

# *The Pond Street Press*

# 2021

*A Publication of Cohasset Middle School Students*



February 2021 Issue

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# School News

## Inauguration Day

By ~ James Lanza

Every four years on January 20th, an important event occurs in the United States: a new president takes the *Oath of Office* during an Inauguration Ceremony. It is a day filled with music, a parade, and a ball. Inauguration means beginning and people celebrate the beginning of a new presidency.

According to *The New York Times*, Inauguration Day started on March 4th, 1789 with the swearing in of George Washington in New York. Thomas Jefferson was the first president to have his inauguration in Washington D.C. in 1801. Inauguration Day starts with a worship service, followed by the swearing in at the Capitol Building in Washington D.C. The President places his hand on the Bible and says, "I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States, and will do the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

The new President then gives a speech, followed by a parade along Pennsylvania Avenue. In the evening, an Inauguration Ball takes place in honor of the new President. The day is a celebration not only of a new president but also of the democracy of the United States of America.

This year, on January 20th, after a lot of turmoil and political debates, we watched some of the 59th Inauguration Day in school. Joseph Biden was sworn in as the 46th President along with Kamala Harris, the first woman, the first Black person, and first Asian American to be Vice President.

It was not a typical Inauguration Day due to COVID. Typically many people travel to Washington D.C. to witness the ceremony but this year they could only have a select few to watch. Additionally, the outgoing President, Donald Trump, did not attend the swearing in ceremony. He was the first outgoing president to skip the new president's inauguration since Andrew Johnson in 1869. Other former presidents however were there along with the outgoing Vice President, Mike Pence.

We watched as the traditional ceremony played out. Lady Gaga sang a very emotional National Anthem. After the swearing in had taken place, Jennifer Lopez sang “This Land is Your Land” and “America the Beautiful,” which was very powerful. To end the musical performers, Garth Brooks sang “Amazing Grace.” Poetry has also started to be included at the Presidential Inauguration. Four presidents have had poets read at their inaugurations. John F. Kennedy in 1961, Bill Clinton in 1993 & 1997, Barack Obama in 2009 & 2013 and Joseph Biden this year.

Amanda Gorman read “The Hill We Climb” and suddenly everyone was talking about her. Her poem was moving, appropriate for the current time, and so powerful. The lines “When day comes we step out of the shade, aflame & unafraid, The new dawn blooms as we free it, for there is always light, if only we’re brave enough to see it, if only we’re brave enough to be it” stuck to so many minds, young and old. Such an inspiration for challenging times.

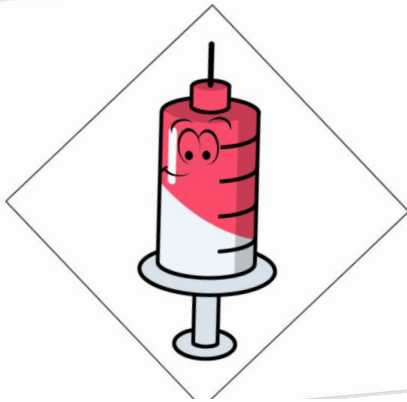
In four years time, we will see another Inauguration Day. I wonder who it will be?



Pictured above is Amanda Gorman reciting her poem “The Hill We Climb” during the 2021 Presidential Inauguration Ceremony  
(Image by News.com.au)

