



The Tusker Tribune

SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

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Summer 2020



Special 'COVID-QUARANTINE 2020' Edition

You Are the Chroniclers of This Time in History!

By Dean W. Pappas
ELA 7 White Team Teacher
Tusker Tribune Advisor

To my valued 7th grade ELA
White Team students:

Welcome to being a part of history. The COVID pandemic and the subsequent quarantine have changed your lives in ways you may not yet fully comprehend. Whatever your thoughts on living in a virtual bubble over the past three months, there is no doubt that this is a major event in your young lives.

It's said that history is written by the victors. Well then, who will write the history of an event where there are NO victors? As it turns out, YOU will.

When I became a teacher 20 years ago, the very last thing I ever imagined doing would be teaching you via computer from my upstairs office, with my dog sleeping on the floor next to me. Virtual meetings, instructional videos, and sending feedback via Schoology and e-mail are all novel, and intriguing. But the truth remains, teaching is a CONTACT SPORT, and I truly, truly miss the daily contact with each and every one of you. No marvel of technology can replace interacting with a group of 24 eager young faces, having a discussion or debate, writing in notebooks, standing on desks (I REALLY wanted you to do that this year!), having a poetry slam under a spotlight, and having some of you hang out in my classroom during lunch. I, too, feel denied in some way because of this quarantine.

So, I wracked my brain for some kind of final project that would allow us all to express how we're feeling. For better or for worse, this Quarantine Memoir is the result of that brainstorm

(or brain drizzle . . .)

Even in this age of Distance Learning, Telecommuting, Zoom meetings and virtual offices, newspapers continue to chronicle history. Headlines, photographs, editorials, reports, stories, and now, YOUR Quarantine

Memoirs, will preserve this moment in time for all eternity. Your voices, which have been stifled in so many ways because of quarantine, WILL BE HEARD now and forever.

This, my dear students, is YOUR way to leave your mark on this historical moment. Well after you graduate SMS, and make your way in a new and changed world, you will be

able to look back on this issue of the Tusker Tribune and say, "I was a part of history, and this is MY STORY." Not everyone gets a chance to tell their story in this way.

You do.

And after being denied so much this year—socials, concerts, plays, sports, after-school activities, a weekend sleepover, a casual hangout, the Bronx Zoo, Splash Down, seeing your friends and teachers in the hallway, cafeteria, playground, or in class—it's time that you're GIVEN something—a chance to TELL YOUR STORY to a wider audience.

Please let your voices ring loud and strong in this very special issue of the Tusker Tribune. Because for once, you not only get to LIVE history, you get to WRITE IT as well.

You have made me so proud of all you have achieved, and I know that you will rise from this, learn from this, and take on the world on your own terms. Let that start here.

Sincerely,

Mr. Pappas, ELA White Team
19 June 2020



Quarantine Quotes

*"Do What You Can,
With What You Have,
Where You Are . . ."*

—Teddy Roosevelt

*"Our Grandparents
Were Called to War.
We're Asked to Practice
Social Distancing and
Stop Hoarding Toilet
Paper . . ."*

—The PEI Collective

*"Not All Heroes Wear
Capes . . . But a Whole
Dedicated Bunch of
Them Wear Scrubs . . ."*

—Unattributed

*"It's OK to fall apart
sometimes. Tacos fall
apart and we still love
them . . ."*

—Carly's Confessions



is the online Somers Middle School Student Newspaper. It is published weekly (except during school vacations) on the Somers Middle School Website. It is entirely student-written by 6th, 7th and 8th grade students from:

**Somers Middle School, 250
Route 202, Somers, NY, USA.**

Any SMS student is eligible to write stories.

If interested, please e-mail
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The Pandemic That Changed Us All



By Emily Uffer
ELA 7 White Team

I never thought that I would end my last day of 7th grade from my own house. I thought I would spend it in school with my friends and teachers, but instead I am in front of a computer screen sitting in my room. I started my first day of 7th grade in the school building, thinking that I would end it the same way. But I was wrong, wasn't I?

I feel like being a 7th grader in the Covid-19 pandemic has changed me in many ways. Although I miss seeing familiar faces every day, I have learned to appreciate everything I have, to remember that everything happens for the best and to be thankful for my friends and family.

Since we have been out of school for four months, we have continued learning. We started online school. The teachers post work daily for the students to do and the students must submit assignments by the end of day. I think distance learning has been a change for the students and an odd way to learn. I feel that having the whole day to complete work has been working out well for me. I don't feel pressured to have all my work



finished in 45 minutes. Staying home every day and not having to wear shoes has made me forget to put them on when I leave the house with my mother. As a country, I feel that we did not take as many precautions as soon as we should have. Many schools did not close until the second week of March, which could have prolonged the impact of the disease. This most likely affected the number of deaths in America, which is unbelievable and extremely upsetting.

Due to the virus, I was unable to have my annual family Memorial Day pool party, which is my favorite part of summer when I get to spend time with family and friends who I rarely see.

I have been unable to see my friends, which is what I miss most. I feel that returning to school in September will be different from what we have been used to. I think that the school day will be split in half and distance learning will continue for part of the day. I do believe that there will be a vaccine, just not quite yet. I am hopeful that life will return to normal in the near future, and this pandemic will be seen as a learning opportunity.

The Boredom of Quarantine



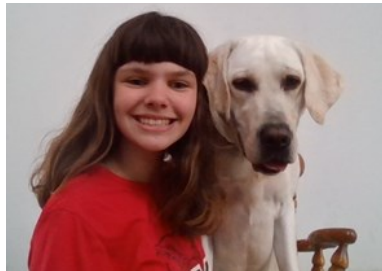
By Heather Arena
ELA 7 White Team

Christmas came and I was living a normal life. Then came St. Patrick's Day and Quarantine. The schools closed and I was no longer able to hang out with my friends. No more sleepovers; no more movies; it seemed my life as I knew it stopped.

My new life consists of video conferences, Facetimes, and phone calls. It also consists of getting up later than usual and staying in my pajamas all day. I miss school and being around my teachers and classmates. Fortunately, I have a dog named Sabrina who keeps me company and keeps me busy. I also have a cat named Bisket who also keeps me company.

I used to be up dressed and at school at 8:20. Now I have been starting schoolwork at 9:00 in the morning in my pajamas. I stay at my desk working alone all day until I see that everything is complete. It is very boring and lonely to do schoolwork that way. I do not find this memorable in anyway and I certainly do not find it funny.

Last summer, I was able to go to Tusker Trax Camp and go all these cool places with lots of other kids. I was also able to go to carnivals and waterparks. This summer, the Trax Camp is cancelled, and social distancing prevents parties, sleepovers, and many good times with friends.



The government responded to this terrible pandemic in many ways, some good and some not so good. The good thing is that they protected the kids and teachers by closing the schools. Another good thing is that they instructed people to quarantine; to wear masks, stay 6 feet apart; and to wash their hands often and not to touch their faces.

The not so good thing is that they closed the small stores and kept the big stores open and many people lost their jobs. I felt they should not have shut the entire country down. Rather, they should have shut down hotspots where the pandemic had a high infection rate. I feel scared, worried, and sad that so many people died in this country.

I do not like quarantine because I miss going places and seeing my friends. I think there will be more spread of the virus due to the recent George Floyd protesting with large numbers of people in a crowd. I think we will have a vaccine by the fall. I hope it will be in time. I also hope that they will be able to treat people with medicine to reduce the symptoms and shorten the time of the illness and have people recover rather than die if they do get sick. I think we will continue to use computers more in the future after the pandemic is over. I am looking forward to getting back to a more normal life.

The Worst School Year Yet



By Emily Mladenovic
ELA 7 White Team

The way I changed from this pandemic is I have been going outside a lot more than before. Also, I have been doing my homework a lot faster at home than in school.

The most unfair thing I have gone through so far is not being able to go to London. I have learned to appreciate how close my brother and I became because almost every day, we play basketball together for about 40 minutes. I like distance learning because the weeks go by so fast and there is no pressure of needing to raise your hand or just get called on.

Something memorable is how my family has been talking a lot to each other, sharing jokes and funny stories. We usually talk about what's going on with each other and my grandpa shares stories about his life back then when he lived in Serbia and how poor he was. Also, something I will never forget is when I was four points from beating my brother in basketball, but before I could win, my brother scored and won the game.

During this pandemic, something that we did right was closing everything to avoid people getting too close to each other, and if they did go out, to wear masks and stay six feet



apart. Something done wrong was closing running tracks because usually there are not a lot of people on the track so they would be far away from each other. Also, some people just want to take a walk. I've been frustrated about not going on any field trips, especially the Splash Down trip, because as soon as my dad paid for the trip, I was excited from that moment on, and as soon as I heard it was cancelled, I wanted to scream at someone.

The fact that this virus has killed over 100,000 people makes it kind of depressing to think about, but soon enough, this virus will be normal, just like the flu. Some things that I miss are my friends, going on trips,

and seeing family. I miss my friends because we used to share everything together and now, we can't without interruptions. I couldn't see my distant family because we don't really know who has coronavirus, and who doesn't, so we don't risk it. I hope in the future, we get a vaccine and the pandemic is over and everything will go back to normal.

I think that we will go back to school because so far, the virus has been going down a lot, so we may have a chance to come back. School would probably be weird because everyone would be sad having to get up early and get on a bus, but happy because we are back at school.

Quarantine Life



By Nick Bachas
ELA 7 White Team

Imagine you are in 7th grade, spring just arrived, and then a sickness comes out of nowhere. First, it is the town next to you that closes, then everything closes. Schools close, shops close, barbers close. So now what? You are stuck at home and must figure out how to have fun, stay social, do homework and be safe.

Being quarantined sucks! Usually you are out with your friends swimming in a pool, doing whatever, but instead, you are sitting in your room on Facetime with your friends. It changed a lot of things about our normal day life, like Zoom meetings instead of normal school, online field trips . . . it changed a lot. The most unfair thing that has happened to me is that my sleep-away camp got canceled, but other camps opened again, so they canceled way too early. I have learned to appreciate people who are still working, like my dad. He is a civil servant, and so are my cousin and my uncle. All the doctors are still working,



and I am thankful.

Distance learning is good and bad. It has its pros and its cons. It's working well for me. I can get my work done easily. One good memory is when my uncle, my brother, my dad and I went quadding and biking.

I think we should have not cancelled stuff in the summer this early. I feel sad that we missed the Bronx Zoo trip and Splash Down because they would have been

great times hanging out with friends.

It makes me feel sad, but also happy that I did not get Coronavirus and no one in my family got it, or any of my friends.

The thing that I miss most is hanging with friends and family, going on walks, bike rides, going to the beach, and going swimming. I do not think that we will have a vaccine.

I think that COVID will not reappear. I think school in the fall will be normal and nothing will be different. My hope for the future is that it will all go away by the end of June and we can all go back to our normal lives.

Family Matters During This Pandemic



By Sofia Calandrucci
ELA 7 White Team

As I have grown older, I have appreciated the fact that I grew up with such a close family. Every Sunday after church, it was a family day. I have learned during this quarantine how difficult it has been not seeing my friends and family. I miss having sleepovers, going shopping, and partying on the weekends.

I have also miss having the long-tired hours in the gym and practicing like crazy so I can do my best at gymnastics competitions. I miss my coaches and teammates. And how my body isn't sore and aching when I get out of bed in the morning, or my hands callused or ripped up.

I thought in the beginning of this quarantine that it was just going to be a fun little break, but it actually turned out to be the longest three months of my life. No one really assumed it would be this long. I personally thought everyone was overreacting in the beginning. I miss talking to my friends and fooling around in the hallways. I am sad that 7th grade is over so soon. It's time for



8th grade, new teachers, new curriculum, new memories. I have really learned during these past couple months that friends come and go, but family will always stick by your side. I know sometimes it might get hard. You might lose people you love but, in the end, everything happens for a reason. God put people in your life for a reason and He takes people out of your life for a reason. I have also learned the worth of my-

self. I don't need boys, friends, or even social media to make me happy. All I need is to love myself and believe in god. God is sad. He made this virus for a reason--our world has become so bad. He had to make a virus so our country and world will come together and allow our world to self-reflect. Every day is a new one and you need to make it count. Like I said before, I know it gets hard sometimes but you need to keep going and always remember your haters are your fans and your biggest motivators.

My parents always told me that if things don't go right in life, go down on your knees and talk to God. And that is what I have learned during this pandemic.

My 7th Grade Memoir



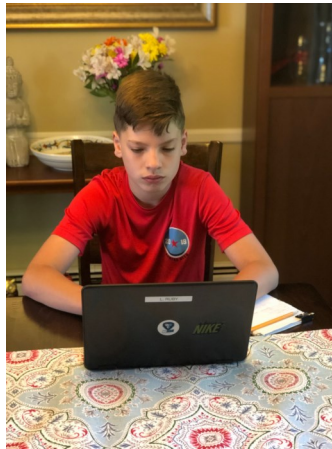
By Logan Ruby
ELA 7 White Team

Corona virus, COVID-19, pandemic . . . whatever you want to call it, these are crazy times. So much has changed in my life, good and bad. It is good that I am spending more time with my family and it's bad that I am not spending as much time with my friends. I have lost sports and I may potentially lose part of school for next year. I am definitely never going to forget this crazy and interesting year.

I do not think I have changed as a person, but I know that my life has changed. I get to sleep in and stay up later than usual. I am not leaving my house to go do something as much. Most of the things I do need to be done are done at my house.

I do not think what I have been going through is unfair. But I think that what business owners are going through is unfair. Businesses did not deserve to shut down for something they could not control.

I have learned to appreciate my family more than I already do. They always push me to



do great no matter what situation I am in or what they are in.

Distance learning has been going pretty good for me. There have been some technical difficulties but everything else is going great. A memorable anecdote during this time was when my friends and I were riding bikes and we went to a waterfall and we decided to jump in the water. We had such a great time jumping in and hanging out with each other. I think the U.S. made a good decision by shutting down everything and putting everyone in a quarantine.

I feel bad that I have missed key events in my life because of the Coronavirus because one of my really good friends

who is in 8th grade was finally on my lacrosse team and I was so excited, but the Coronavirus happened and we won't be on the same team until high school.

I feel that this virus is very scary and hard to contain due to the amount of deaths and the short amount of time the Coronavirus has been a recognized disease. I know that this pandemic has changed our world in many ways. I hope this pandemic will end and everyone can go back to their normal lives with no quarantine and all cities and businesses open.

Quarantine? Yeah, Right!

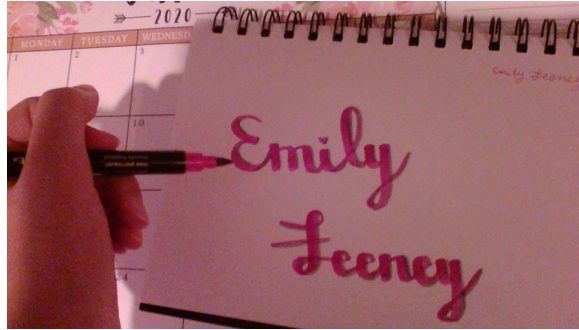


By Emily Feeney
ELA 7 White Team
Quarantine?

Yeah, right! That is what everyone thought when coronavirus was first heard of. Nobody thought we would end up spending the second half of our year wearing masks and staying at home. We would laugh and say the idea of quarantine was crazy, but now no one is laughing. It is not very funny anymore.

Throughout this time, I have learned to appreciate all the little things and enjoy every day! Like going to school. You might not like it so much, but you do not realize how much you do like it until it is gone. The most unfair thing that happened because of coronavirus is my dance competitions were cancelled. I am a dancer and I am on a team that goes to competitions. I worked hard all year working towards those competitions and my recital. Now I cannot go to them. So, I have learned to appreciate all the things I get to do and go to for dance more than ever now. I have loved seeing my friends there, showing my dances I have worked hard on, and doing the thing that I enjoy most.

Distance learning has been good for me, and bad, too. I like being on my own schedule and going at my own pace. I can do what I want throughout the week because I am able to work my way. However, it has not been helpful because when I have a quick question, I must email the teacher, which takes time away from my getting



work done. Also, it has been a struggle when my computer or Schoology does not work. I must then wait for the problem to solve itself before starting my work again.

I think as a country, we have been doing the right thing by staying home. I think it is very sad that 100,000 people have died from this disease. I have heard many scary stories

about people being in the hospital and not being able to breathe. It makes me feel awful that people have been dying and I feel that we should all do our part and stay home until told otherwise. I feel sad about missing things like my band concert, dance competitions and recital, NJHS ceremony, birthday parties, and more. But we must move along and hope for the best to come.

