BCC NEWS

BCC Chess Club Teaches Students How to Check and Checkmate

BY MICHELLE HA

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Have you ever played chess an marveled over how those little kings, queens, and knights become such a riveting diversion? If you're looking to play, or have an interest in learning how, Bergen Community College's very own chess club is the place to enlist.

The cool part is that you don't have to know how to play chess to join; the advisors will teach you.

"We're different," said Professor Keith Chu, of the Social Sciences department and an advisor of the college's chess club. The other advisor is Maria Fressola.

Members of the club are taught strategies and moves to use in the game. The club, which consists of about 30-40 members, also helps students plan for chess tournaments.

The club has yet to compete with other colleges, but that is the next goal they hope to accomplish. The club intends to find a good student officer to lead and plan for future chess club competitions.

Last semester, the chess club hosted Maurice Ashley, an African-American star chess player, who visited BCC in October. Known as the "Tiger Woods of Chess," he is an international chess Grand Master. The BCC chess club held a public interview of him on stage, and it went very well, Professor Chu said. He is in the top .01 percent of chess players, and the author of "Chess for Success."

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Professor Keith Chu of the Social Sciences Department

"He really is remarkable,' Professor Chu commented.

"I believe it is the greatest game ever invented," said Professor Chu, who obviously is very passionate towards the game of chess.

Professor Chu says that chess is good for concentration and even allows people to see consequences of their actions.

"It's so great because chess' origin began in India and people have been playing for thousands of years, and it still speaks to the 21st century, he said. "I love that it has a historical element."

In addition, studies show that there is a strong correlation between chess and science and math. People who play chess tend to do better in analytical studies.

The object of the game is to checkmate the opponent's king, which means the king is under immediate attack and there is no way to remove him on the next move.

So what about all those students who are always hanging out by the chess tables in the Student Center? Do they have anything to do with the club?

Student Matt Akkerhuis says he's not part of the club but plays in the Student Center almost everyday. He believes it is a good hobby. "It's a good way to kill time between classes, and it's fun," he said.

The Ultimate Gift: Organ Donation

BY HUMA MUNIR

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The tears were visible in the eyes of Francisco Monzon as he spoke about his experience as an organ donor for his older brother, who received a kidney transplant.

"Prior to the operation, my brother was not even urinating for two years," said Monzon, his voice cracking with emotion.

Monzon's older brother had received a kidney when he was 18 years old. "At the time, i was very young and my dad was diabetic," said Monzon, "My mother was the only one who could donate [at the time]". After the transplant, Monzon's brother recovered very well and married and had a family. Then two years ago, Monzon received a phone call saying that his brother needed another kidney transplant.

"After seeing my mother do such a brave thing, I wanted to do it too", said Monzon.

Monzon was one of the six panelists who came to BCC to speak about "Organ Donation Awareness" on April 16 at the Anna Maria Ciccone Theater. The panelists included two recipients and two organ donors.

However one panelist, Loretta Borrows, a student at BCC and an awaiting organ donor could not attend the discussion due to her medical condition. Borrows is waiting for a kidney transplant and since age seven has been diagnosed with diabetes. Since then, Borrows had to take insulin and check the blood pressure four times a day. In middle school, Borrows' blood pressure rose and led to a strain on her kidneys. Today, Borrows is awaiting a donor and strongly feels that not enough information is available to people about organ donation.

Another panelist, Doctor Manzi, who had received a kidney and a stem cell transplant from his wife, acknowledged that it was a shock when doctors told him that he had only 16 months to live. Dr.Manzi's health before receiving the transplant was "absolutely terrible" he said.

"I had no energy and no appetite," said Dr.Manzi.

He remarked that the evening he woke up from the transplant, he regained his appetite and ordered a lot of food. "The minute I woke up, I said what's for dinner tonight?"

Frank McEntee, who came to speak about his experience, has been a diabetic for 37 years and because of kidney failure, went on dialysis in October, 2000. McEntee was on dialysis for five years before getting his transplant in 2005. One of the problems that he faced was loosening of teeth from the back because of a limited amount of calcium he can take at the time. Due to diabetes, Frank's fluid intake was two ounces for each hour after eight hours of sleep.

After his transplant, "I was glad that I was finally going to be able to drink [fluid]" said Frank. Frank now volunteers at the Hackensack University Medical Center and informs people about becoming an organ donor.

"If people would research and become educated about being an organ donor, it would help many people today," said Michelle Moller. It will be four years in August since Moller met a woman on a living donor website whose husband at age 49, was waiting for a kidney transplant for several years. "I still talk to the recipient and he is doing fabulous," said Moller, "The feeling you get from [doing] this is tremendous."