# Vaccines

By ~ Eva Harries & Madeleine Dubeau



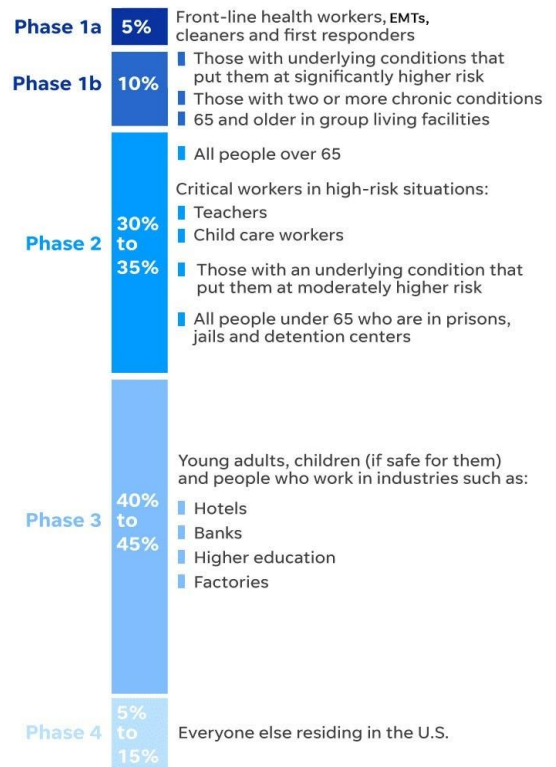
Many people are wondering how vaccines are getting distributed. Front line workers have already started to get the vaccines. In Phase 2, the teachers will be getting their vaccines.

We interviewed Ms. Collins, the highschool nurse, to get more information and to see her view on vaccines. Ms. Collins reported that vaccines are hoping to be ready for

teachers around the end of February. The two companies that are distributing the vaccines are Pfizer and Moderna. Many people and companies are trying to approve the vaccines for the people below 16. When getting the vaccine, there will be two doses. The first one will be around 3-4 weeks before the second dose. When we interviewed Ms. Collins, she said, “I can’t wait till we can all get the vaccines. I hope everyone will take them so we don’t have to wear masks anymore.”

## How the COVID-19 vaccine could be rationed

A plan from the National Academy of Medicine places those at highest risk from the virus at the top of the list. Percentages of the U.S. population:



SOURCE National Academy of Medicine

# A History of Martin Luther King Jr. Day

By ~ Isla Veitas

On January 18, we celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. Day. King was an amazing man and it's fitting that we celebrate him every year. In honor of the holiday, I made a brief history of Dr. King's role in the Civil Rights Movement and the history of MLK day.

Martin Luther King Jr. was born in Atlanta in 1929. He was a Baptist minister who made major contributions to the Civil Rights Movement with peaceful protests. He organized the first major civil rights protest, the Montgomery Bus Boycott. In 1963, he led the massive March on Washington where he delivered his famous speech, "I Have a Dream." In 1964, Martin and many others' work paid off. The 24th Amendment was ratified, which abolished the poll tax, and the Civil Rights Act was put into place. This outlawed racial discrimination in employment and education and racial segregation. A couple months later, Martin Luther King Jr. was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and he donated the prize money to the Civil Rights Movement. Afterwards, King turned his efforts to economic equality. Tragically, he was assassinated when he was attending the "Poor People's March" that he organized in April of 1968 at the age of 39. Almost immediately afterwards, people wanted a national holiday in his honor. In 1970, a few states and cities made his birthday, January 15, a holiday. Finally, on August 27 1984, President Ronald Reagan signed a legislation for the Martin Luther King Jr. Federal Holiday commission, making Martin Luther King Jr. Day a national holiday.

After his hard work, persistence, and his service to our country, Martin Luther King Jr. absolutely deserved a federal holiday in his honor. I hope that his life and achievements inspire everyone to do something good for their community, whether it's big or small.

(Source: History.com)