I miss my friends and family most during this quarantine. I miss them because I am used to seeing them every day at school and family on the weekends. It makes me happy to be with them and now it is only Facetime calls and other things like that. I do not know what is to come with coronavirus. I am hopeful we will open back up soon. But if we open too soon, we are at risk of starting this whole process over again. I think we are doing well with opening everything up slowly. My hope for the future is that everyone learns the importance of the little things in life! I also hope that when we do open fully, that we have a GREAT year!

Pandemic is Emotional Roller Coaster

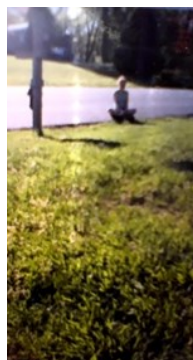


By Maddy Murphy
ELA 7 White Team

This pandemic has changed my mood in many ways at random times. I miss my friends, but then a few hours later, I am bored and then I am happy. It is weird cause I do not know what I feel anymore. The most unfair thing was that we had to miss trips and could not finish 7th grade, so when we come back, I will have different teachers.

I have learned to appreciate where we live, and that we have water, and grocery stores are not wiped out of essentials near us. Distance learning works for me; it is just not that fun. It is boring sometimes because all you are doing is typing on a screen. What is memorable is that we are living in history, and everyone will always remember this.

I think it was right to close for people's safety. I feel sad that I am missing trips and I can't finish 7th grade, and I did miss some memories, but I am making new ones while in quaran-



tine like having fun with my family or swimming with my siblings. It makes me feel so sad that so many people have died because they should not have died this way. That is why everyone must keep fighting and staying inside.

I miss my friends most because it's fun being around them and we are always laughing. I hope that no more people die and that this will be over soon. I predict that we will be doing online school for a little and then finish school at school. Before this all happened, everyone was like, "I want to go home, or I don't want school to happen, but now that it did happen, everyone wants to go back. I got to see my friends in school, and I could hang out with family."

Nothing will ever be the same; everyone will always remember this year. When we go back to school, no one will know what to do because it is going to be so different. I hope this is over by August because then we can have school again and will not have to worry about people's safety. Soon everyone will be safe. I hope everyone is safe and is staying safe.

This Year Was NOT What I Expected!



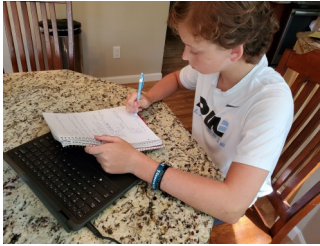
By Sean Kelly
ELA 7 White Team

If you would have asked me in the beginning of seventh grade what the rest of the year would look like, I certainly would not have told you that we would be living through a global pandemic crisis.

The year started like any other. Friends were reuniting, football was starting up, and new classes and teachers were the big thing. Everyone was coasting through the year as if they had no worry in the world whatsoever.

But suddenly, there was talk about this new virus, with an oddly familiar name referring to an alcoholic beverage. Everyone was in shock. It supposedly started in China. Specifically, at the Wuhan market, where thousands and thousands of people go to buy livestock and food. It was the perfect place for a virus like this one to start.

It was now late February, and this new virus hit the U.S. Cases in Washington State were consistently rising. It spread all over the country and possibly to one of worst places a virus of this kind could affect: New York City. The state of New York quickly became the most infected area in the world. As of March 13th, 2020, President Trump declared a national health crisis. Then, things worsened, when schools over America began to shut down. Everyone was so jubilant for spring



sports, but they, too were banned. Everyone in America was now in full quarantine.

As one of the millions of kids who have been affected due to this COVID-19 Virus, I can say many things about this quarantine, but one that I truly feel can sum it up is reflection. I have been given an opportunity to reflect. To reflect on how I have taken so many things for

granted. To reflect on school. To reflect on sports. To simply reflect on my mindset and the way I view things.

As horrible as these 12 weeks have been and as horrible as it is to realize how so many lives were lost, I try to take this as an opportunity to improve through adversity. There have been times where I have broken down through quarantine, and I won't say that I've lost my mind, but I will say that I have truly forgotten the point of school, of sports, of working out, or even having the discipline to simply make your bed every morning.

But some things in life are truly a blessing in disguise. This moment in history that I have been a part of, has given me time to realize that life is much bigger than my little bubble. Life is a vast, difficult, and interesting thing that takes lots of determination to get through. In the end, this time has given me an opportunity to really think about what the purpose of all this is and I'm thankful to have been a part of it.

Quarantine Through My Eyes

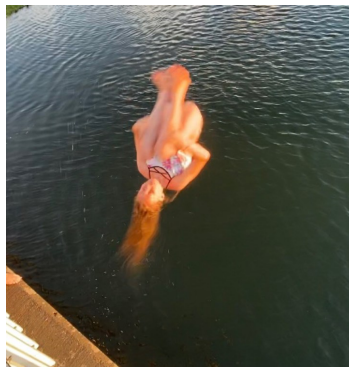


By McKenna Mullins
ELA 7 White Team

Nowhere to go, no one to see, nothing to do. Sitting at home staring at a screen for four hours. The only people I can see is my family. I'm bored in the house and I can't go see my friends.

This whole quarantine thing has revealed some changes for me. I have changed because now I can practice lacrosse more. I used to not be able to practice lacrosse that much because I would come home from school and go straight to gymnastics on most days. But now I can practice lacrosse extra. My practice schedule has changed. I feel that when we are in quarantine, some things are just unfair. What I thought was really unfair is my states and regionals competitions for gymnastics were cancelled. I feel that we could have competed. I have appreciated many things while we are going through this difficult time. I have appreciated the time that I get to spend with my family. We usually never have family dinners because we all have sports but now, we sit down all together and eat.

Throughout these difficult times, we have



been distance learning. It has been a big adjustment, but I have been doing well. Sometimes my computer has not worked but most of the time, it has. From the time we were in quarantine, I had many stories to tell. One anecdote from quarantine is that I scared my little sister. I got her good when I said "boo" and jumped out in front of her. She screamed and jumped up in the air.

We have been in quarantine for about three months and I think during those three months, the government and our governor have done a good job to try and keep people safe. I'm really upset that I missed a lot of activities, like sporting events, parties and more. Back in the beginning of quarantine, I kept hearing that around 200 people were dying each day because of this virus and I was sad for those people and their families.

I have missed my sports the most because I used to have a sport every day and now, I don't have anything. I feel that we will have vaccine soon. I think COVID-19 will come back. I think that school will be different in the fall. I hope that by August, everything will be somewhat normal with sports and, hopefully, school will, too.

Appreciating What I Used to Take for Granted



By Emma Friedberg
ELA 7 White Team

I feel during quarantine I have come to appreciate everything that I took for granted like friends and school. I never would have thought that I would be stuck at my house for three months.



I think the most unfair thing during quarantine is that not everyone is doing their job. For example me and my dad were going for a drive to get out of the house and on the side of the road there were more than 50 cars and more than 100 people on the side of the road walking to a damn, and most people were not wearing masks. I've learned to appreciate everything we could do before quarantine like, going out with friends. I feel distance learning was not as helpful and affective to me because we did not have a teacher in front of you explaining everything and i normally would have 45 minutes to an hour of work.

A memorable thing during quarantine was when me and my friends went to one of our houses and socially distanced while hanging out because it was supposed to be my friend's Bat Mitzvah, but it got postponed. It was nice to get our group of friends back together since it's been since March. I think as a country we have done good about letting people know about Coronavirus but as a country we have not done well about social dis-

tancing because a lot of people are more focused on themselves, being selfish and not social distancing which leads me to believe we may be in quarantine for a while. Also, we are not enforcing wearing masks like we should. I feel sad that we never got to finish school as a grade and doing all the activities like, field trips, signing yearbooks, playing outside with friends.

I feel this year won't ever feel complete like every other year because of Coronavirus. I feel upset about how many people have died from Coronavirus. I think it's disappointing that so many people have lost their lives from Coronavirus and their families are so sad and in grief from losing a loved one. My dad's frat brother almost died from Coronavirus he was on a ventilator and started writing goodbye letters to his family and kids but was lucky enough to survive. Since quarantine I have missed friends and being able to go out in the city or malls and restaurants because I felt freer but now, we are stuck home.

My hope in the future is that quarantine is very soon. I think in the fall school will be every other day with half the grade switching off and we might wear masks. I don't think we will be distance learning the whole year but maybe in the beginning of the year. I do think COVID will return, but I think once we get a vaccine everything will be alright.

Quarantine Has Changed My Life!



By Dean Barlanti
ELA 7 White Team

This quarantine has made me miss out on many memories. Some memories would include my spring sports, hanging out with my friends and different class trips. It also changed life for many of my friends, family members and the people of Somers. There were no graduations for middle school or high school. There was no prom for high school seniors, no sports and no Washington D.C trip for my sister, Mia. I am going to explain more about how quarantine has changed my life and the lives of others.

I have changed so much since quarantine. Instead of running and getting exercise at school and after school activities, the hardest thing of the day is getting out of my bed and walking downstairs. The most unfair thing about quarantine is that people can't see their friends. Even though the rules are getting way more flexible and people are starting to hang out, it still isn't the same. I've learned to appreciate the fact that people are dying because people go out-

side, so we need to start staying inside to save older people and to save up on medical supplies for hospitals. Distance learning is probably the easiest part of Quarantine because I only work for three hours or less in a day instead of six hours of school. It worked for me because I can wake up at any time of the day to do my work and for the rest of the day, I can relax.

As a country, I feel like we did some wrong with dealing with the coronavirus. I don't feel that we started social distancing early enough. I also think the government should have advised everyone earlier to wear face masks in public.

I feel terrible about the missing events in my life. The most important to me was that I couldn't go to Cooperstown for baseball. This is the only year I could have gone, and I missed it. This would have been a great memory for me to have had as a child. The thing that hurt me the most is that so many people died from coronavirus this year and we are still not over it yet.

My hope for the future is that coronavirus ends, and economy can start to open again, and I can go back to school in September.



Sitting At Home Gets Pretty Lame After Awhile

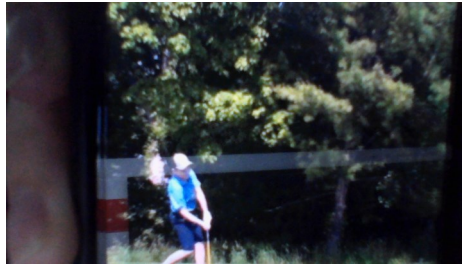


By Jack Senatore
ELA 7 White Team

I think sitting in your house, and not really being able to see your friends is not so great to me. I have gone through online learning, which is way harder because you cannot see your teacher and he or she cannot give you much help. But it also is bad because most things like diners and fast food are only takeout and deliver. You cannot go to dinner anymore; you just must eat at home now which I do not like at all. Life used to be about quarantine, but now, I think it is starting to go down. Spending like 13 weeks in a house, where you cannot see your friends, is very lame and annoying.

I have realized how I changed through this pandemic. I got more organized and independent from home. I think I grew up more and I do not have the school setting. I think it is unfair because it will set me back because I do not get too much new material, and I do not have a teacher in front of me to help me more. I learned to appreciate my family, spending more time with my brother, grandparents and my whole family, like cousins. I spend more time fishing, quading and just hanging out with my family more.

In my opinion, distance learning is not really working for me because I cannot have my teacher speaking in front of me telling what I do. Now I



must email each time I need help, which is annoying, and I don't have the in-school feeling. One of my amusing stories is when I was playing Categories with my family and we had to pick collectibles that start with "b" and I pulled out a baloney sandwich because I had one.

I think what we did wrong is we did not shut down the nation fast enough because we could have gotten a handle on it quicker, but we did not, so it is spreading more. I also think handling quarantine is ok because we are also allowed to be outside and go places. I feel aggravated and disappointed because I cannot see my friends in sports and I also cannot play sports. Football, basketball, and summer lacrosse are all canceled because of Coronavirus, and I also miss birthdays.

Since I have been in quarantine, I have missed sports the most because they are so fun, dribbling, tackling, and winning games, and I also get to see my friends. My prediction is it will take time to get a vaccine, but we will eventually have one. I think COVID is also not going to reemerge. There is no evidence it should reemerge. I believe September will be odd but then when October arrives, everything will be back to normal. I want to point out that if you, or are sick, or have a runny nose, to stay inside. Just basically stay home if you are sick!

Life in Quarantine



By Luke Armstrong
ELA 7 White Team

The past 12 weeks might be the most memorable time of my life. Being quarantined at home and having to do school online has never happened before. My experience during these times has been nothing short of extremely unusual. This is why I'm sharing my adventure with you.

There are numerous things that have changed about me during quarantine. First off, my hair certainly got longer. And I also grew about four inches. Another thing that's changed about me, is that I get more time to do the things I enjoy. I find it disappointing that I missed out on things like field trips, hanging out with my friends, and most of all vacations. I have learned to enjoy the outdoors, and especially getting my homework done out there.

Distance learning has really had an impact on me. I find it extremely helpful, and I like that I get to work at my own pace. One time, it was hilarious when we had nothing to watch, so we decided to start watching a show about flat-earthers.



It gave me a headache after about 30 minutes.

COVID is obviously a big problem. I believe that originally, the country was handling it correctly. After a few weeks, however, I think we ended social distancing in certain places too early. This will have repercussions and will only make COVID grow. I've heard many people say that 7th grade was the worst grade of their lives. Personally, however, 7th grade has not been a

problem. This is mostly because of COVID, and since we have to stay at home. It's unbelievable how many people have lost ones they love to this disease. And it's heartbreaking that so many people – not just Americans – are dying every day.

I miss being able to see my out-of-town family and going to places like King Kone. I predict we might have a vaccine for the virus by mid-2021, and, if we come out of quarantine too early, then COVID might re-emerge. I think that in the fall, we will still have full distance learning. I'm hoping that doctors come up with a vaccine soon, and everyone resumes life as normal, knowing they went through an event that will go down in history.

My Life in Quarantine—Behind the Scenes



By Drew Petrini IV
ELA 7 White Team

Quarantine is awful. Do you guys feel the same way? I miss hanging out with people and all my friends. I just want this to be over! We have been in quarantine since March 16th, 2020. All the distance learning is ruining my mind!

I am changed as a result of this quarantine and the pandemic because now I feel like a couch potato every day of my life. I used to be active and social and now I am the complete opposite. Playing sports after school was what I used to do and now my new normal is doing nothing and learning from home. In my opinion, the most unfair thing I went through was social distancing. Not seeing my friends is not fair for me to live with. It is difficult to not be able to see my friends daily. Facetime and Xbox live cannot replace that connection. I have learned to appreciate my teachers for what they have been doing for us. They are working so hard every day to provide lessons. This hasn't been easy for them to deal with technology issues and some students not being engaged with distance learning.

Distance learning hasn't been easy for me because for all my life, I have been in the classroom. I tried my best to attend all the mandatory Zoom meetings, but I did not show my face on video. I have what you call a quarantine hair style! My schedule has been completely thrown off. My normal hours are 12 am-11 am, not 10 pm-7:20 am. It is going to be so hard to get back to a normal routine. I am hoping next year distance learn-



ing doesn't continue.

Throughout this pandemic, my parents, my siblings and I have spent more time together in the evenings. That has meant a lot to me because we are normally going in a million directions. Our society lives such a scheduled lifestyle that this was the best part of being home. We watched movies together and ate popcorn. Just fun stuff!

As a country, I think that we didn't handle this as well as we could have. We didn't think that it was going to get this bad and we didn't have enough masks or hospital beds for patients with COVID-19 and it spread quickly around the world. I missed a lot of key events that were going to happen but didn't end up happening. Our school was going to go to Splash Down and the Bronx Zoo. We didn't go because of this pandemic and it would have been a lot of fun to go with my friends. Hearing that over 100,000 Americans have died from this disease is scary because that's a lot of people and it scares me that more and more people are going to die. This will get better someday just for now, we have to deal with it.

What I miss most since I have been in quarantine is going to school with friends and socializing. I miss meeting with and seeing my teachers in person, and most of all just being NORMAL. My hope for the future is that this is over and in 8th grade, I will be in the classroom learning like it's always been. My prediction is that hopefully, COVID-19 is done for good. School in the fall will still probably be distance learning. I do not think COVID-19 will return; I think we will be distance learning for the first month or two of next year.

This Changed My Life Forever



By Morgan Klempner
ELA 7 White Team

The last day of school was like any other day, but the only difference was that all the teachers told us to take our books and tablets home just in case we were going into distance learning. In my head, I was thinking that I would not need to take all this stuff home, but I took it home anyway.

The following Sunday, all the parents received an email that we would be home for two weeks or longer and start online learning. Little did I know it would change my life forever.

