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a student publication

The Montgazette

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The Students' Voice

Issue 94

Serving Montgomery County Community College and the Surrounding Community

April 2023



i know this isn't something you want to hear but....



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Honesty... Can it be bad? Page 6.

(Photo / Anne Kastelein)

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Spend the summer break outdoors

Steven Wicher Jr.
The Montgazette Editor-in-Chief

As much as I love school, I must admit I have another love in my life: the beach. I never understood why NASA spends billions of taxpayer dollars to explore the universe, when all the universe's perfection can be found along the Jersey shore. That is where I long to spend my days, under the burning rays of sunshine. The coarse sand in my sandals and the repeating pulse of the pounding Atlantic Ocean soothes me into pure bliss.

Some students may not enjoy the beach, which is perfectly fine. Summer is not just for the beach, but it is meant to be spent outdoors. Camping

in the Pennsylvania wilderness during the summer is another beautiful adventure that cannot be experienced the same way in other seasons. In the winter, the wind bites at exposed skin and the cold stiffens the body's bones. In the summer, however, the Earth's melody comes to life. The bugs buzz with glee as tree branches shake in the cool breeze. The scent of newly mowed grass drifts into the nostrils of swimmers floating on a mountain lake.

Perhaps the beach and forest are not your cup of tea. Then I have two words: amusement parks. Students do

not have to travel to the swamps of Florida to go to a good amusement park. Nestled in the hills of Allentown is Dorney Park and Wildwater Kingdom, waiting for guests to enjoy their summer nights. Soaring high on rollercoasters and kicking back in the lazy river are two more urban options for those looking for vacation fun.

There are way too many choices for how to spend your summer outdoors. Do not be restricted a hot, stuffy four-wall room all summer. Go out and bask in the fun. Students may have to work most of the time in the summer; I certainly do. To

that, I say, "Make the time!" Your body cannot enjoy a rollercoaster at 80 years old.

To all Montgomery County Community College students and staff, enjoy your summer break. To the students taking summer courses, please work to balance the need to get an education with the want to bask in the sun. To students not returning for the fall semester, I wish you well out in the workforce or enjoying life at a different school.

I hope everyone makes the most of this summer. Best of luck to everyone and keep an eye out for the next issue of The Montgazette in the fall!

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Opinion:

The untold truth of the Disney College Program

Emma Daubert
The Montgazette Contributor

Established in 1981, The Walt Disney Company created a program to entice college students to work in their amusement parks and resorts. Although it is advertised as an internship that will be “the highlight of your college career,” the program is not what it seems at first glance.

The Disney College Program is an opportunity for college students to take a few semesters off and work at Walt Disney World in Orlando, FL, or Disneyland in Anaheim, CA. These students live at off-property apartments owned by Disney during the duration of their internship. Their jobs (referred to as roles) are randomly assigned to them, with the most common being in food and beverage service, merchandise, and attractions. These roles will be where students work during their time in the program, with no ability to transfer unless it is for medical accommodations.

To attract students, the Disney College Program advertises giving “real-world experience” in certain industries. Unfortunately, it is nothing but a ploy to get young adults to do hard labor for a multimillion-dollar company on low wages. Participants in the program are expected to work long hours in hot, uncomfortable environments while earning less than full-time employees. The smaller hourly wages are just enough to still pay the approximately \$800 monthly

for their housing, which is owned by Disney.

These program participants live in a campus-like apartment complex where they room with three other students. Since the program accepts students worldwide, this campus becomes their home, yet there are very little amenities for such high costs of living. The campus does not offer a place to purchase groceries or any social spots to hang out with friends.

On days off, students can use their free admission to spend the day in one of the Disney parks. As amazing as this perk may sound, food within the parks is expensive, so food or merchandise purchased chews away at the rest of the workers’ small paychecks. This is another way the money goes right back into Mickey Mouse’s pocket.

The Walt Disney Company uncovered a fascinating business model with their college program. It pays students the minimum wage while telling them to feel honored for doing the heavy lifting at the theme parks. These “interns” become built-in customers on their days off. They also act as free marketing for the company when they post their experience on social media. Of course, the program’s experience varies from participant to participant, but interns should expect more from a place that is advertised as “The Happiest Place on Earth.”



Cinderella's Castle looms over
the Magic Kingdom in Walt Disney World.

(Photo / Steven Wicher Jr.)