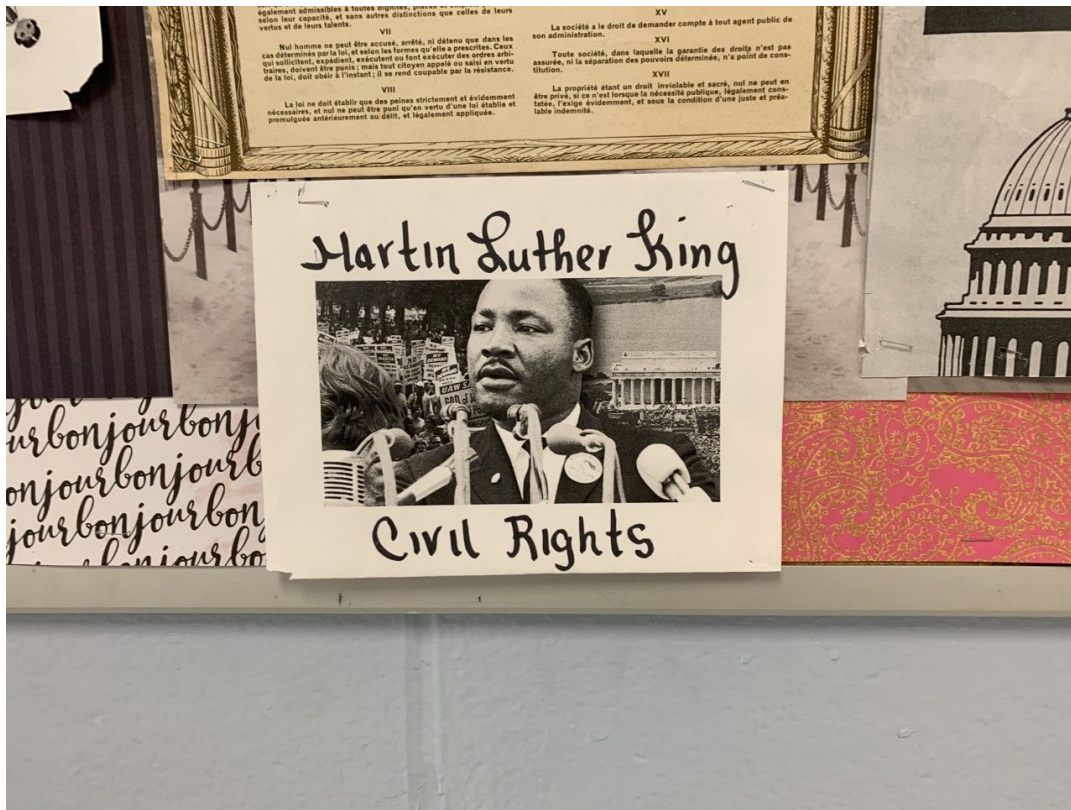


Photo Caption: A picture of Dr. Martin Luther King outside of Madame Sanges's Room.

## CMS 7th Grader Wins MLK Award

By ~ Charlie Manewal



Amara Pierce, a CMS 7th grader, won an award for writing an essay about the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King. The title of Amara's essay is "MLK: Injustice Anywhere is a Threat to Justice Everywhere." Harvard Pilgrim/Tufts Medical sponsored the award which was a scholarship. In her essay, Amara wrote, "I want people of my age and younger to know we are the future, and we will make decisions that will affect the next generation." Well done, Amara.

# No More Snow Days

By ~ James Lanza

When you think of a snow day, you typically imagine playing outside in the snow, getting cozy, drinking hot chocolate and watching movies or reading a good book. We all love a good snow day, but could the joy of waking up to find a ton of snow and getting that call from school to say there won't be school be a thing of the past? This year, because of the unusual schedule with school due to COVID, it was decided by the school administration that when we are unable to attend school due to the weather, lessons will be taught remotely. Additionally, if there isn't any power, then work packets will be provided. No more snow days?! The goal for this is to avoid students falling behind since



the days at school are already limited this year because of COVID. Another positive outcome is that by having a working snow day, additional days will not have to be added onto the end of the year in June. Could this change of policy be a plan for future years, not just for this year? Are our snow days gone forever?

I asked Ms. Melia what her thoughts were on this and she expressed that having no snow days for this year is a good idea.

Ms. Melia stated, "I think that having no snow days for just this year would be good because we have already lost so much time together. In the future, post-Covid, we could have three real snow days and then all the other snow days should be remote days, so our year doesn't extend too far into the summer. I think that kids should have a few real snow days to get to wake up and go play in the snow." Perhaps allowing a couple of snow days would be a good compromise.

Principal Mills informed me that should half the town or more lose power then it can be a snow day, however if there is power then it will be a remote working day. He remarked that having remote snow days could be ongoing for future years to come because students seem to be more productive, however he is not the one who would make this decision. Mr. Mills also said that this year the teachers and students have shown how well remote learning works for snow days.

Mr. Mills said, “A good amount of students like this idea because they are able to get out in June and not have days added on.”

Students seem to have mixed feelings about the idea. One student who I talked to said, “It is okay. It is good and bad at the same time because at least we do not get days added on in June, but we do not get to go outside and play.”