When I started online learning, I expected that it was only going to be a temporary situation. As the two weeks came to an end, there was another email saying it would extend. I was a little sad and a little happy, at the same time. I was happy that I didn't have to see students and teachers who were not very nice, but sad I wouldn't get to see my school friends. A few weeks went by and I would



FaceTime every now and then with my friends.

During quarantine, I also had online dance. On Tuesdays, I had contemporary dance, while on Thursdays, I had lyrical and hip-hop and on Saturdays, I did hip-hop. It was a very different experience online. We normally stretched, then learned a little dance, then practiced the dance. By that time the class was over. If we were in the studio, we would all be together dancing. With online classes, I was dancing in front of a computer.

In quarantine, I also stayed up for two song releases. It was very fun and both songs thankfully ended up being number one on the Billboard Hot 100. I also went hiking in the woods with my family to get some sunshine and exercise.

In all, this was a crazy and very weird experience. I miss going to concerts, swimming, dancing and doing other activities so much and can't wait until I can go to concerts and other stuff like that again.

Gianna's Life in Quarantine



**By Gianna Doherty
ELA 7 White Team**

I loved going to school and seeing my friends and teachers. My seventh-grade year was going pretty well. Little did I know it would end so soon. March 12th was my last day of school, dance and seeing my friends. No one could have anticipated such a great year ending in such a horrible way.

My whole world got flipped upside down. Everything was changing and it was too much to handle at once. Not being able to go to school or dance and not being able to see my family and friends feels like the worst thing in the world. Even I have changed. I feel like I have become more outgoing and always wanting to talk to people. Even if it's the cashier at the supermarket, it was the most socialization I've had in a while. I've missed so much in this quarantine. I've missed my grandma's 80th birthday and my new baby cousin being born. I've learned to appreciate the people around me and never take a moment for granted. However, I've also learned how to see quarantine in a positive light. Like I get to spend so much time with my family and I can binge watch all the TV shows I've been wanting to watch for a while now.

Something I like to do in quarantine is school. It gives me something to do. Distance learning has worked out great for me. Getting to attend school in my pajamas and not having to start until 9 is amazing! However, as much as I



Gianna's "home classroom"

love distance learning, I also miss my teachers and friends. The most memorable activity I've done during this quarantine is riding my bike for hours and hours every day. I haven't spent this much time outside in a long time! When I ride my bike, I get to see my neighbors and get some fresh air.

As a country it was amazing how we all came together to get through this quarantine. Celebrities showed themselves staying at home, and some new shows came out, as well. One show is called Some Good News. It is a YouTube show and it's just so heartwarming to watch. It shows good things happening in quarantine.

Even though I am very sad I missed a lot of events in my life, I am very grateful that I have a good life and good things that I am sad I missed. I am also very grateful that I have a great family and home to quarantine with. It makes me very sad that 100,000 Americans have died from this disease--no one's life should have been taken from this pandemic.

The thing I miss most is dance. At dance I get to see my friends and teachers. I have so much fun at dance and I miss seeing everyone. By the fall I think we will almost have a vaccine and will be doing more distance learning. I think COVID-19 will re-emerge in the winter since it spreads faster in the cold and we will have to be in quarantine again. My hope for the future is that people realize life is too short to be mean or start trouble. We need to spread more love and kindness and not take life for granted.

Quarantine Has Been a Struggle



**By Dillon Kuchinsky
ELA 7 White Team**

Quarantine has been a struggle. One minute, I'm having friends over, being a kid just having fun. It was an abrupt transition which made it that much harder to adapt to this new lifestyle. One day I'm playing with my friends and we're having a great time, the next we can't see each other!; We can't even go out without a mask and gloves. At first, I thought it was a joke! I thought that we wouldn't ever get the virus and it would end shortly. . . BOY, WAS I WRONG!

I changed from this pandemic. I used to take having friends over for granted but when you can't really have them over, you realize how much it means to you. Something I am really mad about that I missed due to the Coronavirus is Cooperstown. This is basically a tournament for baseball where you dorm with your friends and play baseball. I waited all of my baseball career for this (seven years!!!) and finally when it comes, it gets



cancelled!!!!!! I was devastated!

It's scary that there has been 100,000 people who died from this. Like I said earlier, I thought this was a joke. This clearly proves me wrong. Quarantine has made me nostalgic but what I miss the most has to be hanging out with my friends all the time. I love hanging out with my friends and you only realize it when you can't anymore. I think that next year, we will eventually go to school, but I don't think we're going to go to school in the beginning.

I have developed a strong disliking for the Coronavirus. It ruined a lot of plans I had. It has killed people and it has made the last 12 weeks dreadful. Just the thought that this comes back petrifies me! It has been horrible! I am praying for it to end. Every day, I wake up and do the same thing. I wake up every day with a perplexed look on my face because I am wondering what I can do that is fun. To end it off, Coronavirus has made my life a misery. I think this has been the worst time in my entire life.

Chronicles of Quarantine



By Amanda Guardino
ELA 7 White Team

"Did you hear about the Coronavirus going around in China?" says the kids in the halls. "They're not allowed to go anywhere; they have to stay in their houses all day."

A couple weeks later I hear in the halls, "Some other schools have closed in America because of the Coronavirus, they're so lucky."

A week later, they announced that we will have two weeks off school. Everyone was so excited! But little did they know that they would be stuck in their houses for months.

After the two weeks was over, they said we would have to wait a month to go back to school. Some kids were sad, but some were happy. Online school was not the best. It was easier but not as good as seeing your friends at school.

After the month has passed, many kids were hoping that they can go back. But... school has been closed for the rest of the year. Many stu-



dents didn't know how they were going to survive being stuck in their house for months.

Some people are just thankful online school gives them something to do. Every day now is just staring at screens, but people can't go out during quarantine. For most kids, this is a dream to stay home and not go to school, but it has turned into a nightmare. Sometimes it's hard to believe we are living in a global pandemic.

I think many people have started to appreciate school more now that we can't go there. It can also be hard to learn from a computer without the teacher being there. Some teachers aren't the best at using technology.

Some camps have even closed. And many vacations have been ruined. And we hope summer won't be ruined. We don't know how long it's going to last. We just hope that this will be over soon.

I think everyone will remember this crazy time that we probably never thought would ever happen. From going to school every day to staying in bed every day doing work. Many people will pass on stories from these times, including me.

Quarantine Hasn't Been Easy



By Noah Hechler
ELA 7 White Team

Quarantine has not been easy. I've not been able to see my friends and my family and that's very hard. I have become a way better person because I've been realizing what people are going through and I feel really bad for them.

The only way this could go away is if we all stay home and we make smart decisions. Everyone should be washing their hands and staying six feet apart to make sure this never happens again.

One thing that I think is unfair to me is missing so much. We're missing all these fun activities--every event planned for school, or birthday parties, or graduation with plenty of family members. We can never really re-create these and it's a really big thing to us.

One change I've made during quarantine is I've learned to respect my parents more often because they're going through a really hard time, just like everyone is. I don't really like distance learning--that's my opinion. I feel like it's a little hard because we're not learning as much as we would be in school and it's harder to understand most things.

One memorable thing for me during my quarantine is having a drive-by birthday. It truly means a lot to see all my friends and family wish



me happy birthday. I feel like the country did pretty well during quarantine. They made a lot of good rules, like staying six feet apart. That's really helpful. Another thing is reminding us to wash our hands every time we go out or take off gloves. - Also, staying at home is pretty much the best thing to do--not going near anyone; just staying home and doing nothing really.

I'm really upset that I missed so many good events during quarantine that could've happened, because we won't be able to re-create a lot of the stuff, like going to a park with all my friends. It's really fun and that's like something that I'm not gonna be able to do with everyone at my school. I also didn't really even get to see my family members on my birthday and that obviously didn't make me feel better, but I felt good knowing they're safe. It has made me very upset that so many people have been dying from coronavirus. Several family members have even died and it's shocking, it's terrible.

I miss sports and my friends a lot--those mean a lot to me because I love sports and I love hanging out with my friends. It's so fun! My hope in the future that hopefully, coronavirus never comes back. This is terrible and I don't want anyone else to have to experience what we are going through. I feel like school next year will have to go little slower. We might have to redo some stuff from seventh grade. I really hope coronavirus does not come back. That would be really, really bad.

Months that Feel Like Years



By Jane Guardino
ELA 7 White Team

These last few months have felt like years. Every day I wake, knowing that nothing new is going to happen. It is the same schedule every day. Eat, work, sleep, eat, work, sleep, eat, work, sleep. No seeing friends, no seeing grandparents, no going to the movies, and no eating out. When the ball dropped on New Year's Eve, everyone said 2020 is going to be the best year and a great start to a new decade. But the day 2020 started, it went downhill fast. Like a kid going down a slide, but it was a very steep slide with bumps and a global pandemic on it.

I don't think anyone will say they're bored ever again after quarantine is over. No one knows when it's going to end. I couldn't imagine what it's like going into next year, meeting all my teachers on Zoom. We already missed so much this year. I wouldn't want next year to be ruined, too. All year, kids look forward to the last day of school and get super scared for finals. We wait for that. Summer



is ruined, too. We can't go on vacation or to the beach. I was so excited to go to Arizona, Nevada, Utah, but I can't take a plane. I was really looking forward to that. I know many, many people who can't go on their vacations anymore. Some people got stuck on vacation and couldn't travel back home. I'm lucky I went to Florida right before quarantine and got home.

Online school has been different, but it's our new normal now. Some weeks are stressful and packed with tons of new work and lessons; other are easy-going and we have like barely any work. But I sometimes like a lot of work; it gives me something to do when I'm bored. But I would rather have school and see my friends. It's easier to talk to a teacher when you're confused, instead of emailing them. There is also a lot of technical difficulties with tablets. I would rather work with a pencil and paper.

It's crazy to think that I'm a part of history. I will pass down this story to my grandkids and I'll say I lived through a pandemic. It was a very boring time and we were stuck in our houses. I'm just waiting for all of this to be over.

The Troubles of Quarantine



By Layla O'Neill
ELA 7 White Team

The difference of what it was like before the pandemic and now is shocking to me. Just being able to be with people besides my family is a big part. My personality has taken a toll from all of this, as I have turned into a garbage bag full of emotions.

At first, I was very hopeful, even a little excited, to have so much time, but now, it has been only time, and nothing more. There have been positives to this. I have been able to draw more and I am able to focus more on work (or try my best to).

Kahoot

The thing I find unfair about this situation would be schoolwork. To me, I have been able to focus, but God, it has it taken a big chunk of my sanity! The thing I have appreciated is just seeing how this would play out. We see it in movies, but it's just really cool to be living in this hectic world that people someday will learn about.

Something memorable I will keep from this time would have to be the very long nights, only because it has given me more time to figure out what I am like under this much free time. Or even just exploring music, since I have had nothing better to do. Plus, I am glad about that because I found great bands. The thing I found we did wrong as a country is become very selfish. With the toilet



paper shortage in the beginning, people lost control of their sense and did not care for anyone else as they wanted massages or haircuts.

But I think we are doing a good job breaking this down into stages since it would be too dangerous to just go back to normal just like that!

The events I have missed during this time have not really affected me. I was going to go somewhere on my birthday but that moved because of this. But I do not mind. I don't even miss traveling to see family that much, since we Skype all the time anyway.

But the fact that over 100,000 people have died from this, is saddening and makes me sick of the people (who I said before) who are-being selfish because they don't care about other people dying just to have themselves stuck up on little things.

I would imagine school in September to be different with some new precautions desk-wise and everything, but maybe it will not be too different, but who knows? My hope for the virus is finding a cure of some sort, so that way we will not have to go through all of this again.

What I hope for the future is for everyone to be equal without having to riot for it. Pride started that way; BLM is happening that way. What is going to happen if we keep fighting instead of listening like a one-way conversation? I think a lot of things need to change, but those are just some thoughts.

2020: The Year We Did Not Imagine



By Traian Stor
ELA 7 White Team

A lot of people I know thought 2020 was going to be a good year. We rang in the New Year with a Roaring '20's New Year's Eve costume party.

That night, all of us thought that 2020 was going to be a good year. You know, the start of a new decade with exciting possibilities. Instead, 2020 has been the year of lock downs, masks, hand sanitizers, no restaurants or birthday parties, and virtual schooling with 12 weeks of staring at a computer screen quarantined in my house. The last time there was ever a pandemic was in 1920's.

Being in quarantine is a habit you get used to. Most of the time, I was home, waking up early at 8:00 and doing schoolwork. So, I have changed in ways of learning. But I also have been outside more. I have gone running, walking and bike riding pretty much every day during quarantine.

I feel what is most unfair is that I cannot see my friends. It is so boring being stuck inside your house with only your parents and brother. I miss getting together with my friends. My mother scheduled several Zoom calls with a group of my friends, but that felt weird and is not the same as



getting together in person. However, being stuck in my house did bring me and my family closer together. We have watched '80s and '90s movies that my parents saw when they were growing up and that has been interesting. We have also had more family dinners than in the past.

During quarantine, school has been the one thing that I have been doing. The work is easy. I mainly get work every day, but it is not as bad. I sometimes miss Zoom classes because of other things that I must do. But most of those Zoom classes are optional. Also, if I finish my work early, I can relax and take a break. So, online school is not that bad. The most memorable moment involves school. I remember I was cooking something, and I was on a Zoom call and forgot that I was making pizza, and it almost started a fire.

I feel that as a country, we could have figured out a way in the beginning to interact and socialize without getting the virus. One thing I really miss is dance and competition events. It is very sad that more than 100,000 Americans have died during this pandemic. I really do not think we are going to get a vaccine any time soon and life as we knew it in 2019 will change like Zoom classes representing in-person classes. Either way, I really do hope that this pandemic ends and I am able to see everyone again.

Pandemic!



By Kailyn Garrity
ELA 7 White Team

Being home all the time has been our new normal. Not seeing our friends and celebrating together. Doing the same thing over and over each day. Waking up to only hearing more bad news. I am trying not to take things for granted because people are dying and suffering, but sometimes, it's ok to be a little selfish. Wanting to sleep forever, hoping this was all a dream, and waiting for reality to kick in. 2020 was supposed to be the greatest year of our lives; now look at it.

This year was supposed to be a great dance year for me. Last year, I broke my foot two times and was out for dance for 12 weeks. I only got to go to one competition last year. This year, I was supposed to go to all of them. I would hang out with my friends and have a good time. This year was supposed to be different, but it feels the same. Missing dance just like last year. Now we do Zoom calls, but it is not the same seeing my friends and dancing with them side by side. This



year was extra special because I just learned en pointe. Now I can't have any more training to get better and more advanced. This pandemic ruins everything. Say good-bye to hanging out with friends and swimming together. We can't enjoy summer together now, just looking at each other through a screen. No birthday parties, no fun, and no sun, but now we are all trapped inside. Everyone was supposed to turn 13 this year, now we are all going to be "quaranteens". Going to camp together all summer long. Eating ice cream and just having a good time being together. All I want to do is to play with my friends and have a fun summer.

Look what 2020 brought us; nothing great. We still have more of the year to go and we will all keep fighting. It has been a crazy year with twists and turns everywhere. We should appreciate the things we still have the food we have, the family we have, the house that protects us. Maybe we won't be out with our friends, but it gives us a chance to become closer with our family. 2020 was supposed to be the greatest year of our lives; now look at it.

Distant Thinking



By Gaby DiFilippo
ELA 7 White Team

12 weeks of isolation. 12 weeks of staring at a screen, with no motivation to get up in the morning. It went from laughing and talking in class to mute until asked to talk. In Zoom calls. Because of one hit of a pandemic, everything is different now. Will it ever get better?

In this quarantine, more than myself has changed. Things around me and people around me. I've become lazier; doing work online isn't very motivational. The most unfair thing that's happened to me was the loss of people I knew and love. I am always going to miss them and be proud of what they did and who they were. During this quarantine, spending time in my house, I've learned to be grateful for my friends and family. To be grateful of the people who work and risk their lives every day to try and save people. I'm grateful for the technology in this world today that hopefully soon will find a cure to end this.

Social distancing learning is the hardest thing I deal with every day. I get easily distracted while trying to do my work. It's also hard to be on Zoom calls because I am busy doing other things, too. An amusing story that's happened to me during quarantine was a skateboarding accident. Over the weeks, I've learned how to skateboard and cruise along the streets. I went down this very steep hill



while sitting on my bottom. This wasn't smart, and I did a flip in the air and hit my back.

As a country, I think that we had so many misinterpretations, but in the end, we found out what will really have our people safe. And it's a great idea to wear masks and social distance. I think about what could and couldn't happen every day if corona wasn't a thing. But in the end, I always will be reminded that things happen not by a cause, but for a reason.

