis

Three calming new green spaces may soon be arriving on campus. A new arboretum has already been started, and soon to follow are a peace pole and a labyrinth. Kathy Coley, FSC’s director of communications, said these are some of many developments planned for FSC.

The arboretum is taking root in the grassy strip adjacent to the bus-stop shelter at the campus’s north end. Staff and students planted its tree in May 2009 to remember the first anniversary of China’s Sichuan province’s devastating earthquake. Later that year, FSC welcomed 19 of the province’s students, who attended classes here.

Another relaxation space will be a labyrinth, a strolling maze-like circuit, the budding idea of FSC’s Health and Wellness Center’s Kathleen Casserly. Since around 2300 BC, when their relaxing properties were first discovered by Egyptians, labyrinths have soothed the human soul.

Today hospitals build them for patients. Walking on labyrinths can be particularly beneficial to Parkinson’s disease patients; doctors believe maneuvering the curvilinear single route helps with brain hemisphere coordination. “When you walk on a labyrinth, ask yourself who you might need to forgive -- or be forgiven by,” said Casserly, an interfaith minister as well as an addictions counselor at FSC.

Funding is settled, she explained; now it’s simply a matter of scheduling. First Stop Café employee, Donna Rojs said, “I’ve seen [labyrinths] in

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The Rampage Student Newspaper

Farmingdale Freshman Sorely Missed

By Allie Sila

who knew him. Coaches and all fellow players are still in shock that someone so dedicated and physically in shape, could collapse during what he was so built to do.

Spirit week and homecoming were planned for October 12th to the 16th, but have been cancelled due to the circumstances. All intercollegiate sporting activities will continue as scheduled.

“I was really looking forward to spirit week, and all the activities along with it. The campus was finally going to have some life to it,” said senior Michael Defabio. There still has not been a statement posted about whether or not spirit week will be held next semester.

“I think it is great that the school is showing their sympathy. It shows each student counts,” said Pat Moore, an employee for Farmingdale State College.

No Spirit Week This Semester

By Kerri Bristol

All of the events planned for spirit week and homecoming have been cancelled due to the recent death of Dominic Murray on October 5th. Funeral arrangements for Murray were being made for the week of homecoming and everyone on campus could have the opportunity to remember him.

Tina Silvestro, a student at FSC, said, “It is such a good idea to cancel the events for now because we should be remembering Murray, and come together as a school for his family and show support.”

Student, Steve Desmoine, said “The cancellation is a sign of respect for Murray. It wouldn’t have been the same to do homecoming without him,” Stephen Messina, another student, had a different opinion about the whole situation. “We worked really hard to make this homecoming worthwhile, and it is upsetting that all our hard work has to be postponed, but under the circumstances, it is understandable.”

Even though students will have to wait a little longer to have a homecoming, everyone at FSC agree that this time should be spent remembering Murray and to keep him in our hearts.
Health vs. Beauty
By Kerri Bristol

Some people today are more concerned with how they look and feel and will do anything to achieve it. Tanning beds are an effective way to get tan without sitting in the sun for hours. Some think it is better to sit in a tanning bed for 15 minutes and come out with a nice tan. However, there are very strong opinions about tanning and whether or not it’s a smart choice.

“I love to go tanning because I love to be tan, plus it’s free for me,” said a worker at Beach Bum tanning, Caitlin Andy. “Tanning actually helps some people with acne because it helps them heal. But as far as dangers if you abuse tanning than you’re in trouble.”

Reyna Ashley, a recovering skin cancer victim said, “I don’t think it is necessary at all on a daily basis to go tanning. Once or twice a week is fine. I don’t think people are truly aware of what dangers it really has.”

Dr. Redmond, a dermatologist said that, “I have perhaps an 800 percent increase in the number of expected melanoma cases in teenagers here, strictly from the use of indoor tanning.”

Other long term risks that tanning beds cause are premature aging of the skin, possible blindness, and sagginess and a leathery appearance of your skin. More than one million people are diagnosed with skin cancer every year.

The rays emitted by the lights of the tanning beds are actually 2 to 3 times stronger than those from the sun.

The possible warning signs for cancer for people who go tanning are a mole that changes color or shape, an open sore that doesn’t heal for weeks, or a skin abnormality that changes color or size. Any of these examples could be cancer. It is recommended to see a dermatologist annually or when you notice any changes with your skin.

Digital Killed the Record Store
By Katie Robertson

Led Zeppelin filled the spaces in Mr. Cheapo’s Records, one of the last few record stores on Long Island. With the CD racks filled, a decent size vinyl section, and a cashier who seemed more than busy with customers, it was hard to tell that the record store era is a dying poetry.