Opinion: Why you should care that teachers are leaving their profession

Rose Padva
The Montgazette MSP 171

Following the hardships of the pandemic, there have been constant reports about the shortage of teachers in schools across the nation. Many of these teachers who once loved their profession are now leaving due to negative student behaviors, low wages, and the politicization of classroom curriculum.

It's no surprise that student behavior has changed from the early 2000s. This is due to the easy gratification of technology and ensuing difficulty engaging students. As teachers try to grab their students' attention, many are growing frustrated at a general unwillingness to learn.

Along with student behavior, teachers earn low wages, placing undue financial stress on them, even if they participate in a union. Considering the large impact teachers have on future generations, it is unfortunate how much they are taken for granted.

During a PBS interview, Minnesota's 2020 Teacher of the Year, Qorsho Hassan, stated, "I also feel like there's this expectation that we do free labor, without any foresight or any thought about the families that we have, and the other roles that we carry besides teaching."

Instead of giving teachers

more tools and resources, administrators have put a focus on increasing their school's individual ranking compared to other schools. The United States educational system, primarily K-12, has prided itself on acquiring higher rankings compared to foreign countries. However, according to author Kimberly Amadeo from The Balance, this has not been the case since 2018. In 2020, the US placed third.

The focus of ranking schools against each other by using standardized testing puts more emphasis on the test material than it does on meeting student

needs. This focus causes students to fall behind and lose interest, so they turn their attention to anything else than their education. It is a vicious cycle.

The educational system

should work to help students navigate life and problem-solve in a productive manner. If the system focused more on teacher-student relationships as opposed to rankings, students would thrive, and so

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Two award medals.
(Photo / Rose Padva)

Meet Dr. Lianne Hartman: Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs

ESL 005 Montgazette Contributors

Dr. Lianne Hartman is a very talented person who has worked at the College for 14 years. She is well-educated. She attended four colleges (Ithaca, University of Michigan, Temple University and MCCC). She also had different majors like biology, English, library information and education. Her education has helped her to be a wonderful Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs.

She is not a morning person, so she doesn't start until 9:00 a.m. and doesn't finish until 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. each day.

She enjoys her job because each day is different.

Sometimes she has lots of faculty meetings, and she likes to interact with students about their college experience. When she has free time, she likes to read novels, especially contemporary fiction, and she also likes to weave cloth.

She enjoys her job because she likes the people she works with. To be successful in this position, she feels she must be patient. It is also important to be a good listener and a strong communicator. When she speaks, she is clear and unhurried.

Overall, meeting Dr. Hartman was enjoyable and educational.

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Opinion: Can honesty be bad?

Anne Kastelein
MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

What's honesty, really? Is it words constructed into a sentence to form a statement of truth? Or is 'honesty' just a word to describe an attribute of someone's character? Is honesty something real?

According to Christopher D. Connors, author of "Honesty: How It Benefits You and Others," "Honesty is going to take you places in life that you never could have dreamed, and it's the easiest thing you can practice in order to be happy, successful and fulfilled."

The origin of the word honesty comes from the Latin term "honestus," which means honorable and respected, but was also used to describe how a person looked and dressed. In society today, people use the word as a facet of moral character that connotes positive attributes.

Honesty can feel empowering to an individual and enables people to remain consistent with how they will present facts. Many people believe that honesty is the best policy to prevent making a habit out of "fibbing" one's

way through life.

At the same time, author Carolyn Steber explains some instances where honesty may not be the best policy. These instances include when someone is looking for your approval or when you are around toxic individuals. Steber states, "While authenticity and honesty are important, not everyone is entitled to know your life story or have access to your authentic self."

Although her opinions are valid when it comes to discussing one's personal life, not wanting to hurt

another person's feelings is important, too. There is still the idea that honesty helps people find the answers they are looking for.

Honesty is the foundation of trust in a relationship. It allows the relationship to function and thrive. A person can gain respect out of honesty. As Connors says, "Honest intentions in speech and action gain the attention and respect of others. These people become the ones who you not only want to influence but you also want to be influenced by."

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Opinion: Dogs are the most joyous companions

Amanda Bush
The Montgazette Contributor

The phrase “dogs are better than people” rings true for dog-lovers all over the world. The bold personalities and zest for life that these animals have never failed to spice things up every day. Although it is a huge undertaking, owning a dog can bring life-changing benefits for pet owners. Everyone should consider adopting a dog because of their unconditional love and because they help improve both mental and emotional health.