It taught people many lessons. I think that it's devastating how so many people's lives have ended. It really makes you think that sometimes, there isn't a tomorrow for people and that's why you should live in the today. The coronavirus has taken so many people from their families, and without saying goodbye. That's why I will always be grateful and open-minded toward my love ones.

I've missed many people and places that I went to without worrying about. I miss going on vacation in a hotel overlooking the beach. I miss school and seeing my friends and teachers.

But most importantly, I miss my friends and family. I think that coronavirus will come back up because in some places, they did not handle social distancing, and because of the BLM movement, people want justice.

But too many people protesting together can cause spikes in coronavirus infections. Hopefully, if this all happens, I know some smart scientist will find a cure and end the spread of coronavirus for a long time.

COVID-19: The Worst Four Months of my Life



By Emma Barton
ELA 7 White Team

Friday the 13th. The day we found out that our school's one-week break was going to become three weeks. We were all so happy that day. But little did we know that the rest of our 7th grade year would be over that very day.

We went from sprinting to each class, to simply switching tabs onto our next Zoom. It was not easy, I will admit that, but it helped me realize everything we take for granted daily.

Even Manhattan, one of the craziest cities in the world, is now a ghost town.

The thought of school would always come as a sad thought, something no one wanted to hear about. But now, it's the thing we miss the most.

When I would usually get annoyed at the fact that I have 'school tomorrow', if I heard we were going back to school today, I'd leap out of my bed! When we'd usually get angry if we didn't have enough time during a play date, just having 30



minutes not having to stand two meters apart from someone else would make my day.

All I am saying is, if COVID's about to ruin summer, too, I don't know if I could stand it. Nothing is going to be the same. I have heard rumors about a second wave, new school schedules, and many more precautions.

You see, 2020 has not necessarily been all smiles and rainbows. There were threats of world war 3, wildfires in Australia, and now a global pandemic. I wouldn't be very surprised if NASA said the world was going to end next week!

I honestly feel terrible for the Seniors! No last prom, or graduation. I just wish everything could go back to normal. But I think we all know the next few years are going to be anything but normal. At this point in time I don't think anyone can say what is going to happen next. I guess we will just have to play it by ear and hope that summer 2020 pulls through.

And that, pretty much sums up my seventh grade year.

Quarantine Fatigue

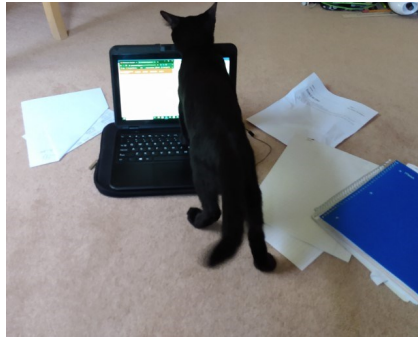


By Jackson Frankie
ELA 7 White Team

Remember when we used to go to school? Teachers, students? You could consider it a distant memory. You would wake up, ride on a bus with other people and go to a building containing hundreds of other kids, touching every surface. Now, it's been about 12 weeks since then, weeks of sitting down all day on a computer. How did everything change so fast?

Many, many things have changed during this time, myself included. I'm sure this is true for many of us. One positive is that I really value time spent with grandparents or relatives. Nevertheless, this is a huge portion of our lives that has just evaporated. All of this has caused everyone to lose a huge portion of their lives. In Somers, 8th graders missed a Washington DC trip, while high schoolers missed graduations, and everyone missed various events, sports, and clubs. That's the worst part. It is very unfair that this has been taken from us.

Then there is the subject of distanced learning. It is very annoying for both students and teachers. Each lesson must be planned the day before, and put up in its own folder with its own grading rubric. My experience is generally



being done working by 2:00 or so. The work isn't as hard, but students don't get to interact with teachers, resulting in a lot of confusion about directions or material. Folders get cluttered and it is often hard to find given assignments, especially if the teacher doesn't update them. It is a lot of work for the teachers, though. America handled the virus moderately well. There are several points that could have been better, though. If we had shut down a little bit earlier,

we may have prevented the spread faster. Another point is the cleanings. We should have been excessively cleaning before all of this. A third issue is, or was, the mass hoarding of wipes, toilet paper, tissues, and cleaning products. We need to note not to do this next time.

What I miss the most about life before the quarantine is being free, and not trapped in a mask inside. It's difficult not to see friends, participate in events, and many other things. No one knows what will happen in the fall, but I predict that we may still be on lockdown. We may come in to school, but only half of the grade at a time. But whatever happens, we will recover. All of our experiences will be remembered in the future, after the virus. It can't stay forever! So remember to wash your hands, and have a good day.

Quarantine Sucked!



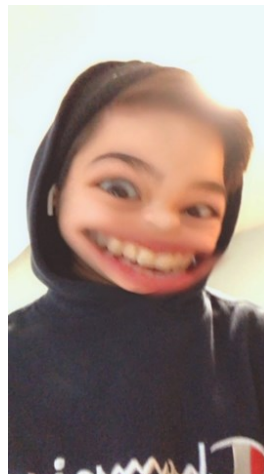
By Sebastian Chao
ELA 7 White Team

Quarantine sucked! The only thing I did was school, soccer, and play video games. It started with me being sick. I was sick for the three days before it started, so I had an even longer stay in hell (aka home).

At first it seemed great, a two-week break from school, because that's what it was at the beginning, but now it has been almost four months. Quarantine sucked because I could not see my friends and even though it seems like I did a lot, it wasn't that much.

At the end of March and the beginning of April, cases spiked in NY. I have just been doing the same things since then. I did start cooking over quarantine; I have made cookies, brownies, and many other dishes such as lo mein, garlic chicken, and homemade pasta.

Besides cooking, my brother and I made a bike trail in the backyard through the woods. It goes around about an acre of land, and there are



two trails. We made a few jumps, too. We have yet to name either of them.

Second, we also started on a fence for my dog so that she can run around. We can't finish it yet because there are a lot of rocks in the ground. It would be a huge plus if we can finish it by mid-summer because my dog, Zoey, loves to run around.

Third, we started on a vegetable garden. We made the beds out of logs that we had from cutting down some of the trees in my backyard. We have planted cucumbers, peas, tomatoes, strawberries, and potatoes. The second to last thing is that we started to build a hangout in our backyard out of cheap wood like pallets and discount wood. We are going to put either tin or plastic roof for it.

The last thing we did so far is put up our pool. It is a 16-foot circle and it's so much fun just to cool off on a hot day.

To sum up my quarantine, I played a lot of soccer, played a lot of video games, did a lot of workouts, watched many hours of YouTube, listened to so many podcasts, and a lot of music.

The Quarantine Chronicles—The First (and Hopefully Last) Volume



By Emma Gordon
ELA 7 White Team

What do you think would happen after being at home for nearly a hundred days? Was a question that I thought I would never ask myself. Yeah

sure, each day is mostly just “wake up, eat, work, eat, work, eat, relax, sleep”, but there have also been thrilling misadventures (or as thrilling as they can get from home) along the way. From great achievements to learning new things about myself and my teeth, here’s my quarantine story.



Now, a lot can change in a few months. Even if those few months are mostly spent sitting in front of a computer. But think about it, you can do lots of things on a computer (while not doing schoolwork, of course). And you can even learn new things about yourself along the way. Like for example, I’ve started writing my own fictional story (a couple, actually) and I’ve realized: wow, I’m good at creative writing, and I love to do it! Although sitting in front of my computer all day brings some pros, it also brings some cons. Like for example, when I first turn on my tablet, the time doesn’t change right away. So, it can cause a lot of problems and stops me from doing my work. I’m also a Harry Potter nerd, so I find it unfair that this quarantine had to start right before my trip to Harry Potter world. I mean, couldn’t it start after? Oh well, at least I was able to get my family to watch all the Harry Potter movies (now that’s an achievement if I’ve ever seen one!) All Harry Potter obsessions aside though, I have learned to appreciate a lot of things during this time. One of them is my family and that I have two awesome (when they’re not annoying) brothers to keep me company. I realized this from a dream I had just a couple days ago (it may or may not have included Harry Potter stuff, but that’s not the point!) where I lost one of my brothers and I realized that life would be awful without him there.

Now onto a topic that most people will think about when they think about quarantine: Distance Learning. Before quarantine, I was very great about handing in my homework on time and I would never hand anything in late ever. Yeah well, distance learning threw all that out the window. Now to be fair, it’s not distance learning’s

fault; it’s mostly mine. But hey! I haven’t handed any of my algebra homework in late at all! So that’s pretty good! On the other hand, though, I can’t say the same for my other classes. However, distance learning won’t be the first thing that I

remember from this experience. That slot goes to me having to get a root canal. The explanation behind that is that one of my teeth has been hurting me for a while now and it turns out that it grew in with decay in it (basically a cavity) and it’s near a nerve so now I have to get a root canal... but hey at least I get laughing gas! A little moment that happened during quarantine (or, a couple) was when I got a

new scooter and nearly killed myself twice on it! It all started on Mother’s Day when it came. When we went on our daily walk, I decided to test it out. It was fast and way faster than my younger brother’s smaller scooter. So, being the intelligent kid I am, I decided to scoot it downhill. My brother and I went up to the top and then scooted down, me passing him easily. It was the most fun thing I’d ever done in my life! So, we decided to go down one more time. On the second time down however, at the bottom I stopped it incorrectly, fell forward and nearly crashed into a parked car. Somehow, I left nearly untouched except for a couple scrapes on my hands and my leg feeling weird for a few days. Fast forward a few days later and I’m on my scooter again. This time though, I’m scooting on my driveway up and down. I get a bit tired, so I decide to go sit with my parents in the chairs on the front porch. However, a bee decides it’s the perfect time to attack so to avoid being hit by my dad swinging my (yes, he uses my racket) tennis racket to kill the bee, I decide to wait a bit by doing donuts on my scooter. This was a bad idea because I go too fast on one of them, fall and scrape the skin off my knee. And now it’s still healing. I haven’t touched that scooter since.

Now as for all the politics surrounding this pandemic, I don’t really have that much of an opinion. I don’t really much care for all that stuff to be honest. All I really know is: Pandemic, lockdown, social distancing, COVID-19, protests. But my *childish* opinion is that they should’ve started quarantine after I went to Universal Studios and Harry Potter World and drank all the Butterbeer I could.

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Affected By a Pandemic



By **Sidney Ingraham**
ELA 7 White Team

This pandemic has obviously affected me a lot. It, it has affected everyone in America.

I do not enjoy doing schoolwork as much as I did when I was physically in the school and I am a bigger pain for my parents. I am bored, I miss my friends and I miss seeing people every day.

The most unfair thing I went through was that my spring Somers lacrosse season was taken away. This year, I would have played with the 8th graders and we would have had a great season! On the other hand, I have learned to appreciate how much I like school. Distance learning has its pros and cons. I liked being able to sleep in and decide when to do my classes and this is almost like college. But I hardly learned anything, and it is much harder to learn on your own and to understand the material.

A memorable anecdote was when my neighbor and I crashed into each other. She was on a bike and I was on a RipStik electric skate-



board, and we turned at the same time.

What helped in handling this virus is that people in NY state listened and are wearing their masks, which helped stop the spread of the disease. But some states did not listen so now their cases are spiking.

I strongly dislike missing out on our field trips to the Bronx Zoo and Splash Down, as well as the rest of the school year, because everyone knows the last day of school is the best day! And, of course, I am upset my lacrosse season is over.

It is sad that 100,000 Americans have died from this and it is scary for everyone, whether you know someone who had it or not. I miss seeing my friends every day at school. I miss it because we would have fun and share experiences.

My hope for the future is that EVERY state goes down in cases and that buildings and schools open back up and sports will be allowed. School in

the fall will be weird; COVID will still exist, just like any other disease, but I am hoping the humidity will kill it. I honestly cannot say if we will be in distance learning, but I like to think no.

Quarantine Chronicles

From Page 16

Yes, I can see how that's kind of selfish considering that 100,000 Americans have died from this disease. But I'm still hopeful that this country can bounce back. I mean, 100,000 people is just a small dent in our country with a population of over 300 *million* people, right? We'll still (probably) have normal lives after this. Speaking of normal lives, I as a 7th grader don't really feel like I missed too many important things (except for of course my Harry Potter World trip, did I mention that already?). Who I do feel missed a lot though are the 8th graders (D.C. trip), college grads, and especially the seniors. No Prom! No Graduation! They don't even get to have a normal first year of college! Sorry for anybody reading this who has to miss all that and I'm just reminding you of it though.

I say what I've missed most over quarantine is yes, my friends, teachers, activities, school, yada, yada. But what I really miss, is some order, some stuff to do. Like, even though I have absolutely nothing else to do, I still never am able to

finish all my work because I don't really have a schedule, certain things due by certain times. The other part of me though, the lazy part of me (my favorite part of me by the way) likes all that. So, I don't want to be able to choose to be scheduled or not, I just want to have to do stuff and to be able to feel like I accomplished something when I finish. Do I believe that we won't have to worry about that in the Fall? I just hope. I hope that they make a vaccine or whatever they need to do so we could all get back to our old lives by January. I have no idea what's actually going to happen though, only time will really tell.

But as we wait for time to tell us what will really happen, we just have to try to make the most of it. When was the last time you even said anything to your sibling that wasn't "*pass the salt*"? Or the last time your family watched something together that wasn't at the movie theater and that you had to be quiet the whole time? When was the last time you wrote a story? Or read a book? Or baked something- or whatever interests you?

Try to use this time to find new hobbies or interests. You never know, you might just thank yourself later on (but try not to hurt yourself along the way like I did).

Locked Out of Heaven



By Benji Cutler
ELA 7 White Team

These past few months have been something none of us have ever experienced before. There's been some ups, but many downs. This quarantine hasn't been horrible, but there are a lot of things I would rather be doing. My favorite events are cancelled like camp and Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, and I can't wait for this pandemic to be over.

During the quarantine, I have been making myself most meals and I have been getting better at being on a routine. I have also learned that staying in shape and having good hygiene is very important. The most unfair things I've went through so far are having camp close and having Bar and Bat Mitzvahs postponed. Camp is my favorite place on this earth, and this was the year I would be at the most Bar and Bat Mitzvahs. Lastly, I've learned to appreciate spending time with family.

Distance learning has been very interesting. In some ways, it's very helpful and useful, and in some ways, it makes learning way more difficult. For some subjects, it may be difficult sometimes because it takes much more time to interact



A lava cake made from a TikTok video called "Quarantine Snacks".

with the teacher if I'm having trouble. However, usually I have plenty time to do assignments. That's one very helpful thing about distance learning. I have all the time in the world compared to a normal school day to finish work. One memorable anecdote I've had during quarantine is going to the Danbury Mall with my family. It was one of the first times I went out to a public place and seeing everyone wearing masks was crazy!!!

I think America has been handling quarantine very well, having things re-open little by little and having everyone wear masks, etc. This is a crazy time to handle, but we've been surviving, which is great. Missing camp and Bar and Bat Mitzvahs is tough, but I know that safety is always the main priority. With 100,000 Americans dying, however, it does mean that this isn't a joke and we always have to stick to the guidelines.

What I miss most right now is just hanging out with friends, because I miss hanging out and having fun together. I think we'll find a vaccine, and we'll be using distance learning for the rest of 2020, and normal school starting around January or February 2021. I really hope Coronavirus never comes back, and everything will go back to normal, because I really miss the real world.

The Four Day Weekend That Became So Much Longer



By Brooke Fazio
ELA 7 White Team

Everyone was so excited for our four-day weekend, but no one expected this. Being stuck at home for three months with no stores, no activities and worst of all, no friends.

I shouldn't be complaining. In a way, I am in a bubble from the rest of the world. While some people are so sick and weak, they can't get out of bed, my family is only one town away, spends quarantine with food, has internet and both parents who still have their jobs, and a whole neighborhood of friends that I hang out with almost every day.

One of the biggest changes I have noticed about me from this pandemic is how much more I appreciate seeing my friends or going swimming or even knowing I have a roof over my head, because some people are not as lucky. It took me some time to realize how a lot of people don't have these privileges, but now I know, and I am very grateful for what I have. The only thing I'm complaining about is being bored.

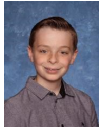


America has been dealing with this pandemic very well. We closed cities, stores and the numbers for the Coronavirus cases has been dropping, but the thing I do not understand is why we didn't close airports down sooner! When the Coronavirus started, China shut down their airports. They told us it was extremely contagious and dangerous, so why didn't we close our airports? That could have prevented the spread to the United States.