CD sales have been sliding for some time now. With legal and illegal downloading, record stores have been collapsing more than ever. One click of a mouse gives someone an entire album in their collection without paying a cent.

Legal music downloading through iTunes is cheap too ($9.99/ download) if one is only purchasing a few songs from an album.

“It’s crazy to buy music at the price it is,” said student Lauren Mason. “I’d be spending thousands of dollars if I bought all those CDs.”

According to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), 1.4 billion single tracks were legally downloaded in 2008, while over 40 billion music files were shared and downloaded in the same year.

Downloaded music is the younger brother of CDs in the music sales family and he hasn’t stopped pushing his brother more and more out of the picture.

Tower Records was one of the first major record stores forced to close its stores nationwide for good in 2006. F.Y.E (For Your Entertainment), another chain, closed hundreds of its stores across the country in the past two years. Most recently, Virgin Megastores has fallen victim to this plague. This past summer, Megastores shut down both of its New York City locations.

There isn’t much competition left out there nor is there much that can be done to boost sales in record stores. “You just have to hope you get to the customers who still like tangible music,” said Stu Goldberg, the manager of the Mineola Mr. Cheapo’s.

Despite CD sales falling and music file downloading taking over, there are still people who prefer to walk into a local record store, wave to the cashier across the room, and begin to spend a chunk of time flipping through row after row of CDs.

The clacking of the CDs against each other is what some crave. The clicking of a mouse and the light from a computer screen just doesn’t come close for some people.

“I like supporting bands I listen to over better sound quality that might come with digital downloads,” said student Phillip Thomas.

The physical CD’s album art is also essential and can turn out to be famous as it did with Pink Floyd’s “Dark Side of the Moon” and The Beatles “Abbey Road.”

It’s only a matter of time before there are no record stores left. “It’s not going to turn around,” said Goldberg. “I’m just hoping it’s not going to get any worse.”

The Buggles’ “Video Killed the Radio Star” was the first music video aired when MTV premiered in 1980. Since then, music videos have become far more popular and outranked the stars of the radio waves. From the looks of how the music sales are going, the “stars” of the record store might definitely be next on the chopping block.
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Student Newspaper
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Every semester, each student is faced with the challenge of sourcing money to finance their book purchases. Although there are several alternatives to shopping at the college book store, many find it convenient to purchase their books on campus.

However, many students have boycotted the bookstore in their own efforts to either save money or look elsewhere for cheaper textbooks.

“I no longer buy textbooks. I either suffer or look on with a classmate,” said Brandon Haviland, 24, a senior. “I don’t care if the textbook is required. I’m just required to go to class and take notes.”

Many students share a common relationship with the campus bookstore which, in their eyes, is not a friendly one.

Kevin Machin, 22, a transfer student from Suffolk Community College refers to the campus bookstore as “an on-campus business merchant.” Although Machin has shopped at the campus book store, he refuses to get low-balled on selling books back.

“I do buy new and used books, and I just keep them come the end of the semester,” said Machin. “It’s like a library in my room, but I refuse to them sell them back to them for 20 percent when they turn around and sell it for 80 percent.”

Ashley Bain, 23, a junior, has a strategy to purchasing college textbooks. “I actually do all my book shopping before school starts so I can get first dibs on used books”.

Although this may save time and money, Bain doesn’t get the current edition. “I never buy new editions for two reasons: they only have some new material and I’m not paying an arm and a leg for a book that’s practically the same as the old version.”

SUNY Farmingdale: A Wealth of Creativity
By Robert Sutter

Amongst the several activities outside of academic studies, Farmingdale State College is known for an assembly-like gathering called the Visiting Writer’s Program.

These events are mostly attended by English students during their first or second years at FSC but remain open events. Many writers come to the campus to talk about their works or the works of others, poets in particular.

The coordinator of the Visiting Writers Program is Associate Professor of English and Humanities, Dr. Margery Brown.

One of the most well-attended events was that of Michael Gray. British writer Michael Gray will be speaking about the life and times of Dylan. Gray explored popular music during his writing career but his work on Dylan is considered his most noteworthy efforts. The life of entertainer Bob Dylan is historic. His songs are considered important in the anti-war movement, yet he still explored many song genres such as rock and roll, folk, and jazz.

In regard to the content of the event, there were students who were intrigued by the subject matter pertaining to Bob Dylan.

“He’s one of my dad’s favorites.” said FSC freshman student, Mitchell Johnson. “It makes taking English my first year worthwhile.”