Another fellow student wasn’t happy about the idea of losing a snow day. “I am not that happy about it. I enjoy having that day off from school and having the chance to go and play outside.”

Other students, however, were very happy with remote snow days because they thought that they have already wasted so much learning time, that they need these extra days to learn.

We will have to wait to see if snow days will be a thing of the past. Perhaps the school administration will compromise and let us have a couple of snow days a year. One thing’s for sure though, here in New England, we will always have snow!

## Snow Storm Teacher Plans

By ~ Charlotte Gallagher

On Thursday, December 17 and Friday, December 18 there were two consecutive days where a snow storm caused CMS to have all remote days. The storm causing these remote days dumped almost a foot of snow across our area over Wednesday night and Thursday. Due to this, we could not have school and teachers gave out paper versions of work, anticipating the storm. Cohort A students received these assignments on Tuesday and Cohort B on Wednesday. The work for 6th Grade included maps for World Geography, various pages of a packet for Math, a letter to a character in *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* for ELA, a worksheet about lightbulbs for Science, among other work. I spoke to a few 6th grade students to see what their thoughts were about this work.

Grace Kiernan explained that she enjoyed having free time after finishing her work for the day. “It was more handwriting, but I liked being able to complete the work on my own time.”

Fellow 6th grader Eva Harries said, “I liked working without the constrictions of continuous Zooms.” She added, “I enjoyed being able to take breaks to play in the snow.”



Similar to Grace's thoughts, 6th grader, Hadley Berns, said that she liked not having to be on Zooms, but disliked having a "day where she had to complete assignments instead of having a traditional, fun snow day."

## 7th Grade STEM Rocket Launch

By ~ Hadley Berns & Georgia Royston

In the photo below, 7th grader Ian Henry tests a rocket that he made in STEM class. The student-built rockets reach the height of about 25 feet in the air. These rockets are made out of clear plastic bottles, paper, and cardboard. The rocket's size is about 18 inches tall.

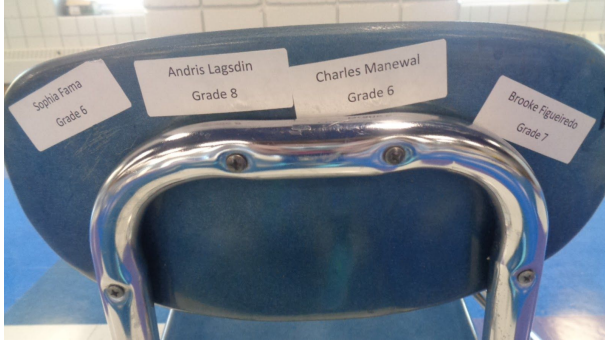


## New Lunch Seats

By ~ Anne Gordon

Recently CMS students changed their original lunch seats in the cafeteria. Shortly before winter break, students were instructed to pick a new lunchtime seat which they will be sitting in for the second half of the year.

To get more information on the reason for the seat changes, I contacted Dr. Salas, the Assistant Principal at CMS. According to Dr. Salas, "Assigned seats help with contact tracing and help to keep everyone safe." She added that it can be helpful to have



assigned seats because “students know where their seat is for lunch and don’t have to worry about finding a seat.” Dr. Salas also explained that changing seats allows students to “spend time with other peers and some students may prefer a space change as well.”

I asked Dr. Salas how the students have responded to the change. She believes that students are fine with the change, although there are some challenges. One challenge is that not all students get to sit where they were hoping. However, Dr. Salas noted, “We have some really great kids here that look out for others. If they see someone not talking to anyone then they will start talking to them.” Another challenge was taking off all the old name tags from the chairs. Removing the name tags was a time consuming job for Dr. Salas and the custodians.

Dr. Salas wrapped up our conversation with a message and request for all CMS students: “I am looking for ways during lunch in which students can interact with more peers. Also, ways to make lunch more fun. If you have any ideas - please send them my way!”