I do not feel I am missing out. Yes, I haven't been to some parties, friends' houses and some school trips, but eighth graders missed the Washington D.C. Trip, high school seniors are missing prom and their last year of high school! They have a reason for feeling like they're missing out.

One memorable experience from quarantine happened yesterday. My neighbors and I did a workout and it was 85 degrees. By the end of the workout, we were all super-hot, so we decided to jump in the pool with our clothes on. It was super fun and it cooled us down. Overall, quarantine isn't that bad.

A Memoir of 2020



By Luke DeBellis
ELA 7 White Team

Coronavirus. If there is one thing I learned from this disease, it is how lucky I am to be alive. Coronavirus has had a huge impact on many families, including mine. Many things have changed during these times. Before Coronavirus I used to freely hang-out with my friends and especially do what I love ballroom dancing. Coronavirus is a disease the whole world will not forget. I believe Coronavirus has helped humanity look closer at other significant problems in our world. I hope in 2021, the whole world can resolve most of all issues that are going around and take a large step toward healing.

The seventh grade of 2020 was yet to be my most important year of all grade levels. At the end of the year, my hard work was supposed to be rewarded with field trips to water parks and going to zoos. However, Coronavirus has taken all that away. I will never again experience seventh grade to its fullest. I will also need to wait for another year to have a dance competition. Coronavirus has taken very special moments away from me, especially when my family and I were supposed to go to Florida. We had tickets bought and our bags packed, but when we found the world had closed, my family and I lost a trip that we rarely ever take. I will **NEVER** forget the year 2020.

The dreadful fact that over 100,000 Americans died is unbearable. Coronavirus has had a huge impact on the world. People once thought



that Coronavirus only targeted elderly people. However, researchers found that the Coronavirus affected people of all ages, infants to adulthood. Many families have lost loved ones to this virus, and though I have not, I still feel massive amounts of pain and sympathy for these people.

Through all the things the world has been through, I feel America has done many things to help people during the Coronavirus. For example, the New York Governor has issued an executive order that people cannot get evicted during these times. Another thing that America is doing right is by finding a cure for Coronavirus! Every day, healthcare workers risk their lives so that millions of people can be healthy! People only look at the wrong side of America. They say horrible things about government officials, and how they are supposed to do things. People do not think about how hard it is to be a governing official, -especially being the President or a governor! Usually, the government is all over politics but right now their number one priority is to help save others!

Looking into the future, I hope that next year in eighth grade is a new and better year full of happiness, love, and kindness. I hope the world has learned from this pandemic and will do things differently than how they were done before. I hope that my school will open, and I will be able to see my friends again. I hope I can visit my very amazing teachers who I only could see for half the year.

My final wish for next year is that the **CORONAVIRUS WILL NEVER RETURN!!!**

I've Learned to Appreciate A Lot During this Time

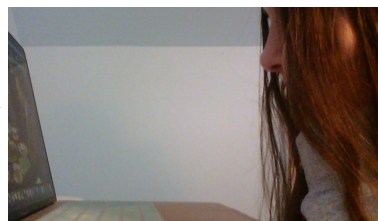


By Alyssa Tucci
ELA 7 White Team

Twelve weeks glued to a computer screen. Locked in your house with only your family. If you think you know what insanity is, you're wrong.

One thing that I would say has changed the most about me is my daily routine, and my sleep schedule. For example, I've been going to bed really late and my daily routine is different because I don't have school, so I have more time to do things that I've wanted to do for a while. In my opinion, what is most unfair is that people are losing friends and family due to coronavirus. Also, that we can't see our friends or family anymore. I have learned to appreciate my safe neighborhood and that I am able to have working electricity and technology.

Distance learning has been a little difficult to work with. Mainly because Schoology doesn't always work, and it can be difficult to submit your work sometimes. One thing that I think will be very memorable would be the Black Lives Matter riots because there are so many of them going on



right now. Another thing that I think will be memorable is that 2020 is a very hectic year and that multiple things keep happening, one after another.

One thing that I think our country did wrong is that we did not quarantine early enough, and I think if we had, we could have reduced the spread of the disease. I feel a little upset that we had to miss so many fun events and experiences. The fact that so many people have lost their lives due to this disease makes me sick to my stomach.

What I miss most is that I can't see my friends because life just isn't as fun if you aren't able to spend time with people you enjoy hanging out with. My prediction is that we will have a vaccine in about a year. I also think that COVID -will come back in about 10 years or around that time. I think next year, we will either be having distance learning, or a more safe way to go to school. My hope for the future is that we find a vaccine for COVID and that we try to keep the Earth healthy, because pollution rates have gone down since quarantine has started.

Getting Used to the Word 'Pandemic'



By Amanda Dustin
ELA 7 White Team

Pandemic. A word that was so rarely used before the coronavirus came along. If you don't know what a pandemic is, it's a virus or sickness that has spread around the globe, worldwide. Basically, everyone is at risk for it. It's so crazy how everything can change so quickly because of something. I mean, I'm going to remember this for the rest of my life.

Will things be normal again? I'm not sure--but I know that it's not going to last forever. What's crazy is, I miss some things I never thought I'd miss. Like school or the ability to walk around without a mask. I will have changed as a result of this--I'll be much more grateful for what I have. I'll also be grateful for the ability to see important events in large groups, like the Memorial Day Parade or school trips.

To me, the most unfair part about this whole thing is that I can't really do anything about it. Do you know how frustrating that is? Having to just wait and wait and hope that it'll go away soon? Probably not. But that's all I can do, really, hope.



I used to wake up at 7:00 to get ready for school. I would walk out of the house and be greeted by the bright yellow school bus. Now, I wake up at 9:00 (8:30 when I'm in a good mood) and log straight onto my tablet to see what homework I have for each class. It's different, but it's working for me so far. Especially since I get to spend more time with my family. My father hand made some championship trophies for Battleship and Monopoly, which we play every weekend (And which I am the reigning monopoly champion). It's not so bad, but I miss my friends dearly and have a bunch of homework to complete every day. Still, not so bad.

It's very unsettling that at any time you or your family can be at risk for a virus that has killed over 100,000 Americans. I worry mostly about my grandparents, because they are at the highest risk of getting COVID-19. Though all this is horrible, my hope for the future is that we can all get together in large groups again and hug each other freely.

And I know that that will become a reality. I'm just not sure when.

The Pandemic of 2020



By Matt Battaglia
ELA 7 White Team

The global pandemic which was also known as the coronavirus outbreak of 2020 was a very unexpected event in time starting in China and spreading all over the world this disease would affect millions across the world and take the lives of many. At the start I didn't think it seemed serious but as many started dying and buildings and schools would close it changed my and many others view about this deadly disease. This would affect millions not just by the virus, but many have lost lots of money and lost their businesses. Sports around the world were postponed and many travel restrictions have come into place. This disease took a hard hit on many people

On March 15th I got home not realizing that school wouldn't open the rest of the year. No school started with a break of 2 weeks and the start of online learning. This decision was surprising, and many people had questions about what would happen. Online learning was challenging at times with no teachers to always be available, but we all pushed through and successfully got through this hard time with the online learning. To help with the difficulties of online learning the teachers didn't give heavy workloads



and were very flexible about the work. I and many other people didn't like online school and weren't motivated as I felt like it wasn't school related since it was very different

Since then we have been in a quarantine with many travel bans across the world keeping us from seeing friends, family or taking a vacation. I couldn't see my friends for a while and if anyone would go in public, we would need protection like a mask. All sports and activities ended up

being canceled and that caused life to be very boring but we had to stay safe and prevent this disease from spreading still the country is now starting to reopen and life is starting to go back to normal. Now without sports and public places to go to everyone is bored at home but we must stay in to be safe

Overall, this global pandemic has affected millions and it's sad to see how many people have died from this disease known as coronavirus this virus has caused many things we haven't seen before like a quarantine and online school. We have never had to go through that and hopefully we never will have to again. Things are progressing well, and the leaders of the world, countries, states, and cities are doing everything to get rid of this. The doctors are also doing very well as all the other essential workers are as well.

Isolated



By Tiana Righetti
ELA 7 White Team

The whole world is in a huge pandemic right now. We are all going through struggles caused by this disease. Things are different; we need to adapt to a new lifestyle for the time being. This isn't ordinary, or "the new normal". This is going to change, and things will get better as time goes on.

It's weird having to sit on a screen all day to do schoolwork and not being able to see my friends who help me through everything. It's been hard mentally and physically. I almost feel like I'm tired all the time and I'm so bored that there's nothing to do anymore. I try to find new hobbies to do, but it's not the same.

Things are different right now. I have had to change many things, like my schedule, eating habits, living, and soccer schedule. During quarantine, a lot of unfair things have happened to me, some important private things I would not like to talk about. But I have not been able to see my friends, or go to play soccer games. I still Facetime my friends and practice soccer but it's not the same thing. It's also unfair to go out in public with people looking at you like a psycho if you get too close to them or you're not wearing gloves, or even if my parents are bringing their kids with them to the store at all.

I've learned to appreciate having such helpful and caring family members to get me through things. I also appreciate the simple and normal things that we could have and do before Coronavirus, even the things we wouldn't have thought of before this pandemic that we do and use every day that are huge contributions to our daily lives.

Learning also obviously isn't the same as it used to be. We sit in front of a screen on our laptops and computers doing online school work, and we have weekly Zoom classes, and submit school work Monday through Friday. In the beginning of quarantine, it was (still is) hard to focus on my work and not get distracted because we were at home. Sometimes, it's hard to understand things also, but the teachers are making it easier for us to contact them if we have any questions. I definitely would rather work at school than my house, but you have to work with what you got.

I have many memories from my time during quarantine, with the same people, but many

memories. One is that every Friday night, my family (my dad, mom and older sister) make home-made pizza, and my dad was getting so mad at us because my sister and I were spreading out the dough wrong, but my sister was even worse! She was acting like it was Play Dough and was pushing her finger tips in it. But we're like pros now, and we always make it a competition on whose pizza came out better (we make one regular pie with fresh mozzarella, and tomatoes, and basil, and one with fresh mozzarella, tomatoes, and mushrooms).

I think the president did, and still is, making the right decisions with the pandemic, but sooner or later, we need to just end quarantine. Coronavirus, will always be here. It's, like the flu; you can't hold back people in their houses and keep people wearing masks everywhere for the rest of our lives. I have missed many events that I wish I could have gone to, some very important things, and some things that could



have been really fun.

It makes me sad that 100,000 Americans died from Coronavirus, and it's not fair that people are now going out on the streets protesting and spreading it more, acting like Coronavirus isn't a thing anymore, and people looting stores while most of them are already unstable with money, thanks to Coronavirus. That needs to stop also if we want to end Coronavirus sooner.

I miss so many things. My friends, and soccer are a huge part. My friends help me with everything, and I can turn to soccer whenever I feel down, stressed, or not myself, and I really miss playing on the field with my teammates. It's, not the same, but I still play at my house.

I think they are coming up with vaccines very soon, and there will be another outbreak. There always will—it's, just like the flu. I hope school will be back to normal in the fall, but with our school, I know it won't. I think people will go into school on different days, depending on a schedule you get. My hopes are always too hopeful, and I know it won't happen, but I hope by the end of this month, quarantine will be over, school will be back to normal in the fall, I can play soccer again, and Trump will get re-elected.

I don't know what will happen in the future, but I know something will be different from how it was before.

Living Through History



**By Katherine Papa
ELA 7 White Team**

I'm sure you've thought, "I don't want to go to school. I'd rather do it from home."

Believe me, as someone who has been stuck at home in the house, not seeing friends, do not take school for granted!!!! I have been in quarantine for 87 days with only my family. Also, believe me, school is MUCH easier with a teacher in the same room as you to help you. Yes, as you can tell, quarantine is tough!! Be happy you are living through history right now.

Quarantine has changed my perspective on life. I have learned not to take things for granted. During the regular time before quarantine, I took certain things for granted, like having enough food and a roof over my head. Just hearing about the people who do not have those things during these tough times has really changed my perspective. Also, I have changed in a little bit of a worse way because I have been in the house with my sister, so I have been getting snappy with her. It is not my brightest moment, but I have been working on it. It was a very unfair thing to happen to so many people. I was lucky not to have been in a tough family situation. So many people were in an unstable living environment. I think the most unfair thing that happened to me was not being able to play softball, which to me is important.

But when I look at the things some other people have been through, I realize I've been lucky. I've learned to appreciate my friends and my family because they have been helping me through this.

Distance learning has not really helped me. It is harder for me to get my work done at home. It is hard to ask questions and there could be internet problems. It is much easier to work in a classroom setting. During May, it was my sis-



ter's and grandmother's and my dad's birthdays, so we did a socially distanced birthday party for them on each of their days. We had cake, gave presents, and did a Zoom call with some relatives who lived farther away. This helped us feel less isolated and alone. It helped broaden the amount of people who we saw those days. It made them feel more special. As a country, we did certain things correct for the pandemic. I feel like the governors for the states could have talked a little more to get a

clearer view on the big picture, however, I do think they did a respectable job acting and shutting things down. Without that, we could be in a worse place than we are now. There are some days where I feel sad about missing some key events in my life, like softball or school, but it is not as bad as it could be and I hold on to the hope that things will get better soon.

It scares me a bit that about 100,000 Americans have died from this disease. Although it scares me, it can also act as a reality check, showing me that no matter how bad I feel, it could always be worse, so it helps to find something to be glad about. Like when I feel sad about softball, I like to say to myself, "You should be glad that you found something you love so much that being without it makes you sad."

The thing I miss most while in quarantine is softball. The people I miss most are my family and friends. These people and things help me feel whole so when I am without them, I feel incomplete. I predict that there will be a vaccine very soon. My hope for the future is that we will be back to school and sports and visiting friends soon. And I want to remind you, no matter how sad or lonely you feel, you can always find something to be glad about. When you feel lonely, think, "I am glad I have people in my life to miss." When you feel tired think, "I am glad I have a bed to sleep in." I promise, you can always find something to be glad about.

Lots of Time To Think During Pandemic



**By Lia Babon
ELA 7 White Team**

In this quarantine and pandemic, I had a lot of time to think and learn new things and spend time with my family, I have found new hobbies and more things to do when bored and in my free time.

I think the most unfair thing that a lot of people had to go through was being locked in their houses, not being able to do much, some even losing their houses because they have no work and

without work, they cannot make money, I don't mind staying home, and others think the same way, too.

In this time, I have learned to not be so picky and I just have been more relaxed than stressed. Distance learning worked fine for me, even though I do have some missing assignments. It has been easier to do work, and I think it is just a cool experience,

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12 Weeks of One Lockdown!



**By Eliza Wilke-Olsen
ELA 7 White Team**

Packing up my belongings, it was heavier than normal. Why? Because we might not go back. Well, that's what the teachers said, and I still couldn't wrap my head around the thought of that being the truth. I mean, neither could all the students and everyone in the world, I guess no one could. We all thought that we would come back soon enough, but boy, were we all wrong!

We all had our personal tolls during this pandemic, but there were ones that most people related with. Like hanging out with friends. No one had the opportunity anymore, not because we were busy, but because the world was on lockdown. We didn't, and still don't, get to go to the places we normally could usually, because they are closed, but if we do, it's with masks and distance from other people. I will agree, it's rough and at this point, I think all people want to do is have some sort of social interaction.

Once we had been told that we would be experiencing distance learning, I expected it to go smoothly and have no problems with my tablet, since that is what we are using to do school work, yet I was wrong again. In the beginning, everything was fine partly because I expected to go back to school and still had that same motivation. Also, I had no tablet problems. As time went on, my tablet had started acting up. By that, I mean randomly shutting down or restarting, causing me to lose most of my work. Let's just say that disrupted the work process I tried to maintain. Because of that, some work would be late or missing, even though I had been doing it. So, on that note, dis-

tance learning did not go to well for me.

One of the most memorable moments in the past 12 weeks was the day I nicknamed, "bad luck Monday". Now I'm usually not some superstitious person, but I really believed it this time. It started on the night before when we were going on a walk in our neighborhood and a black cat crossed our path. The next morning, I woke up hearing all this commotion, so I asked what happened, and it turns out two showers in our house broke! I thought that was it, but no, I got downstairs, and went to the kitchen and what do you know, there was a big leak! My dad had to call the plumber over to check everything out and see what the issue was, and to top it all off, we have three dogs, so it was incredibly loud. My mom also had work calls all day. Shortly after, our water had to be shut off and in that time period, we lost power, so no water, no power, so no internet and no capability to do our schoolwork! Overall, we had two unrelated shower problems, no internet, no water, lots and lots of noise from the dogs, a plumber, a cleaning lady, and landscapers!