Dogs are loyal companions. People with dogs are never truly alone. Their dog sits beside them for their morning coffee and welcomes their owners home with enthusiastic greetings of gleeful barks, wagging tails, and happy jumps. At the end of the day, dogs nestle beside their owners, and they fall asleep together. The companionship that a dog provides is unparalleled to any other animal. The genuine bond between a human and dog is rare compared to other relationships.

Dogs can bring improvements to a person’s health in many ways. According to Johns Hopkins Medicine, petting a dog reduces the levels of the stress hormone cortisol. Even being in the presence of a dog can lift a person’s spirits. The companionship a dog provides can help a person through hardships, such as illness, grief, and loneliness.

Dogs can keep their owners physically healthy as well. They require physical activity to keep happy, so people must take them for walks and play with them. Each of these activities, by extension, keep their humans moving. According to research by the Mayo Clinic, dog owners gain stamina and better cardiovascular health from walking their pets. In addition, dogs are loyal protectors who can detect incoming threats to their owners better than any security system.

Unfortunately, many people are put off from bringing a dog into their lives by false misconceptions. Some believe that dogs are territorial and cause more harm

than good. Many breeds of dogs have bad reputations by no fault of their own. According to the BBC, a study in Austria found a dog’s personality and temperament come from the way they are raised by their owner. While dogs are indeed a lot of work, the fulfillment that comes with a happy dog is unlike any other feeling, and the benefits of such a devoted companion far outweigh any potential issues.

Dogs are often said to be man’s best friend. The companionship of a dog is incredibly therapeutic, and it can help a person through the darkest of times. The unconditional love, physical health benefits, and the emotional support that a dog provides is unmatched. Sometimes, all it takes is the light of one dog for a person to find purpose in life.



Two resting Saint Bernards.
(Photo / Steven Wicher Jr.)



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Opinion: Are energy drinks worth the hype?

Eden Schrag
The Montgazette Contributor

As a busy teenage girl, I am guilty of stopping at Wawa to pick up a Monster energy drink on my way to work or school. While I would not call them delicious, they are a quick way to get an extra boost of energy prior to any activity. Yet, are energy drinks really the best option for a consumer's health? Studies have shown that while energy drinks indeed boost energy and productivity, they also can do more harm than good.

Energy drinks, such as Monster or C4, are often used as a pre-workout drink to increase endurance during exercise. According to Dr. Rosenbloom of Verywell Fit, if an energy drink containing large amounts of caffeine is ingested one hour before a workout, it can raise both aerobic and anaerobic performance. She also found that ingesting caffeine prior to a workout can boost muscular strength and increase both jumping and throwing performance.

Energy drinks are also proven to bolster the mood of consumers. While the result is often short lived, the drinks can be beneficial by improving mental clarity as well as motivation in daily life. For example, symptoms of depression often include constant fatigue and exhaustion. One may consume an energy drink to temporarily relieve these feelings. It is a short-term fix that can help tired individuals struggling to get through the day.

On the other hand, while

energy drinks do offer short-term benefits, they also have potentially life-threatening consequences in the long-term. According to the Washington Post, in a study on participants' reactions to energy drinks, 12% of people who consumed them were hospitalized. Another 8% of people who ingested both energy drinks and drugs required in-patient medical care. Substance abuse combined with energy drinks are a deadly match.

According to Rosenbloom, energy drinks cause side effects such as anxiety, high blood pressure, insomnia, weight gain, muscle spasms, and even seizures. Someone with a pre-existing heart condition who ingests large amounts of caffeine is more likely to suffer from cardiac arrest. For someone without a heart condition, the caffeine can cause more forceful heart contractions than normal, leading to hospitalization or death.

Another danger of energy drinks is the threat of powerful migraines during withdrawal. A significant rise in caffeine intake followed by a sudden decrease can lead to severe headaches that can affect quality of life. According to the National Library of Medicine, migraine symptoms start 12 to 24 hours after caffeine intake, peak at 20–51 hours, and could potentially last as long as nine days.

In addition to caffeine, energy drinks contain potentially harmful

ingredients such as the vitamin additive known as niacin. In small quantities, niacin is technically harmless but it can lead to an overdose when overconsumed. Symptoms of a niacin overdose range from vomiting, itching, skin flushing, and rapid heart rates.

Energy drink overconsumption is a rapidly growing problem among teenagers and adults. Adding more

restrictions to who and where energy drinks can be purchased could help to slow these negative effects. Another solution would be to regulate the amount of caffeine allowed in one can or a pack. The small benefit these drinks offer certainly does not outweigh the potential health crises of energy drinks. Any beverage that can slowly destroy a consumer's heart is not worth the hype.