The Panel Discussion was carried on by a question & answer session. Dr. Michael Shapiro, the Chief of Organ Transplantation at Hackensack University Medical Center, answered questions about physical, psychological, and economic impacts that the students had about being an organ donor. Several misconceptions and myths regarding the organ donors were also addressed.

Students were encouraged strongly to find out more information on how to become an organ donor. The experiences of the recipients and organ donors brought tears to the eyes of those who were attending the discussion.

"Organ donation is truly like giving somebody a life," said Dr.Manzi when he was asked about his perspective on organ donation.

For access to U.S. Government information on organ and tissue donation and transplantation, visit OrganDonor.gov. The site covers donation basics, research, best practices, and legislation, and how you can get involved.
There are currently 99, 134 candidates on a waiting list, according to Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN) data.

COURTESY/FLICKR.COM

Contrary to the cliché, words can certainly hurt you.

Learning the Value of Words

BY ANITA PEJIC

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

"Are your words holding you back?" was presented to an audience of about 30 on March 6 in the Student Center during Women's History Month. The workshop encouraged all attendees to become aware of, and to discuss how we, as a society (especially women) use our words.

One would think that in this so-called "visual age," not much attention is paid to what is actually being said, but this is not true. Words still do hold value.

After reading an article entitled, "Are your words holding you back?" by Ellen Welty, Sharon Goldstein, director of BCC's Career Development Center, and a member of the Women's History Month Committee felt compelled to spread the word.

A copy of the article was handed out before the discussion started so that everyone would get a chance to familiarize themselves with the topic.

The article itself points out some speech habits typical of women. Phrases such as, "this is probably a stupid idea, but …," were deconstructed. This particular phrase is considered to be the product of many years of training girls not to stand out or to have differing points of view. Other habits include overly excessive use of fillers, such as word "like," which makes one sound inarticulate. Also, the habit of constant apologizing, whether enlisting the use of the word "sorry", expressing insecurity with the words "I think," "kind of," and "sort of," minimizing the importance of your message by saying "just," and making statements sound like questions by up-talking (ex. I am free on Friday?) were mentioned as well.

"It is something that I believe every woman can relate to," Goldstein stated. "We have all done it, we all use these words, but the point is that we don't have to. It would really like to know what students think and feel about this topic. I believe it will be a great experience for all of us."

After a warm welcome from Mr. Goldstein, everyone got a chance to briefly introduce themselves in order to create a more comfortable and trusting environment. Women and men from ages 18 to 80 were present. Such a mixture enabled respectful, interesting and educational discussion.

Differences between the way men and women talk, as well as differences between words used in everyday conversation now and few decades ago were also mentioned as having some significant factor in how we ultimately present ourselves and talk.

"I never actually paid attention to many of those things, but now that I do I am surprised of how often we, as women, use those particular words," said Krista Lewie-Cepero, one of the students attending the workshop.

"I realized that in our speech, we, as women, are trying to coat things up by…"cushioning the blow," when many times it is really not necessary. It was such a positive experience," she stated.

A Writer Goes for his Dream

BY GRIFFIN SAMUELS

GUEST WRITER

Thomas Cannone's dream was to be a writer. But instead, he became an accountant, and a father in Oradell, N.J. – a good life, yes, but he still had his youthful dream.

Now, more than a quarter century after graduating from St. John's University and earning his CPA, Cannone, 50, is taking courses at Bergen to realize his dream to become a published author.

And, he appears to be headed in the right direction.

Cannone is one of 30 students selected among 350 applicants nationwide to attend the New York State Summer Writers Institute at Skidmore College, under the joint auspices of Skidmore College and the New York State Writers Institute at the University at Albany.

To receive consideration for the scholarships, students submitted applications to the Institute featuring their best writing. Dr. Dorothy Altman, associate professor in BCC's English Department, encouraged Cannone to send his collection of his short stories and poetry, citing his imagination, research and technical skill.

"Tom has written excellent poetry, alive with images; his drama and short fiction also reflect his considerable talent," said Dr. Altman.

As a youth, he said he was inspired to be a writer by the music and lyrics of singer-songwriter Bob Dylan.

Cannone's writing includes a short story, entitled "Smokewalker," which Dr. Altman described as a story of a man who uses 9/11 "as a screen to fake his death and walk away from an empty life." Some other titles include "A Letter to Jennifer," "On a Stretch of I-70," and "El Stadio." Poems include "Empty Pages",

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