There are some things I definitely did not expect to miss during quarantine, like waking up very early to go to school and school itself, but I really miss my friends and the everyday activities I would do, like dance. I think that COVID-19 will return just like the flu, but we will probably have a vaccine for it, and if not, maybe half the year will be in school and half will be distance learning.

I think school will be different when we come back in the fall, but eventually, I think everything will get back on track. Even if the Coronavirus does return, and it most likely will, I bet we will have some sort of solution that will help somewhat.



Lots of Time

From Page 22

I always wanted to try out homeschooling and online school sort of helped me see how it would be if I were homeschooled. I have had a lot of memories in quarantine and most were with family and friends, and I feel I have gotten closer to my family than when I was in school.

I think the country went wrong making us stay six feet apart and wearing mask outside. In my opinion, we should not have to wear masks while going on a walk or outside with neighbors and friends. If you are not sick, the mask does nothing (opinion).

I think keeping us inside is just making a lot of people's lives worse. We should be able to hang out with other people without standing out-



side six feet apart wearing a mask.

I missed a few key events in my life during quarantine, like Going on my family vacation, and birthdays and while they are not so important, it still disappoints me. 100,000+ people have died from this, and some of the ways the people have died were painful and sad.

I think the thing I miss most about being in quarantine are my friends and family and being able to go places without masks or a certain amount of people in one area. I hope that this ends soon, and we can start our lives again and have things go back to normal, to be able to see others, and go places.

I think that we will start school different next year, but hopefully not online.

Quarantined!



By Simon Szabo
ELA 7 White Team

What does it feel like being quarantined for 12 weeks? Let me tell you. This story is what it felt like being quarantined. By the way, this is a true story.

I feel like how I have changed during quarantine is that I have become closer to my family because you are with them all day, every day, which I like. Also, I feel more social with my family because when we had school, we would only talk about how school was and that was it. But what is unfair about what I went through is that I could not hang out with my friends, even to this day. What I have learned to appreciate during this that time is Zooming with my cousins and my church friends and doing movie nights on a Netflix party. We have also gone hiking sometimes together, which was fun seeing my cousins and church friends.

The first-time doing distance learning was kind of hard because it was like doing home schooling, which I never did, and it was hard to get used to it. But then it got easier as time went on and I am used to it now. An anecdote from my



time in quarantine is that when we went hiking, we went to King Kone to get ice cream and then got bacon and buffalo chicken pizza at Yorktown Pizza.

What I think we did right was that we wore masks and kept a safe distance from each other because then it would be dangerous if you have grandparents who are with you. Also, what they did

right is that they closed stores so that people would be safe. I do, however, feel bad that I am missing some key events because I was going to have a fun summer, but since the coronavirus is going on, a lot of things are not going to happen that I wanted to do this summer, such as going to the pool, going to Canada for camp, and going to the beach. I especially feel bad that 100,000 innocent people died from the coronavirus.

What I mostly miss is school. I miss school so much because I got to spend time with my school friends. But later, I think we might have a vaccine. But I also think coronavirus is going to re-emerge in the fall, and that we might have online school for a little while. But I hope the vaccine will help.

History Has Been Made!



By Patrick Bracelin
ELA 7 White Team

The last few weeks, history has been made, and I have seen it all! Just when you think this is all impossible, it just gets worst. It was just a virus, then it spread as fast as lightning. Almost every country had this and it has gotten worse and worse. Then when it came to New York, we got closed at school for one day and went back to school right after. Then then we got shut down again and again. After that it was for the rest of the year!!!!

I have been changed by this pandemic because I have gotten way more patient than then I used to be. What is most unfair for me is that all of my baseball got shut down after we were practicing for two months and we skipped three tournaments. Also, what is unfair for me is that I don't see any of my friends anymore. During this time, I have learned to appreciate life more because one 1 day, you can be great and the next day, it might be over. I know one person who has passed during this pandemic, and he was fine just the day before.



Distance learning has been working for me because I can do things when I want during the day and sleep a little later. Memorable things from this quarantine are going to drive-bys for birthdays at some friend's house. As a country, I think we handled this very well with closing down, staying closed and no one in the restaurants.

I haven't really missed special key events in my life, but I did miss some baseball tournaments and the end of 7th grade. I feel very bad for the people who that we have lost through this tough time. I personally I know someone who that we lost, and I still can't believe this.

What I miss most during quarantine is seeing my family and friends. I am not

used to not seeing them, so it gets me sad. My future hopes are that we get a vaccine to the virus and it ends soon, and that it doesn't come back. For the fall, I think that the virus might have a spike, but I think we will be able to go back to school, even if it's but maybe only half capacity Monday, then the other half Tuesday, and so on.

This virus ruined millions and this should never happen again. History has been made!

I Am Living in a Historical Time

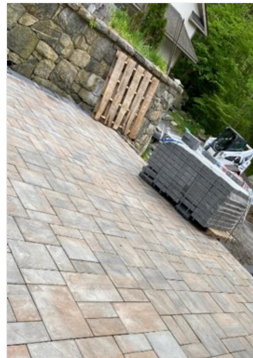


By Anthony Gregorio
ELA 7 White Team

As I am writing this, I am living in a historical time. I am trapped inside of a house not able to leave unless I want to risk catching a deadly disease. I have to do school from home on a computer and must take classes over a call.

During a time like this, school is difficult. I'm very unmotivated to do work and take breaks every five minutes. You also start to realize how much you takes for granted. Even such little things as hanging out with friends and talking to them in person, and even being able to go outside without having to wear a mask and stand six feet apart.

My hope for the future is that in a month or two, the cures that they have now pass all the tests so they're safe and that they are available to the public. After all this, I hope everything goes back to normal and everything opens up so I can have a normal summer.



As a country, what we did wrong was that at first, no one really thought anything of it and that it would never come here, and it wasn't deadly, so no one took extra steps not to be infected and. I also think the government could've done a better job explaining the virus in the beginning even if they had scarce knowledge.

The fact that 100,000 people died from this doesn't necessarily scare me, but it does give me a sense of how serious this pandemic is. The one thing I miss the most about not being in quarantine is easily seeing my friends. I have been bored out of my mind without seeing anyone and staying

inside.

My prediction of what school will be like in the fall is that even if we go to school and don't keep doing distance learning, at first, teachers and kids will be extra careful and at least try to keep their space, but as time goes on, everyone will get comfortable again and everything will be basically back to normal and we will start hanging out with friends and going outside.

It Won't Be Like This Forever



By Madison Kourakos
ELA 7 White Team

We all thought it was a joke in the beginning, until it wasn't. And smiles on every face in the middle school for what we thought was only a four-day weekend. We were all wrong. This was going to be how life was for the next three months, and possibly even longer. We finally realized that several lives were being taken away. Along with seeing friends and family outside of your own home. The latest gossip is only the rapidly rising numbers of cases, deaths, jobs lost, and the lady at the grocery store who was not wearing a mask.

It feels very frustrating that everything has been cancelled. Sports, school, a concert that I was looking forward to for seven months. It is all so exasperating. I just wish we had a little more time because it was not like everything was shutting down gradually. Everything got cut off so suddenly. It has also been so frustrating how you cannot see your friends.

Social distancing is hard. People need other people. I have gotten used to it by now. But it is still very hard not seeing my friends. Even though everything possible to keep anybody entertained or busy was gone, we still managed to



try and have fun. So, on some nights, we would do a firepit and roast marshmallows. There were still a couple parks open, so we could go for walks. It was not all that bad because before, with work and school, I have not really had much time to spend with my family. It is nice spending time with them. One of the things that has made me most sad, is the number of people who have died. So many innocent lives lost to this disease. I have really learned to appreciate how lucky I am to have my family, and how none of them have been affected.

One thing that I was not totally on board with was the remote learning. But I can understand why it is not perfect. It is all new, and we are the guinea pigs. In the beginning, the workload was very overwhelming, and I was not finishing until around 5 pm. But as the weeks went on, it has improved. I think it is not as effective as teaching in person. But we just had to get used to it.

My hopes for the future are that we will be able to go back to school without any precautions. Also, I hope that all sports will resume and social events like concerts will be rescheduled. I think eventually all of this will go back to normal. It will not be like this forever.

12 Weeks of ?



By Mayank Dave
ELA 7 White Team

How long has it been? It feels like years, yet it has only been 12 weeks. I wonder how? Almost all of us have been sitting in front of a screen for the whole time. I mean, my laptop has not seen this much on time since I got it.

Spending this much time in front of a laptop has taught me to learn all the functions of my laptop. Did you know that Ctrl+Esc opens Windows start? Hopefully, I also learned a few things in school, too.

I think the one thing about quarantine that we can all agree about is that we have changed, and I think that the thing I am most changed over is the way I interact with people. I have stopped caring about what other people think about me, because no one's around to judge me. I have learned to appreciate the solitude of this time since I usually have social interactions every day normally.

When people talk about online learning, I do not like it. Online learning is fine itself, but the problem really is how the teachers teach since none of them were prepared for something



like this. I think one of the most amusing times during quarantine is when a frog got into our pool and my sister and I went in, but we did not know. We freaked out when it started to swim towards us. The frog was fine, but I do not think I am.

As a country, we did wrong in the handling of this pandemic.

We did not put enough resources towards manufacturing crucial supplies, leading to the shortage now. And I do not think the fact that over 100,000 Americans have died due to poor coordination sits well with me or the nation.

I have missed a lot of key moments in my life such as my cousin's 16th birthday. It really does suck to miss an important event during this pandemic.

I really do miss seeing my friends and family during this quarantine. I have missed so many things throughout this time period that I feel like my personal calendar has been kind of shifted.

Hopefully, we do get a vaccine to and when there is one, it will be distributed fast. I am hopeful that we will get through this pandemic and afterwards, we are careful, so it does not reemerge.

The COVID Adventure



By Andrew Marzella
ELA7 White Team

Coronavirus. The word you will never forget. It is probably the craziest experience you will ever have. You will tell your kids, and they will wonder how crazy it was during this time. And how crazy it was to do school in front of a computer for 12 weeks.

This experience really changed me. It showed me how lucky I am to do a lot of things and it shows me that going to school isn't that bad compared to online school. What is unfair about this is that our whole lacrosse season got canceled!!!! We couldn't go on our vacation that we were going to with all our cousins, and my summer camp got canceled and it is unfair for the people who lost family members. I have learned to appreciate the things I do and to appreciate going to school and to appreciate spending time with friends and family.

I do not really like distance learning. It is annoying and stressful. And I really want to go back to normal and go back to school. Something



that is very amusing is playing games on my Xbox. It was what made quarantine a little more fun. It was fun to talk to my friends online and being able to do something with them.

I think where we went wrong was in the beginning. We didn't take it seriously, which made it bad and then the cases of COVID-19 went up. I feel really

bored that there were a lot of events I could do, but I couldn't do them, so I feel bored just sitting in my house. It is sad to know that during this pandemic, 100,000 people died from this virus and I feel bad for the people who lost a family member due to the virus.

What I miss most during this pandemic is watching sports and playing sports. Those were both fun for me and now I can't do those activities. I think there will be a vaccine by the end of this year, and I do not think this virus will reemerge. I think school will look normal next year but I think we will just have smaller classes. I hope we or another generation will never have to go through this again!

My Quarantine Memoir



By John Leary
ELA 7 White Team

Quarantine was not even that bad. It was just that you had way more free time than you need, but that is finally over!

I'm starting to hang out with people more often and there are less things pressuring me to stay inside. How did I fill the extra time in quarantine? I did it by playing basketball outside and then video games. I felt like there was not a lot of extra time with nothing to do, but also, it seemed like the days were shorter.

Online school did work out but it was also a hassle because some submissions wouldn't go through and for some assignments, I had zero clue what to do. I did not have any special memories over quarantine because almost every day, I did the same thing.

What we could have done as a country is pay attention to stuff like this and not take it as a joke. What key events did I miss? I don't think I missed anything other than social interaction.



How do I feel about the many people who died during this pandemic? I really don't know how to feel. Obviously, I feel bad for all the people who passed away, but I'm just shocked.

What do I miss most in quarantine? I would miss going out to eat, hanging out with friends, doing things with other people, and just being able to go places

without a mask. What do I hope for? I hope that during summer, the pandemic dies down and everything is fully open everywhere.

Do I think we will be back in school after summer? Yes, I do. I think that we will have school, but I think maybe we have a few weeks off. How has quarantine and the pandemic changed me? I have not been changed. I have just been really bored for the past few months. Some days, I'm doing stuff with my friends and some days, I'm just inside for way too long.

I think the most unfair thing about quarantine is how the days are so repetitive. I feel like I have done the same thing every day for what seems like forever!

How Things Have Changed!



By Tristan Kavanagh
ELA 7 White Team

When I think back to the beginning of the New Year, I remember hearing about COVID-19 from the news. It was affecting other parts of the world at the time. Though, like other kids, I wasn't really worried that it would travel to our little town of Somers. Wow! Have things changed.

As I look back at the text string with my friends, I laughed when I saw a text from my friend Aiden, who wrote, *"I really hope we have the day off on Friday!"* He just wanted one day off from school, because we all thought this "virus thing" would quickly pass us by. Little did he or anyone else know that the Friday that he hoped to have off would be the beginning of the school closing for the rest of the school year.

As one day led to the next, I found myself struggling more being home and feeling isolated from my friends, my teachers and other family members. While I was glad to have my brothers to play with, I really missed my friends and the in-



person help from my teachers and my guidance counselor. Even though I was able to talk to my friends through my video games and FaceTime, I missed laughing with them at our table at lunch. I missed having sleepovers with them and just hanging out at each other's houses. I have a strong bond with my friends and I really miss them. This whole thing has taught me never to take advantage of our friendship.

While there have been some lonely and frustrating moments over the past few months, there have also been some good things that have come out of this isolation. I have been able to spend more time with my family and I feel that I am closer than ever to my brothers. We play lots of board games that we had not played in years. We play outside together more than we ever have, and we are doing more creative projects to keep us busy.

When we all get back to normal, I hope that my family continues to have these kinds of days with each other. I hope to see my friends, I hope to walk into my favorite stores and go to my favorite places. As with my friends, I will never take any of these things for granted again.

A Quarantine Memoir



By Ryleigh LaRegina
ELA 7 White Team

I feel like I learned to appreciate how many people are in my life there were who I really didn't think I would miss this much. I think the most unfair thing about quarantine is that they force us to wear masks even if you have asthma and can't breathe with one on. I've learned to appreciate how much we were able to do before quarantine.

I feel like distance learning wasn't as effective as going to school in person because you usually have 45 minutes of work, and it's easier to understand what they're teaching when your teacher is in front of you explaining the lesson. It's also fun to do work with your friends, too. A memorable event from quarantine was when my friends and I hung out for my friend's bat mitzvah that got postponed. I had only seen one of my other friends and it was fun to finally get our group back together.

I feel like the people in our country could have been more focused on themselves instead of ratting other people out for not social distancing.



That turned everyone against each other. I feel like this year will never be forgotten or remembered. We will always remember how much Coronavirus took away, but we will never remember what we were doing on the last day of school.

Every other year felt whole and complete, from signing yearbooks, to playing outside every period on the last day of school. This year just feels like an empty hole that will never be filled.

I'm sad that we never got to go on field trips with our grade, but I'm sadder that we never got to say a final goodbye. I miss our whole grade being together in the same place because the atmosphere was so much fun.

Even if we didn't talk to everyone, you still feel their presence in the room. I also miss little memories like re-enacting the last bell before we left school every day. I think next year, we will either be distance learning for a couple months or rotating schedules at the school every other day for a few months, but then hopefully it goes back to normal.

We'll Become Stronger After This has Passed



By Michael Morrissey
ELA 7 White Team

Friday, March 6th, 2020. The day everything changed. My friends and I were having a blast at my house. I was looking through my phone when I saw someone's story. "A woman in Somers diagnosed with Covid-19." This would lead to us being in quarantine for 13+ weeks, with lots of positives and negatives.

This quarantine has changed me, most importantly my sleep schedule. I was always someone to be in bed early, around 9:00 and wake up at 7:00. Not anymore. I am now going to bed between 1-2:00 AM and wake up between 9 AM and 12:00 noon. The most unfair thing about this quarantine is not being able to see people. My mom works in health care and we have been taking social distancing seriously to keep others safe since we are exposed. I have learned to appreciate being in school because it is difficult for me to keep up on my work.

Distance learning has worked out well. I can work at my own pace, take breaks and have more freedom, but it is hard to be motivated to do work when I see all the stuff around me in my house which I'd rather be using like my

PlayStation. One amusing anecdote from my time in quarantine is when my friends did a drive-by for my birthday. They had balloons, got me gifts, and even made me a poster.