## Student Council Update

By ~ Will Henle



On the last days before Holiday Break, our winter spirit day was held. Since we didn’t want to offend anyone who didn’t celebrate a certain holiday, the Student Council decided to have an ugly sweater day instead. As you can see in the picture, many students decided to wear an ugly sweater into school once it was their cohort’s turn to go into school. Our spirit day was a nice refreshing final day before our much needed vacation. The Student Council had tried to think of another fun plan for Valentine's Day but met no avail. We have

run into many roadblocks in the process such as cleaning a large meeting area, not being allowed to hand out candy, and the fact not many people would go to an after school movie.

## Snowflakes for Mass General

By ~ Grace Kiernan

On December 15, Mrs. Gordon, 8th grade Social Studies teacher, held an activity to make snowflakes for Mass General Hospital in Boston. Eight 8th grade students participated in the activity and created many festive 3D snowflakes to fill the halls of MGH. These snowflakes brightened up the halls of MGH and made many cheerful while working through the holidays. Mrs. Gordon taught the students how to create the snowflakes by weaving together strips of paper.

I interviewed 8th grader Camrin Lavigne and she explained that, “We’re making them for Mass General Hospital and they will be hung in the halls.”



# The Arts at CMS

## Performing Arts Update

By ~ Catherine Willock

Although it seems like some things are going back to normal, people still have to take many precautions. However, that doesn't stop the Performing Arts Club from producing entertainment for everyone! We talked with Ms. Carmody, Performing Arts Director and the 8th grade ELA teacher, about shows from the past and shows that will happen in the future.

Students had a lot of fun on past plays. The club's biggest hit was 2019's play *An Absolutely True Story (As Told by a Bunch of Lying Liars)*. This year will show some challenges, but Mrs. Carmody is sure to make the play happen. For 2021's plans Mrs Carmody is thinking of doing a play on Zoom, but this plan comes with some challenges. One challenge being that the play will have to be specifically made for Zoom.

*An Absolutely True Story (As Told by a Bunch of Lying Liars)* was the club's biggest performance. With a large cast and a comedic storyline the play kept the audience giggling throughout the entire show. The play starred a family of liars. Throughout the show, the point of view shifted through each family member; Even the dog!

Mrs. Carmody has been making plays since 2015. Past plays have been comedic twists on storylines like *The Wizard of Oz* and *Sherlock Holmes*, but starring the nieces of Sherlock and Watson. Other CMS hits have been *Circus Olympus* and *Bedtime Stories*. The storyline of *Bedtime Stories* was on a dad who was tucking his kids into bed and twisted famous tales like "The Princess and the Pea."

"The students are always awesome," Mrs Carmody says. We interviewed three students that were in these plays to get their opinion on this comedic club. Levi O'Duggan and Nolan Smith were both part of *An Absolutely True Story (As Told by a Bunch of Lying Liars)*. Nolan played the family dog and Levi played one of the brothers in the family. "It's gonna be tough but I want to do something," Nolan stated. We also interviewed Lucy Royston who was going to be in last year's play. Each student talked about how the

performing arts club opened new opportunities for friendships throughout different grade levels.

From making new friendships, to performing in humorous plays, these astonishing performances keep everybody excited for what's coming next. I don't know about you, but I will definitely be attending the next play!



Photo Caption: One of CMS's favorite plays, *An Absolutely True Story (As Told by a Bunch of Lying Liars)*, was performed by students in 2019. Archive Photo.

# 2020 Recap Poem

By ~ Madison Williams

A year of screens and isolation  
For children and families across the nation

Violence, riots, and accusations  
Tik-tokers, influencers, and politicians

A pandemic called Covid 19  
People are dying, a new vaccine?

So many people have lost their jobs  
Unless you're a doctor using swabs

Quarantine is so boring  
Fever are soaring

It's a brand new year  
And 2021 is finally here.

## Editorials

### Home For the Holidays

By ~ William Chisholm

Like Thanksgiving, Christmas has been much of the same because of the continued pandemic. My family and I had to stay just with our immediate family due to COVID-19. We all normally celebrate this wonderful holiday with our cousins or grandparents or

whoever you love to celebrate with.. Even though we are all in the same boat this Christmas, we all are going to be doing it in our own different ways.

When we think about Christmas we think about joy, family, and being together on one of the best nights of the year. My family and I are one of those families that go to their cousins or grandparents on Christmas and Christmas Eve, but because of COVID-19, we had to stay home and go through the holiday with our immediate family.