Collection of Monster energy drink cans.

(Photo / Simon Hershberger)

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Opinion:

Body dysmorphia destroys younger generations

Benjamin Hegge
MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

Body image issues among younger generations are not alien to our society. Young people have always been insecure about their body size, whether too big or small. Body dysmorphia is the general term used to describe the mental ailment in which self-criticism of one's body image exceeds a normal level, causing a person to take up habits that are destructive to their body.

Dysmorphia disorders, such as anorexia, are often attributed as feminine issues. According to the University of Rochester, their study on eating disorders found 90% of anorexics are women between the ages of 15 and 25. However, this does not mean men are immune to body image disorders. Instead, men are affected by different disorders than those that afflict women.

The term "bigorexia" has been thrown around by the internet's fitness communities. It describes a dysmorphia on the opposite end of the spectrum from anorexia. One suffering from bigorexia believes they

can never be big enough. Men are more likely to suffer from this ailment. The beauty standards set in society combined with the negative perspective young men put on themselves can diminish self-esteem, allowing these dysmorphias to form in the mind.

For decades in the United States, the media has portrayed men to be muscle-bound beasts, while women are to be sweet and petite. Undereating is the primary destructive habit in which anorexics engage. Men suffering from bigorexia, on the other hand, may develop an unhealthy obsession with bodybuilding to the point of abusing anabolic steroids. Both habits are detrimental to overall health, yet the effects of anabolic steroids are far more elusive to the naked eye than are those of people deliberately starving themselves.

Anabolic steroids are exogenous androgens (manufactured male hormones) that can be implemented by athletes as PEDs, or performance-enhancing drugs. The common goal among users is

to create a physique that is naturally unattainable. However, severe side effects of steroid use include gynecomastia, the development of mental disorders, balding, and stunted growth.

In a recent study reported by the journal Pediatrics, 2,700 high school students in the Minneapolis area were surveyed about their anabolic steroid usage. The survey found that nearly 6% of boys and 4.6% of girls had used anabolic steroids. While this may seem like a small number, it is a large jump in contrast from a decade ago. According to the CDC, only 1.3% of men and 2.2% of women had used anabolic steroids in 2009.

This is a startling upward trend with no end in sight. Younger people are using these dangerous substances more and more frequently, which plays a major role in their evolving psychology. All these effects paint a grim picture of the future of adolescent health.

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Opinion:

Universal Orlando is one of the premiere theme parks in America

Evan Wanish

MSP 171 The Montgazette Contributor

In the United States, theme parks have always been the go-to destination for thrill-seekers and families. Nowadays, there are more parks in operation than ever before, but not many offer the variety of Universal Orlando. Florida is known for hosting Walt Disney World, but just nine miles away, Universal has made its reputation as one of the best theme parks in America.

Opening on June 7, 1990, the park welcomed the world to its original site. Five years later, construction quickly began on a second park known as the Islands of Adventure. Today, the two main parks remain, with the addition of a water park called Volcano Bay and a fourth titled Epic Universe in construction. Universal Orlando continues to grow in popularity, even post-pandemic.

Entering the park is like walking into the screen at a movie theater. When traveling through certain sections, visitors are transported into the worlds of “Dr. Suess,” “Harry Potter” and “Jurassic Park.”

A few characters, such as Gru (from “Minions”) or Optimus Prime (from “Transformers”), roam the park to entertain fans of all ages.

James Hill, who has been a Universal season pass holder for five years, visits the park any day he wishes. He said, “I love everything about this place. The atmosphere, the sights, the rides. All of it is quite special.” Hill is not the only person who enjoys going to the parks as much as possible. Many visitors arrive in the early morning hours to avoid the long wait times for their favorite rides, which can stretch into hours.

There are many rides based on popular movies that guests can enjoy. At the front of Universal Studios Florida is the “Despicable Me”-inspired ride, “Minion Mayhem.” Other attractions include “Transformers 3D” and “Men in Black: Alien Attack.” Within Islands of Adventure are the more thrilling rollercoasters, such as “The Incredible Hulk Coaster.” The most recent ride (added in 2021) is the

“Jurassic Park”-inspired coaster known as the “Velocicoaster.” Both parks have made their customers feel like they are experiencing the magic of the movies.

In an industry that is very large, Universal Orlando is one of the best theme parks in the world. It continues to expand with both new rides and a brand-

new park in construction. At the end of the day, visitors can expect to leave with a big smile on their faces and a slight sunburn from the hot Florida sun.