Vivian Shipley is a poet, and her work seems to fit more into the common theme of the Visiting Writer’s Program. While her name might not be as well-known as other poets such as Charles Dickens or Robert Frost, she wrote many works, including “Gleanings,” one of her most popular novels.

Since Shipley is not as well known throughout Farmingdale State College as Dylan, many are skeptical as to what they should expect.

Freshman Megan Greene said, “I needed to attend this event as a requirement for my class. I don’t have any expectations, so we’ll see where it goes.” Altogether, it will be a unique experience to gain insight into creative writing, despite one’s motive for attendance.

The next visiting writer will be Glenn Morazzini, the Paumanok Award Winner of 2008. He will be on the campus December 3 in the Ward Hall Great Room at 11 a.m. Morazzini has worked for several years as a psychotherapist.

In 2006, he earned his MFA from the Stonecoast Creative Writing Program. He has published many award-winning poems, “Ars Poetica Harmonica,” “The Year I Won the Cy Young Award,” “Sonny’s Song,” and “My Uncles, The Italians,” which won first place in the 2007 Allen Ginsberg Poetry Contest. In 2007, he also received a Poetry Fellowship from the Martin Dibner Foundation.

The Battle of the Bookstore
By Kyle Mitchell

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Returning Student Are All Business
By Kate Sparling

Technically the term ‘returning student’ means any person who has missed at least one semester here at FSC and has rejoined the ranks of his/her fellow classmates.

Some are like Judy Greene, 50, who gets up at dawn, gulps down two cups of tea as she crams for her biology test and puts some finishing touches on her anatomy paper, which is due in an hour.

Her oldest son, Ted, 23, grabs a piece of toast and his textbooks while rushing out the door with wet hair.

The dining room table is strewn with laptops and notepads and half empty cups of coffee.

Life at the Greene household goes at a fast pace. Both Greene and her son attend FSC. “My husband makes ‘Dad threw it together’ dinners,” said Greene.

Greene enrolled at FSC in the summer semester. She chose Farmingdale because of the college’s proximity, cost, and good prehealth certificate program.

“I think returning students are generally more focused, goal-oriented, and serious about our coursework and I think the professors appreciate that,” Greene said, “I’m really not here for the social aspect at all.” She currently maintains a GPA of 4.0.

Christopher Wallace, 34, attends FSC after working for years in the mortgage lending sector. “I really like Farmingdale,” said Wallace. “Although the college is growing, it still has that small school feel. The faculty cares about their students and is dedicated to teaching.”

Wallace, like Greene, maintains a 4.0 average and is active in the Golden Key Society, FSC’s high honors club.

Christy Orquera, a wife, mother, and honor student at FSC said, “The reason it has taken me so long to finish my degree wasn’t poor life choices and bad directions. I couldn’t be bothered with more school right out of high school, so I chose military service to stay ambitious about something,” said Orquera. “I love being back in school, I crave learning, and I don’t take this chance at a college education for granted.”

Bridget Erlich, 33, said, “In the course of my first year, I discovered that I was ready to put myself to this test, and to excel! My return to college has enabled me to feel that I’m actively pushing forward in my effort to improve my life and the opportunities available to me.”

With the exception of Greene, Orquera, Erlich, and Wallace have become active in the Golden Key Society and its attendance of older students is growing.

Bob Simins, who heads up Institutional Research at FSC, said there are 1,072 students over the age of 30 who are enrolled this semester.

“One of our best students are returning students because they take learning seriously,” said Simins.

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Cash on Wheels
By Carlos Herrera

Getting to school is getting really expensive for some students. There are students who take the practical way of getting to school by just simply driving there, and there’s a few who live on campus and won’t have to worry about how they’re going to get to class. For a small group of students though, paying to commute to get to school is the only way.

“I have to pay for a bus to the train, pay for the train to get to Farmingdale, and then from the train station I have to pay the shuttle bus to school,” said Nicholas Basil. “It’s a lot of money to spend.”

The bus ride to the train station is only $1 for students, and then a $4.50 for a one way trip using the Long Island Rail Road to Farmingdale, and then $2.25 for students to use the shuttle bus from the station to school. That adds up $7.75 just to get to school is a lot for a college student to spend more than once a week.

Basil isn’t the only student spending money to commute to school. Jordan Williams commutes to FSC from Hempstead. “Twelve dollars on a cab to get to the station, plus the fees to get on the train and for all of the transfers,” said Williams. “It’s rough.”

Basil and Williams are only two commuter students who have to commit to public transportation to get to school, and they say it’s becoming frustrating to manage their money.