Now I am going to tell you how my family celebrates Christmas Eve and Christmas day. My family was really happy for it to finally be Christmas Eve. We were practically jumping out of our chairs we were so happy. We were also a little disappointed because we normally go to our cousin's house for Christmas Eve and eat a huge dinner. I also know that a lot of families around the globe were thinking the same thing as us and were overjoyed at the thought of seeing their families but that opportunity was shut down due to COVID-19.

When we do go to our cousins' house, the parents will talk for a long time while us kids will either play upstairs, around the house, or in the basement. But since we were not able to go to my cousins' house on Christmas Eve, we drove to my grandparents' house and talked outside for an hour or so. BUt don't worry, we not only followed the general rule of being six feet apart, instead we surpassed it by being 15 feet apart outdoors! After we stopped by my grandparents' house, my mom told use that we were going to go see our great aunt and uncle's house and my 97 year old great-grandmother was going to be there too. My siblings and I were jubilant to see them before the holiday night. After we visited at our two destinations, we started to head home and get all the food ready for our holiday dinner.

Now that we were home we started to get the table ready, we cooked the food, and hung our stockings for the fireplace. When we finished all of the hard work of setting up, we were ready to eat. My dad got the ham, the turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, gravy, rolls with butter, and the cranberry sauce out and ready to be eaten. We gathered the food we wanted and we sat down and chowed down on the delicious food. While we were eating, we were talking and laughing the whole night. My siblings and I loved the food that my mom and dad made. Even though we were all so stuffed, we ate the many desserts that we made, which were so good I could eat them everyday. When we finished eating we went upstairs to prep for bed for the big day tomorrow.

When I went to bed I could not fall asleep and if I did it was for about one hour and thirty minutes. After I woke up I would fall asleep again but not for another hour. What

really made angry was how my whole family slept like a log the whole night. Lucky the night went fairly quickly. I was just happy that it was morning.

I finally got out of bed and raced into my sister's room and then to my two brothers' room. Lucky they were already awake. It was now 6:45 am and my sister, my brother and I started to watch tv. We only watch it for thirty minutes to wait for my youngest brother, my mom, and my dad to wake up so we could finally go down stairs. After we all were up we waited to go downstairs and see what Santa Claus left use under the tree.

We raced down the stairs and my dad was videoing all the exciting moments. When my siblings and I turned the corner, our eyes lit up and our brains practically exploited with excitement. We looked to see which presents were ours. We carefully opened the presents and fully embraced the feeling of getting something we loved. Worthy of note is the fact that my two little brothers ripped open their presents like their hair was on fire! Some of the presents that I loved were artwork and photography in nice frames to hang on my wall. I also got two hockey sticks, a net, and hockey pucks. One last thing that I got was a lot of chocolate and candies because they are my favorite. My sibling got almost the same presents that I did.

We loved the experience of having such a unique Christmas and we realized that any way we did it, we would enjoy it so long as we had each other. So long as we were all happy and healthy, that is all that mattered. It was a wonderful Christmas after all!

## The Worst Year Yet

By ~ Ava Coffey

We can all agree that there are practically no pros about 2020, but it's debatable that we did learn something during this difficult year. Some people could argue that Covid and quarantining has taught us some important features for the future that will most likely stick.

An example of a positive lesson from quarantine is that if another pandemic were to happen then we would know to be ready by quarantining early, wearing masks, and getting food and toilet paper before we run out again and all before the next virus strikes. As a result, I'd feel like we would be better prepared.



Something that I most certainly learned during 2020 that I want to share is that it doesn't take a pandemic to take us down. No doubt that we lost people important to us, but we're still here. It didn't wipe out the entire world, but it taught us that we need to listen to the government and healthcare authorities. It also taught us to make sure that we take note from what they ask us to do because they tried to prevent us from learning it the hard way. Sure we were off to a rough start, but we can do better knowing that we survived 2020. They should make a book called "I Survived the Pandemic of 2020". Yeah, that would be amazing. I'm not a big fan of reading, but I'd totally read that book if it were to come out.