Universal Orlando globe at the park's entrance.

(Photo / Evan Wanish)

Opinion:

The birth of a self-improvement mindset

Daniel Galvez

The Montgazette Contributor

Based on my observations, the three pillars of a successful life seem to be forming meaningful relationships, building a solid career, and experiencing overall well-being. Everyone should pursue as many of these ideals as they possibly can. After all, there is no greater pleasure than the feeling of accomplishment and self-realization. Yet, there is a fourth pillar that is frequently overlooked: having a self-improvement mindset. This mindset has recently taken over my life, with very positive outcomes.

Like so many others, when the world stopped in 2020 due to the pandemic, I felt as though I was in solitary confinement. Being locked within the same four walls with no work or people to interact with made me feel purposeless. However, I made sure that this solitude did not go to waste. It made me

appreciate things more closely and it gave me the time for self-reflection. At the start, it was unsettling to confront issues that I had ignored in the past. I felt like a toddler about to take his first steps, but it was just the birth of my self-improvement mindset.

Improving my physical well-being was my first goal. I quickly found myself making endless excuses, like “I don’t have money for a gym membership” or “I don’t want to exercise today.” I had to stop and ask myself if I was ready to give up on everything without even trying, but self-improvement is a journey that has so much to offer. So, I began working out consistently, at home.

What’s more, my life has drastically changed in the past year after moving to the United States. Our nation is called “the land of opportunity” for a reason. I could not let this opportunity for

self-improvement pass me by, so I resumed my education at the College. This new lifestyle taught me discipline, one of the most challenging areas of self-improvement. College forced me to become organized and taught me the value of hard work, so I could meet required deadlines.

My new self-improvement mindset taught me to manage my time, so that I can balance education and work. I was fortunate enough to find a high-paying job that allows me to work from remote locations. Although work is important, my number one priority is to pursue my education.

The knowledge I acquired from experience and a change of mindset will help me achieve my goals. It has made me more assertive, self-aware, and disciplined. Without it, I would not be the person I am today.

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Review:

LGBT love stories shine in HBO's "The Last of Us"

Note: This story does contain spoilers for "The Last of Us."

Marc Regen

MSP 111 The Montgazette Contributor

Based on the popular 2013 video game, the new television series "The Last of Us" has become a gigantic success for HBO. According to Variety, it was the second-largest series debut for HBO since 2010. Within two days, the first episode had been seen by 10 million viewers; by two months, however, this increased to a whopping 40 million viewers. It is clear that HBO has the world's attention and is using it to make a positive impact for the LGBT community. Within the first season of this smash hit, the series exhibited two romances that contrast one another during a post-apocalyptic world.

These romances are between LGBT characters, which is a huge step toward the community becoming more visible. "The Last of Us" may be the most watched series that weaves messages about inclusion and love into an already exceptional story about survival. Having a massive audience watch these love stories brings hope for a future when more media will display this content for every man, woman and child at home who feels the same emotions as these characters.

This is important for Hollywood to show, because progress and inclusivity are essential to creating a safer world for all LGBT members. Improvement can only be implemented when the

media helps get the message out.

One of the show's main characters is Ellie, who is portrayed by nonbinary actress Bella Ramsey. Episode seven centers around how Ellie first got infected and learned she was immune to the fungal infection. It follows Ellie on her last "normal" day with her best friend, Riley, portrayed by Storm Reid. Riley joined the renegade group known as the Fireflies and has come back to spend one final night with Ellie before she leaves Boston. The episode is presented as a flashback to show viewers their outing and the inevitable aftermath.

Episode three also focuses on a love story centered around Bill (Nick Offerman) and Frank (Murray Bartlett). Romance is hard to come by on this show, but when the story veers in that direction, the consequences are fatal. The creative enhancements made to Bill and Frank's tragic tale from the game has been praised by critics for its excellent storytelling. The creators took Bill and Frank's sad ending and altered it into an amazing slow-burn romance with hope.

Each episode centers around tragedy in this terrible world. In lieu of adding to that idea, episode three set out to show Bill and Frank's love getting stronger to beat the

odds stacked against them. They are awarded the rare gift of being able to live and love on their own terms. The story alterations made their time on-screen more impactful and added to Ellie's own relevant LGBT storyline on the show.

Bill and Frank's lives had room to grow, since their love story was built over time, unlike Ellie and Riley's love, which did not get this chance. Ellie's final evening with Riley is not only life-changing because she kisses her budding crush, but because the evening also acts as a catalyst for "The Last of Us" to even happen. Her immunity was exposed and a possible cure for the infection able to be found, all thanks to an ill-fated love story about two vulnerable girls.