As a country, I think we were handling this very well, but it has now all fallen apart as the protests over George Floyd's death are now becoming the main priority and social distancing has gone out the window. I have not missed any key events yet because of Covid-19 except my 13th birthday, which I was not planning anything big for anyways, so it has not really affected me in that way. It is very sad how many Americans and people throughout the world have died or are dying from this disease.

The thing I miss the most is seeing my friends every day. Being around them, all day, made my day much more exciting and fun and talking to them over Facetime is not the same. I think Covid-19 will be like the Sars virus as it will eventually become so weak it will die out. I think when we return to school, it will be much different, and people will take every precaution they can. My hope is that everything will return to the way it used to be and the world will become stable again and we will become stronger from this.



I Want My Life Back, Corona!!!!!!



By Josh Feldman
ELA 7 White Team

Ah yes, as we all know, 2020 has been quite a year so far AND WE'RE ONLY 6 MONTHS

IN!!!! But let me tell you what's been happening in my life so far this year. Besides the fact that we've been sitting in front of screens every day for the past 12+ weeks, I've also been taking walks and playing outside, going in the pool... I mean what else really could you do? Let's continue, shall we?

Now I don't know about you, but surprisingly, really nothing has changed about me. Ever since this virus first started getting out of hand and schools starting to shut down, I figured, "Well I'm probably not going back for a while, so maybe something about me will change..." But it didn't. Weird. Anyways, I've felt that it's so unfair that we can't go visit family/friends. I mean, we've been stuck in the house 24/7 for the past three months and we can't even see anyone! But on the good side, since we've been stuck in the house, that means spending even more time with your parents/ sibling(s), and although they can get really annoying, we've been doing more things together, especially my sibling (Claire) and I, so I've learned to appreciate her a little more.

Do you remember when schools were closing, and that working from home would be so much fun? Well, I thought that, too, but the truth came out to be the opposite. I hate it! It's not fun at all because you have to do everything through a screen and videos and you're not even learning with your friends! I haven't had a problem working



Here is a picture of a puzzle that I did with my parents and my sister in quarantine. We've done many more but here is a picture of one of them.

with distance learning; I just don't like it and I'm sure many other people feel the same way. A memorable anecdote that I had in quarantine has just been spending time with my friends VIRTUALLY! Not in person, but virtually. Whether it's Facetime or playing video games, it's been fun now that everyone has more time.

As a country, what we've been doing wrong is going out unnecessarily and not even wearing masks, which doesn't help the cases go down. Because of this virus, I've missed a lot of events that I was going to, like bar/bat mitzvahs, concerts, camp and it's upsetting but what else can you do? The fact that over 115,000 people have died from this virus is just unbelievable. It's very scary, and you never know if or when you have it.

I miss seeing friends/family and going to school because they were weekly things and it's annoying and upsetting that I haven't been able to do that. Honestly, I don't see this virus ever ending, I feel like it will become like the flu, and they will create a vaccine. If people actually listened, I think this virus could get better. There are a lot of people who are listening, but there's also a lot who aren't, and it's because of those people that this virus is still going on.

For the fall, I predict that we will still have to do online learning and maybe not go back until October/November. Hopefully not, but who knows? My hope for the future is that this virus will get under control and we'll be able to go back to school and see family/friends.

I really do hope.

Six Feet Apart



By Martina Nicora
ELA 7 White Team

Right now, in the world, we are in a fight of our lives against the coronavirus. The world has changed a lot for the better and for the worse. It has affected people, including myself. I'm at home every day now and it is affecting me socially.

Not being able to see friends and talk to people daily is hard for me. I'm usually in a classroom surrounded by my peers, but now I'm sitting at home on a computer for most of the day. However, I'm human so I've learned to adapt to it.

I've changed for the better. I've learned a

lot through these hard times. I've learned to appreciate the time we spend with people. The most unfair thing that this virus has brought me is not being able to see my friends.

The distance learning hasn't been the best experience for me at all. I'm stressed out about my work all the time when all I want to do is FaceTime my friends and train for my tennis. However, the thing that got me through it is tennis. I made the decision for myself and myself only to get my stuff together and work my butt off during this quarantine to be the best possible version of myself on the court.

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My Quarantine Memoir



By Emma Monteleone
ELA 7 White Team

It's been a long couple of months. We all hated winter because we were trapped indoors, and it was too cold to go outside. What if I told you we were trapped in for longer??? That we, were stuck in **QUARANTINE!!!! Dun dun dun DUUHHH!!!!**

Sooooo... Corona happened and let me tell you, it changed all of us. I have got to try more new things that I haven't really had time to do, but when you are in quarantine, you have all the time in the world. I have found new interests and hobbies. I learned how to roller skate, I made lots of art, I even painted my room!

I understand you might be like, "OMG Emma, you are having the time of your life and you get to stay home and play video games and swim all day long!!!!" Now let me tell you, it's not even close to that! It's REALLY boring and unfair. The seniors graduating high school missed their graduation. High schoolers missed their prom and second, fifth, and eighth grades missed their graduations, too. Kindergarteners missed their first year of actual school. All the sports were canceled too! It's just really not fair that everyone got to miss such good opportunities, and everything just went down the drain. 2020 was supposed to be a good year, but it really was not. I have learned that we have to accept what we were given and follow the rules.

Distance learning is very hard in some ways, but it's quite easy in other ways. We're not really learning much; we're just reviewing everything. For the younger kids, like my little sister,



it's hard for her to learn. It takes her hours all day to do her schoolwork, especially because she's not really good at focusing and it's just really hard for younger kids I feel. But for older kids, they might be able to blow right through it, and it seems like we're not even learning anything. I have found stuff to do in my spare time. I also help my neighbors out, as they have four little kids and I help babysit.

I think the country is handling this well, but it could be better. It's really hard to understand for us because we are young, and this has never happened before, so we don't understand much. On top of the pandemic, there's the Black Lives Matter protests and riots over George Floyd's death, if we have stricter rules next time, we won't have another outbreak because of these protests and people getting too close to each other. We would be like Italy when they were not allowed to leave their homes, and if they did, they would get fined.

I am very upset that I missed some key events in my life like going on stage and getting the national junior honor society certificate, and doing lacrosse tournaments, and people's birthdays and holidays. It's very disappointing. And that over 100,000 Americans died is very upsetting because I knew if we had stricter rules, the outbreak could have been slowed down a lot sooner.

I miss hanging out with my friends and doing sports. I think there will be a vaccine in September, but we will have another outbreak in November that hopefully isn't as big. I hope we get to go to school soon because honestly, I am getting dumber and dumber by the minute. I hope we all get to go back to school and that we all stay safe and healthy.

Six Feet Apart

From Page 29

With that comes a lot of hard work, and though it hasn't been easy, it is definitely paying off.

I think that our president and Governor Cuomo have done an amazing job. They are in office for a reason, I think they have handled this situation very well. However, I may not agree with how some of these people aren't social distancing and going out protesting and not being the smartest people ever and just causing more trauma for us.

It's frustrating knowing that I've missed out on a few opportunities, but that's how it is. It's shocking and horrible knowing that many hu-



mans have died from a disease like this, and it's crazy because some things like this only occur in some parts of the world but this virus has affected every single part of our world.

I miss my tennis and friends the most. Tennis because that's the one thing that keeps me going when things are hard for me and I have a love and passion for it. My friends because they make me laugh so hard and make me so happy. I think we will have a vaccine in about a year for this. I think once we get to phase 4 of reopening, there

will be a spike or a second spread but not nearly as big as this one. I think we will have half days in school, or something related to that. Everything will be different.

One thing that I hope for the future is that Trump wins the election. Trump 2020 baby.

How The Quarantine Has Affected Me



**By Sean Maguire
ELA 7 White Team**

Whenever I leave the house to go somewhere, I must wear a mask. I cannot visit friends or other family members and, I think that the only good thing that has come out of this is spending more time with my family.

We go on hikes, play board games and watch movies together. It has made me realize how nice it is being able to go to school in person. I think that distance learning is quite boring, and I have noticed how fun school is. What I think is most unfair about this quarantine is that we had to cancel our trip to Disney World. We were going to do a huge family vacation with our cousins, aunts, uncles, and grandparents.

I am also a little sad that no one could come to my birthday. I think that it is very sad about how many people died from this virus and I am sympathetic toward someone whose family member has died. I think about if had happened to



my family and how sad I would be, and I am very sad for all of the people whose families were affected by death because of this virus.

The thing that I think that I miss most about quarantine is seeing my friends and the rest of my family. I used to see my grandma like every week because she had work near here and stayed at our house during that time. And I also miss my

friends who I have not seen in months and haven't talked to some of them in weeks.

I hope that in the near future, most people will have either gotten the virus and now are okay so they cannot get it again or spread it, or that people can get a vaccine if they make one so that there is herd immunity. That way, I get to see my friends and family.

What I think school will look like in the fall is that everyone will be wearing masks for awhile and will keep to themselves more. I don't think there will be a lot of traveling in the hallways so that the people don't spread the disease if there is not a vaccine yet.

Wishing Quarantine Would End



**By Aidan McMahon
ELA 7 White Team**

On the first day of 2020, things were already horrible: wildfires, death, wars, but the worst thing of all, about a month later, was the coronavirus (COVID-19). In the beginning, it was not as bad as everyone thought it was, but as we were getting farther into the year, it became worse and worse, until the virus was everywhere.

There was a lot we had to change to keep the virus from spreading, one of them being social distancing, which always meant we had to stay six feet away from each other. The second thing we had to change was always wearing surgical masks and other cloth masks when we were out of the house. The third and final, important thing we had to change was school--no more of it! We had to do online learning, which meant that our teachers would assign and give us homework to do every weekday. Even when we were doing all these things, the virus was still everywhere, so we all stayed in our houses and the president de-

clared a national emergency.

Staying at home all the time had its perks and had its disadvantages. Some advantages are you got to sleep late, but you still had to do homework when you wake up. Distance learning was not very fun, but it was not that hard, either. After about a month, everything was boring. You would have nothing to do, so we would have movie night and eat popcorn and watch Netflix. Unfortunately, after a while, you had done everything and watched everything.

I started wishing that this would end. Thousands were dying and then something even worse happened. Riots started happening. People were raiding stores and police officers were hurting people. This was all because of one death, George Floyd.

There is was a lot that I miss, like seeing my friends, going out to dinner, and playing sports. I

know that recently, things have started getting a little better. I am getting excited for a road trip and I am was excited for summer, and for maybe seeing my friends. Next year, school is going to be very different. I think we will have to wear masks all day in school. But this pandemic will be something we will never forget.



'After That Day, Everything Changed'



By Sydney Carnow
ELA 7 White Team

It all started about 100 days ago when the first case of Coronavirus was in New York. No one was worried and nothing changed; everyone thought we would be fine. Then the second case came, and third. They were starting to catch up. I remember the day we found out there was a case in our town, Somers.

After that day, everything changed. The only thing people would talk about was the virus. Every day at school, we would discuss how to stay safe. I did not think anything of it at first; I was not scared. I was convinced that no one in my family would even get close to the virus.

It happened so fast. Neighboring towns are closing schools, everyone washing their hands 24/7, toilet paper and hand sanitizer is out of stock. Saint Patrick's Day right around the corner. It was Thursday, March 12 and school was canceled on Friday, then Monday, then Tuesday, then until the end of March. I was so happy at first, two weeks of online school and getting to stay home all the time. I wish I preserved that time more; it would be a long time until things would be normal again.

Two weeks into online learning, everyone is quarantined and being bored out of your mind is the new normal. Everyday calling your friends and having school conferences. A month into online learning, I was starting to think it was better than regular school. You can stay in your room all day and do work in your bed. My birthday is in one week and no one can come celebrate with me except my family. You cannot go outside without a mask or gloves. Many people have been dying and this virus is getting very serious.



The day of my birthday came, and my friends came by my house to wish me a happy birthday. We all socially distanced and sat on stumps in my front yard. The next day was officially 4th quarter. School was getting harder online. I thought that online school would have been so easy; there would be nothing to distract me. But I was wrong. Learning online from conferences and videos was a lot harder than I thought it would be. Concentrating at home is like doing homework you never wanted to do for four hours. I was tired all the time and lost track of the days. The only thing that keeps the days from blending all together are the conferences that happen every week at the same time. One of my favorite things to do in quarantine is to sit outside in my backyard reading a book.

It is May now. Calling friends is getting more boring. Nothing is really happening and leaving the house is a dream. Over 100,000 people have died from Coronavirus. I wonder if they will ever get funerals. Tons of cities that were on lockdown are starting to open again. Summer is coming and camps are closing. This summer is going to be a long one. Finally! Westchester is going into phase one. The state is starting to open again, and people are getting their jobs back. Before we know it, it will be June.

Two weeks into June and Westchester is in phase two of opening this area. People can now eat outside at restaurants. Wednesday, June 3rd was the first day since March that there were no deaths from Coronavirus. I believe everything will be okay sometime soon. I know that people are going to take everything opening again as a sign that this virus is gone but I know we will still need to be safe and protect ourselves.

The past few months have been crazy. I will never forget about what happened in 2020.

The Real Truth



By Ellie Miller
ELA 7 White Team

After school closure, tablet issues, sibling fights, and dealing with two very active kittens who love to destroy furniture and a dog who loves to defend the house by barking for hours at a time (he's doing it as we speak), this is how I dealt with quarantine and living with five other people for three months straight.

When COVID-19 first became a thing and people were getting sick in Italy, I would always hear news talk from my Hungarian grandmother. She would always want to tell me numbers of death rates and hospitalizations and where this unknown virus was spreading next. From my Grandma's perspective, she was more at risk and

lives alone, so for her, this was a very scary subject.

After getting pressured by my Grandma and having my dad work with the Veterans in the Bronx Veterans Hospital where more and more people were getting sick each day, this news was very hard for me and my family to hear. I definitely saw the change in how the people around me were acting – and how anxious my dad was when he came home from work.

Between all this stress, I still went to school every day and put on a happy face. I would hear my teachers talking about this new virus that has come into the area. That's when it finally shook me. This is really happening. People are dying.

Continued on Page 33

QuaranTimes News



**By Brady Nolan
ELA 7 White Team**

The last 12 weeks have been unique for everyone.

Considering this has never happened on this scale no one knew what to expect. Quarantine has been hard for everyone, especially the side effects such as online schooling, working from home, and lack of social events.

One way this has changed me is since I haven't seen anyone in 12 weeks except my family, I have taken up hobbies that I probably never would've if it weren't for quarantine, such as fishing and hiking. The most unfair thing about quarantine is the only time you can see someone is when you're shopping or doing something that is considered essential. One thing I learned to appreciate is in-person school. I never realized how hard online schooling would be.

Distance learning has not been working for me because it's hard for me to teach myself things that should be taught in a classroom with the ability to ask questions. One memorable anecdote from quarantine would be I have my basketball



hoop so much that the rim is at an angle and it is impossible to play on.

One thing that our country got correct during quarantine is the social distancing to keep everyone safe, especially those with a weaker immune system. One thing that our country has not gotten right is opening some public places, such as some beaches, it's been hard missing out on possible events during quarantine because your life could've been completely different if this didn't happen. Losing 100,000 Americans to this virus is a tragedy. It is crazy how fast Coronavirus spreads and how many people can die from it.

The thing I miss most during quarantine is social interaction. I miss my friends and being able to see people outside the people we live with. I miss social interaction especially since life is so boring without other people. One prediction I have

is that after everything re-opens, Corona virus cases will spike up and there will be a resurgence. I also believe that school will be completely different next year. I think it will be partially in person and partially online. My hope for the future is that there will be a vaccine and a cure and life can go on as it used to before quarantine.

The Real Truth From Page 32

I tried to realize the good in this horrific situation, but really there was no hope. I tried to start new workout challenges, such as Two-Week Shred, Ab Burn, and on top of all that, daily bike rides to keep my mind busy.

I looked forward to meeting with teachers on Zoom and other platforms to make me remember the fun we used to have in the classroom. "All of this is temporary", I would hear, but really, I would just think that no one was living in the moment.

I was also regularly practicing for my Bat Mitzvah, which was supposed to happen in July. After that getting sadly canceled, I realized that meant I would no longer see my cousin (who is my best



friend) for probably another six months.

I was truly discouraged. This news was difficult to digest, but after we stopped those online lessons – because those too were very stressful – only a little bit of weight was lifted off my shoulders.

And now, two weeks until the end of 7th grade, I realize what I did have this year – new friends, recess in the library, trying to take a test while girls around me are making Tik Toks, and the laughs we had in and out of the classroom with old or new teachers.