To steer us back into the direction of the topic, I could say there's nothing that we learned during 2020. Noticing how we lived the life of someone who feels lonely, before and after 2020, I would be lying if I said that we didn't feel a little lonely during the pandemic.

The big idea now is that we can confidently say "good riddance 2020" now that it's over. In my opinion, there was absolutely nothing to miss about that year. But good news, IT'S OVER!

## Groundhog Day!

By ~ Ava Coffey



Like every other year, a groundhog woke up from hibernation on February 2, known as "Groundhog Day." Supposedly, if the groundhog sees its shadow when it emerges from its burrow, there'll be six more weeks of winter. If it doesn't see its shadow, spring will arrive soon. ([www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com))

What is your outlook for spring? Many people, such as me, know that the Covid vaccine has just come out, and thousands of people are getting the injections. My guardian got hers a few days ago, and she's very excited. Some people feel deeply about the outlook of 2021. Almost everyone is glad that 2020 is over, not going to lie, and some think Covid is going to be over before we know it now that 2021 has started and people are getting the vaccine. I honestly feel like Covid won't end until 2022,

but I can't be sure. My outlook for spring is really just changing my eating habits and to try to lose 40 pounds before my birthday in June. With hope and potential, I can do it. Now, some people have given up on their new year's resolutions, but some haven't. Maybe that could be a good opportunity to try and finish those resolutions over the spring.

Groundhog day is very confusing. Let me explain. February 2, is Groundhog Day, and on this day the groundhogs emerge from their burrows. According to my sources, if the groundhog sees its shadow when the weather is clear, it'll get scared and then retreat to its burrow, meaning that winter will continue for six more weeks. Although, if it doesn't see its shadow due to a cloudy day, spring will supposedly arrive early.

Many people, including myself, are excited for spring to arrive and all the snow to go away. As we all know, Cohasset has been super windy lately and snow, sleet, and rain has come down. Hopefully the weather will begin to calm down and warm up so that we can enjoy spring with a clear start.

## Thank you P.S.!

By ~ Aidan Donnelly

Ever since COVID-19 began, the company UPS has been working double-time to ensure that every package arrives at its destination. In the past year, the UPS store in Cohasset has been overflowing with consumers and post consumers ordering and returning packages. While this business is good for the company, I feel the employees are not paid enough for their work hours and days.

On average, a UPS package handler is paid \$31,943 a year according to Indeed.com. According to Google.com, the average household income for a median citizen is \$ 68k. The difference between these two sums of money is outrageous. The difference between \$68k and \$31,943 is \$36,057. The average UPS package handler is paid \$12 a day. If they worked overtime, they would receive 1 and 1/2 times their original pay which would be \$18. Even if the UPS package handler works overtime, they will still find themselves making only an extra \$6. This is a very low sum of money per day.

I hope that the UPS team realizes how low they are paying their employees and make the salaries higher. They could do so, because UPS makes \$71.9 billion dollars a

year as of 2018. That should be more than enough money to distribute to employees and shareholders. I hope all of you readers try to make a difference!

# Sports

## Outdoor Sports Adjustments

By ~ Ollie Buckley

Most activities in winter are indoors, which brings up questions of how the normal winter activities will occur with the Coronavirus. However, one common outdoor winter activity is skiing and snowboarding.

At many ski resorts, close to half the trails are closed. This is in the effort of keeping the trail choice smaller and more centered so it is easier for employees to handle the skiers and snowboarders.

The ski resorts also have an interesting requirement with masks. The rule is that you can wear a face mask that does not have holes, but if you wear a face mask that does have holes, you must wear a mask underneath for the full length you are in the lift lines, on a chairlift, and of course in a building. (Images shown below)

There has been a huge rise in people getting fit and eating healthier at home. With new year's resolutions being fulfilled, and people finally getting tired of staying at home, many people turn to online fitness programs such as Peloton. Others are going on strict diets and work out plans.

Will Henle in 8th grade said, "I go to the gym 3 times a week. I do leg press, squats, skull crushers, curls, push-ups and more."

Normally, new year's resolutions don't last very long but I am interested to see how long the quarantine resolutions last.

Must wear mask underneath	Does not require mask underneath
	

# The Pond Street Press Staff

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