“Most of my cash goes to travel, really,” said Williams. With students spending large sums of money each week, students are begging for help from their school to give them a cheaper form of transportation.

“I would like to see them do something,” said Basil. “I’m spending a lot of money every week just to get here.”

Amy Michelin, Farmingdale’s Communications and Event Associate, was unable to give an answer when asked whether or not the school was thinking of offering an alternate solution for students.

Students like Basil and Williams hope these questions get answered soon, because their wallets are shrinking every time they have to go to school.
Ram Jam 21: Lights, Camera, Action!

By Dwight Jackson

So many loud voices talking and laughing, on top of the even louder "LOL Smiley Face" song, blasting through the speakers. Young men and women of different ethnic backgrounds crowd the dance floor, dancing, clapping, snapping, and singing, while others stand idly along the walls of the large multi-purpose room in Roosevelt Hall, all enjoying the atmosphere.

"Where my ladies at?" said the DJ, shouting into the microphone from his booth. This set off a loud roar from the majority of the ladies in the room.

As the night went on, it wasn’t hard to notice that the music being played had a mixture of a lot of different artists even though reggae, hip hop, and R&B dominated the majority of the spins.

Hundreds of students and non-students were present, however, the room was not filled to maximum capacity. Although Ram Jam had all the elements of a great party, music, people, food and a safe place to contain it all. At a public function there is also a risk that anything can happen.

"You can’t ever gather a lot of people nowadays, without something going down," said Student Christina Lafayette, who regularly attends different social functions held on campus.

By the end of the party, there were several fights. "Those fights weren’t necessary, they ruined the whole party," said Lafayette. The first official party of the semester started off as a night to remember but because of the inability to control emotions Ram Jam ended as a night some students would rather forget.

"The night was going good, but the fighting that ended the party early definitely changed that," said David Sikora. Sikora attends FSC however Ram Jam 21 was the first Farmingdale party he ever attended. "The party had so much potential," said Sikora.

While the fighting that closed the party seemed to ruin the night for some of the students who attended others feel that the party didn’t live up to expectations in other ways.

"I know there were a lot of people there but there should’ve been more people there," said James Taylor. Taylor attends Nassau Community College and claims to party every weekend. "A party doesn’t feel right unless it’s at full capacity or at least close to being full," said Taylor.

Another issue that arose was lack of variety in the music being played by the DJ. "I swear I heard most of the songs like three times in less than two hours!" said Erica Hatcher. Hatcher who also attends Nassau Community College was invited by a friend to attend Ram Jam 21.

"I know that some songs move the crowd more than others but c’mon that was ridiculous," said Hatcher.

According to Lafayette, Sikora, Taylor, and Hatcher, Ram Jam 21 did not live up to expectations. "Despite the disappointments, I think there should be another Ram Jam this semester," said Lamar Hall. Hall runs track for the school and has a strong love for Jamaican dance. "I can have a good time anywhere. Ram Jam wasn’t that bad overall," said Hall.

The College Life, What's That?

By Gregory Tomao

College is a place known for its annihilation of teen and post-teen inhibitions; a renaissance in a student's life where they are free to do what they please and to unleash their inner party animal. Farmingdale State has a way of its own.

"Come here, go to class, and go home," said David Brown, a sophomore commuter student. "At Farmingdale, at least, it’s that way. Working at an old-fashioned deli and doing construction work, I keep real busy."

Most people would have you think that average college students spends a majority of their nights “on the town,” so to speak, but Brown would have you think otherwise. "I like it the way it is. I'm not the party type at all really."

According to the Dean of Students office at Farmingdale State, there are 6,987 students enrolled for the Fall 2009 semester. Of the nearly 7,000 students, only 505 are residents on campus. Farmingdale has always been a commuter college, which is made obvious since a mere 1/14th of the students dorm. Approximately 82 percent of students are employed.

Kenny Vasquez, a freshman living on campus, has a slightly different story. “I’ve met plenty of people already that have little to say if it isn’t about drinking,” said Vasquez. “Me? I like to keep a fine balance between partying and studying, but I’ve always been that way.”

There are those few chosen students who have the privilege of being spoon-fed incomewise, but Vasquez isn’t one of them. “I work at CVS Pharmacy and have to keep up with school work and attempt to have a life as well.”

Thing haven’t changed so much since a few decades ago.

“I had gone to Adelphi University. I remember how people acted back then,” said Professor George N. Caviris, a physics professor at Farmingdale for almost 40 years.

“My friends went to parties. I went to parties too but, I wasn't a party animal.” Caviris didn’t differ much from the students today. “In the summers, I sold furniture, and in the winters, I worked in the drug department of a supermarket.”