I am not placing as much emphasis on what I don't have right now. We are so lucky to have a healthy family. All in all, I think that I have grown from this – a mix of nightmares and gratefulness.

I've Been Home for WAY TOO LONG!

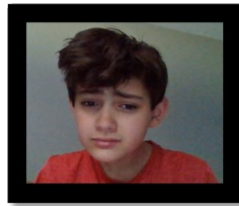


By Ty Colella
ELA 7 White Team

I've been home WAY to long and over this time, I have realized many things--some good, some bad. I haven't changed much but I have realized that school is more important than I once thought.

Being home is making everyone crazy, and going to school is a chance to do something and be with your friends. This is very unfair because not only me, but everyone in my school, too, missed half of a school year. The 7th graders couldn't go to the Zoo, dissect frogs or have Living History Day. The 8th graders missed their trip to Washington D.C., which is what most kids look forward too from 6th grade on. I feel like missing some of these events in my life will always make me sad but will also make me more appreciative of things I do in the future.

And even for the 6th graders, they did not get to complete their introduction to middle school and have the same experience everyone else did. To me, that is not fair. In my opinion, distance learning has been very ineffective. We have been getting work and for the most part, we've been doing it, but we haven't had a chance to really learn



anything, and I'm sure many others would agree. However, there's been lots of funny stories and good time spent with my family. My brother and I have had a great time fishing and playing outdoor games with my neighbors.

As a country, we have done many things wrong, but many things right, too, I believe we could have done a very strict 20-day quarantine in the very beginning, like many other countries did, resolving the problem for the most part. We also could have cut off travel from outside of the country earlier.

Although many people have died from this disease, thankfully, no one close to me has so it hasn't affected me too much, but I have never really thought about it deeply and I don't think I will. I miss my friends the most because it's kind of boring without them, and there's not as many things to enjoy and laugh at, which has taken its toll on me.

My hopes for the future are that we return to doing things as we once did and forget about the illness that ravaged our country. Next fall, I would hope for online schooling to be over and be back in the classroom learning and laughing. Hopefully, we are back soon.

An Unforgettable Year



By Adrianna Cooke
ELA 7 White Team

We always said that we wished we didn't have to go to school. Waking up at seven o'clock in the morning, then getting ready, and soon getting on the bus. Wishing we could just sleep in 'til noon. That has now become reality.

During this period of time, I have changed. One example is I've become more independent. Another is I've spent more time with my family, and we bonded more. Although being quarantined is supposed to keep us safe from this virus, it's unfair that we must stay in our house and be crammed inside. But I have learned some things. One thing I've learned is that if you want something, you have got to work for it. For example, since I am an athlete, I must work hard to keep my body in shape because once the seasons are starting back up again, I'll be in the same condition as I was when this year's season ended.

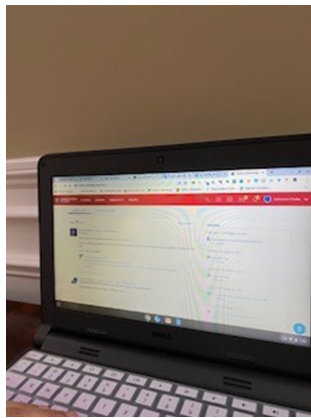
Working at home has its ups and downs. For example, good things are, that I get to sleep in, go in my pool, and hang out with my family. Some bad things are, sometimes my wif is down and my sister is distracting me. But everyone in the com-

munity is going through the same thing. A memorable anecdote is "Somers Strong". When people hear this, they will think that Somers is a strong and great community, and that we will fight back. This will always be in my memories because people here in Somers are very strong.

Our country has done some bad things handling this virus.-For example, we did not take the virus seriously, until someone in the town actually got it. Another thing is not wearing a mask when going to public places. Seeing that 100,000 American people have died from the virus is unbelievable. But people are being more cautious of other people and things around them.

I have missed a lot while being quarantined. Hanging out with my friends, celebrating people's birthdays, having parties, missing my 13th birthday, but what I have really missed the most are the sports I play—soccer, lacrosse, and basketball. So far, the year without any sports has been super weird, and definitely not fun.

This is an unforgettable year. Hopefully, we will have a vaccine that will cure the virus, so we can go out and have fun again. I miss my friends and family the most. Hopefully, in the fall, we will be back in school, and I will get to see my friends again.



This Quarantine Stuff is Quite Weird!



By Aidan Coolican
ELA 7 White Team

My quarantine. Quarantine, a weird word especially now. Coronavirus affecting so many lives. Taking jobs, taking lives, taking livelihoods and many more. But how did it affect my life.

This quarantine has affected my life tremendously. I have changed throughout this quarantine because I have really explored outside. One example is I found a trail in my neighborhood that leads all the way to a bridge and to goldens bridge. Another example of me exploring outside is I went to a place by my friends house that leads to a trail that will then lead to a waterfall with a 15 to 20 feet high cliff. But in this sense, this is a good part of quarantine. I have been exploring and finding things to do after quarantine.

Quarantine made me miss so many things. Some things including school trips like the Bronx Zoo trip and Splash Down. The thing that is the highlight of 7th grade. The thing you are looking forward to. Another thing that I missed out on is a



cruise that I was meant to go on with my grandparents and cousins. We were going from New York to Bermuda for 3 or 4 days. One more thing that I missed out on was a vacation for spring break where I was going to Florida and Disney first and then to my Grandparents house. These things were very important to me.

The future. It could go so many different ways. There could be a wave 2 of corona and it could be even worse, it could be completely wiped by fall and everything would go back to normal forever, or it could even mutate every year and our lives could never be the same. But in my opinion, I believe we will be back to school in the fall with limits. Just to be safe there would be precautions of how we would come back. But I think school would be much different. We would have to do heavy reviewing because there are a lot of teachers not doing this remote learning well. For some subjects I am not learning anything at all.

But, concluding it all I think this whole quarantine stuff is quite weird, confusing, and annoying. I have missed out on a lot, been so bored I have explored so many places. But I feel all of this will be back to normal in moderation.

Quarantine is Annoyingly Unfair

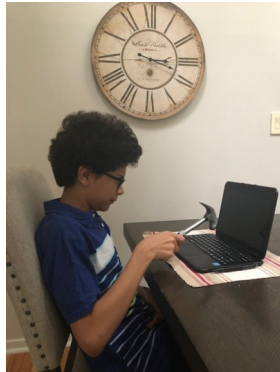


By Maximo Chanlatte
ELA 7 White Team

Day 91 of quarantine. I can finally get up after 6:56, which is fun. I can finally have my own schedule. Waking up at 6:56 is too early.

During the quarantine, I moved, which was difficult, but moving was easier because I was not on a school schedule and we had more time and more flexibility. I was also able to bring more belongings because I had more time and I was able to settle in faster. I got more sleep because I didn't have to wake up at a horrendously early time and to get up at that time, I had to go to bed at an annoyingly early time, and then I couldn't fall asleep for two to three more hours. So, I had more time to myself and it helped me be on my own schedule. The quarantine is annoyingly unfair.

My trip to Florida got cancelled and I really needed a vacation to a beach, but now I'm stuck here in a coronavirus town. My field trips that I was looking forward to were cancelled. My last year of camp was cancelled, and of course, it had to be the very last year-- how convenient! I should have appreciated how easy it used to be to go to a restaurant instead of having to eat at home every



single day. I miss that.

Distance learning did not work because some teachers were not understanding of the things happening in the world that is falling apart, and how that could impact students. I felt like teachers didn't always consider students' feelings. They were just focused on the work and they only cared about how much the students could produce.

While I'm enjoying the memes about the pandemic, it's sad that many people died during this time, but it's nice that people found out how to make the best of the situation. That's all we can do, I guess. I hope that the pandemic ends and we are able to go out to eat again and travel again.

I think the pandemic will return and there will be distance learning. That makes me really annoyed because I can't do this online school stuff anymore. I also think it will be half in school half online learning. I think we will go back to school, but it will be different. I think classes will be smaller and we will have to wear face masks.

For the future, I hope that the pandemic will end, and people will come out smarter because people have had a lot of time to self-reflect. It doesn't seem like people are doing that at the moment.

Hoping Things Get Back to Normal



**By Shannon Williams
ELA 7 White Team**

In quarantine, distance learning is both good and bad. For some subjects, (French, social studies,) it's actually easier to learn. But for other subjects, (science, music) it's harder. For other subjects, it is just generally the same.

I hope that after quarantine is over, everything generally goes back to normal, because I want to have fun with my friends again at lunch. However, seeing as how 2020 is going so far, there will be probably be a crisis every month. If this is true, I highly doubt that we will be going back to school in the fall.

I think something America did wrong is that some states opened when the pandemic is far from over. People are still getting the disease and there hasn't been a cure. Another thing we did wrong was that some Americans still believe it is a hoax. However, I think one thing we did right is lock down the country when we found it arrived here. In the

When you leave your family to go buy groceries and toilet paper.



pandemic, I have learned to appreciate my friends more, as I get to communicate with them more than I got to at school. I have been playing video games with them and calling them a lot lately, and it keeps me from dying of boredom.

However, something unfair about this whole thing is the fact that some of my teachers are not teaching the subject well over technology. They give us a video, then expect that to last the entire unit. My friends and I end up figuring it out, but we use common sense (and Google), not their teachings. However, I think one good thing that has resulted about me in quarantine is that I'm really getting back into some of my old interests that I sort of ditched

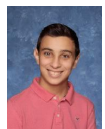
because of school. It gives me things to research.

One thing I like about quarantine is that I get to spend more time with my family. I think that in the fall, we will not be back at school. Even if we are, there are going to be some policies to keep people away from each other.





Music Report



By Noah Volkman
Tusker Tribune Co-Editor
SMS Class of 2020

Tusker Tribune Co-Editor Noah Volkman is publishing his last "Music Report" as an SMS Student. He's off to the high school next year. I wish to thank him for his dedication to the Tusker Tribune School Newspaper, and I wish him the best of luck in his future! —Mr. Pappas

Top 10 Quarantine Projects:

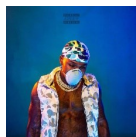
10. Dark Lane Demo Tapes – Drake (May 1)

Leaded with the Michael Jackson-inspired, viral dance hit "Toosie Slide," *Dark Lane Demo Tapes* compiles recent leaked songs and new tracks. The Playboi Carti collaboration "Pain 1993" was massively overhyped prior to its official release, and Chris Brown's presence on his R&B collaboration "Not You Too" is poorly lacking. Includes features from Chris Brown, Future, Young Thug, Playboi Carti and more. Favorite song is "Landed."



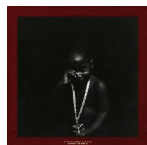
9. BLAME IT ON BABY – DaBaby (Apr 17)

The follow up to DaBaby's easily best project to date, 2019's *Baby on Baby*, *BLAME IT ON BABY* is led by the viral smash "ROCKSTAR," which was just re-released with a new verse from DaBaby focused on the current Black Lives Matter movement. Across 13 tracks, DaBaby brings nothing new to the table that he didn't bring on *Baby on Baby*. While still hype and having a thorough amount of collaborations (Future, Roddy Ricch, A Boogie wit da Hoodie and Megan Thee Stallion among others), DaBaby struggles to shed a new light on his music. Favorite song is "ROCKSTAR" (even though it's been ruined by TikTok).



8. Lil Boat 3 – Lil Yachty (May 29)

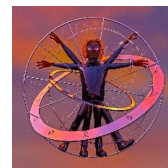
In the third and final installment in the *Lil Boat* franchise, Lil Yachty's *Lil Boat 3* brings us 19 new songs, headed by the DaBaby and Drake collaboration "Oprah's Bank Account." But Drake and DaBaby, two of rap's biggest names at the moment, aren't the only massive names in music featured on this project. Features include A\$AP Rocky, Tyler, The Creator, Lil Keed, Tierra Whack and more. There are several songs that are mediocre or bad, but there are also very good songs, like "T.D."



7. WUNNA – Gunna (May 21)

The long-awaited project from Gunna, *WUNNA*, his first full-length since last year's *Drip or Drown 2* brings us more of what makes us love

Gunna. Over 18 tracks, include the single "SKYBOX," Gunna steps away from the *Drip Seasons* and *Drip or Drown*s of his discography. But he still delivers with frequent collaborators Lil Baby, Young Thug, Travis Scott and also Roddy Ricch. He raps over beats crafted by some of rap's biggest producers like Wheezy, Turbo the Great and Tay Keith. Favorite song is "FEIGNING."



6. High Off Life – Future (May 15)

The 9th studio album and 32nd (geez!) project from Atlanta trapper Future gives us 21 tracks, led by the singles Hndrxx has released over the last several months, but headed by the beat switch Drake collab "Life is Good" and it's accompanying remix with DaBaby and Lil Baby. Future continues his stream of trap bangers with several collaborations, including Travis Scott ("Solitaires"), Lil Uzi Vert ("All Bad"), Meek Mill ("100 Shooters") and several others. While not turning a new leaf and giving more meaning or personality to his music, *High Off Life* gives us the trap beats and Auto-Tune that we expect from Future. Favorite song is "Too Comfortable."



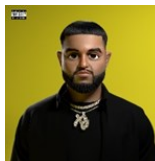
5. Good Intentions – NAV (May 8)

The follow-up to NAV's project *Bad Habits*, *Good Intentions* has pretty much the same robotic voice as he does any other time the Canadian rapper takes the mic, but lucky for him, I enjoy his music. The strong production and stronger collaborations (Pop Smoke, Don Toliver, Lil Durk and Travis Scott, among the frequent collaborators Future, Young Thug, Gunna and Lil Uzi). Across 18 tracks, he raps about the same thing he's been rapping about since his debut in 2016 (NAV): drugs, jewelry and women. Favorite song is "Turks."



Also 5. Brown Boy 2 – NAV (May 11)

Pulling a Lil Uzi, NAV released *Brown Boy 2* literally 3 days after *Good Intentions*, hence being grouped with it. With 14 new tracks before we had a chance to really enjoy the prior project, NAV drops an unnecessary project with the new artwork designed by Disney artist Alex Alvarado. He basically just gave us seconds before we took our first bite of our first serving. There are only two features on this project, Quavo on "Chirp," and Lil Duke on "Free Santana." It is the mood as *Good Intentions*, so it's not bad; just not needed 3 days after a project. Favorite song is "Sprite Clean."



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Music Report

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4. PARTYMOBILE – PARTYNEXTDOOR (March 27)



It has been four years since we've had a new PARTYNEXTDOOR project (2016's *P3*). PND gives us new R&B tracks with moody beats and strong vocals. Only 3 other names pop up on the project, Drake on "LOYAL," Rihanna on "BELIEVE IT" (her first new song in a long time) and Bad Bunny on a remix of "LOYAL." It is a chill album and gives off major '3 A.M.' vibes. Favorite song is "BELIEVE IT."

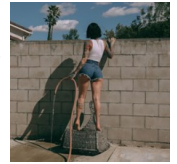
3. Pray 4 Love – Rod Wave (April 3)

Coming off of a wave of popularity due to *PTSD* and *Ghetto Gospel*'s "Heart on Ice," Florida heartbreak rapper/singer Rod Wave brings us 14 new songs that encompass what makes Rod Wave who he is. An almost completely solo project (ATR Son Son joins Rod "Rag2Riches"), we learn more about Rod Wave's life and past. There are virtually no skips, I look forward to more music in the future. Favorite song is "Girl of My Dreams."



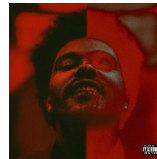
2. It Was Good Until It Wasn't – Kehlani (May 8)

One of the best R&B projects I've heard from the last few years, Kehlani's *It Was Good Until It Wasn't* is the sole definition of R&B in 2020. Laid-back beats, collaborations with fellow R&B artists (Tory Lanez, Jhene Aiko, Lucky Daye, James Blake and Masego), and vulnerable moody singing. This project will be a time capsule for quarantine, showing the emotional effects of isolation. Favorite song is "Grieving."



1. After Hours – The Weeknd (March 20)

The number one project on this list, *After Hours* is the long-awaited piece from The Weeknd as easily his best project to date. Ever since his 2011 entering into the music world with *House of Balloons*, The Weeknd has kept us wanting more. He always shows a wide-range of styles, from sad R&B to happy pop, to moody trap music. On this fourth studio album, the Canadian artist returns to his early style of fragile falsettos, smoky atmospheres and whispered confessions. Containing the viral nostalgic hit "Blinking Lights," and the Metro Boomin top-40 "Heartless" and it's accompanying remix with Lil Uzi Vert, there is something for most people on this album. Favorite song is "Blinking Lights."



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SOMERS MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

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