Ellie and Riley's story acts as a contrast to that of Bill and Frank. They are young with bright ideas to save society, but they are too powerless to move forward with these ideas. Their lack of family and military recruitment helped build a love which organically grew into romantic feelings. Their hesitation to act on these feelings comes from a different place than the one the audience sees in the story of Bill and Frank.

Bill and Frank get to have a life together and die in each other's arms, in peace. Ellie and Riley are

not as fortunate. Their love is cut short by a devastating bite by an infected zombie. They barely get a few minutes to feel the bliss of their mutual romance. Their climatic kiss ends with their world ending. Ellie is angry at the unfairness of the situation, while Riley attempts to accept their fate. Bill and Frank's quiet mutual departure stands in such contrast to the fast deadly end of Ellie and Riley. Riley wanted to be poetic and "lose their minds together," which Ellie wanted as well. They both wanted a Shakespearean ending, but Ellie's body denied that possibility, because she is immune to the infection.

What viewers experience through these two different couples is how love exists in "The Last of Us." Some characters are permitted to thrive and reach a conclusion not affected by the apocalyptic nature of the world. Others cease without warning. Love is fragile and can be ripped apart in a world overcrowded with zombies—just like our reality, where fragile love is more likely to crumble under the pressures of conformity. The stories send a message to every viewer that they should hold on tightly to love, and they manage to do that with strong LGBT characters that reflect the world today.

Review:

Soul for the Sea offers simple cooking for complex lives

Kimberly Pessoa
MSP 170 The Montgazette Contributor

With a passion for cooking and serving people, Devin Robertson used his extra downtime during quarantine wisely. Cooking was something he did for years, but the pandemic allowed him to sharpen and experiment with his culinary skills.

Soul for the Sea is a catering service that offers traditional Black-American food with a Caribbean influence. By using social media, Robertson has grown his audience and established repeat customers. On two Mondays a month, Soul for the Sea sells more than 40 platters at what he calls “Mon-deals.”

On November 5, 2022, Soul for the Sea catered the “Voices in Power” poetry open mic in Philadelphia. It was the largest event Robertson has serviced, feeding 200 people. This milestone was a great opportunity to make new business connections and provide joy through the love of food.

Soul for the Sea got its name from the two areas that Robertson wanted to fuse. As a Black American man, he grew up in a family that loved to cook. At the same time, many of his lifelong friends are Caribbean American. He spent time learning to cook from his Virginian family as well his Caribbean chosen family. Soul for the Sea is where southern cooking meets the Caribbean and

Central America.

One of Soul for the Sea’s most popular dishes is the street tacos. There are two protein options: brisket or chicken. The brisket packs the most flavor, with spices like cumin, aleppo pepper and tomatoes. On the outside is a corn tortilla, dipped in the same brisket’s stew, or consommé, and then grilled. When it is fried to perfection, the tortilla is layered with cheese, shredded brisket, onions, and cilantro. Robertson chose these tacos as a menu item because he wanted to offer comfort food that was sure to be a crowd favorite.

A more decadent dish is the shrimp-stuffed lobster. This plate comes with a bed of crispy grilled asparagus spears. The vegetable is seared on all sides, but not burned. Then, the lobster tail is centered on the asparagus bed and presented steaming hot. The tail is scored down the middle to allow room for sizzling shrimp.

When the dish is brought out, Robertson then drizzles a made-from-scratch garlic butter sauce over the creation. The butter covers the shrimp, seeps down over the lobster, and pools around the asparagus. If there is any part of the meat or vegetables without butter, Robertson provides a ramekin full of the same garlic butter for dipping

Soul for the Sea’s garlic butter is a commodity on its own. After many customers raved about it, the butter is now available for purchase by the block. Some customers also purchase the herb butter and use it at home for their own cooking.

Soul for the Sea boasts repeat customers and good customer service. Many patrons purchase platters regularly (every week), along with the butter and custom spice blends.

Robertson looks forward to expanding his merchandise to make his branding more noticeable. He hopes to secure a food truck by the end of 2023. For now, platters are available for pick-up, and he also offers delivery to the greater Philadelphia area.

The chef focuses on marketing his services via Instagram @Soulforthesea5 and word of mouth. Business inquiries can be sent to soulforthesea5@gmail.com.



Chicken street tacos platter.

(Photo / Devin Robertson)

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