



# The Current

Spring 2020

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# Environmental Issues Seminar

Three Rivers does its part in addressing important enviromental issues.

Story by Tucker Noniewicz

Wednesday January 22nd at 6:00pm in C101 Dr. John Lane, of the United States Geological Survey, Hydrogeophysics Branch, lectured a group of students on water resources in the developing world.

This is the first in a series of Environmental Issues talks sponsored by Three Rivers professor Diba Khan-Bureau. While these talks are part of a class, Professor Khan-Bureau encourages anyone and everyone to attend, listen, and participate.

The talk opens with a lengthy and varied introduction by Professor Khan-Bureau, establishing the credibility of Dr. Lane. Dr. Lane begins his talk by describing it as an intersection between his vocation and his avocation which is working in developing countries and bringing safe water to those who previously didn't have it.

Dr. Lane proceeds by laying down some facts. "Right now, across the world over 1 billion people lack access to

clean water. And we can tie over 80% of the illnesses and 25,000 deaths per day back to the fact that people don't have access to safe water." Those are some staggering numbers.

However, Dr. Lane drops an even heavier fact on the room. "5 Children per minute die from water related illnesses, day in, day out. By the time I finish this lecture something in the order of 300 children will have died from a preventable situation."

Dr. Lane laments that the world population is set to increase by "2 billion over the next few decades." He implores the room to think about where that growth will be occurring, and gives the answer "developing countries."

"Developed countries significantly reduce their birth rates. Some countries in fact have negative birth rates. They can't achieve a replacement rate, Japan is a good example. Russia is another one."

Dr. Lane addressed key questions

## SPRING 2020 Environmental Issues Seminars

Wednesday classes run from approximately 6-8:30 PM and will be followed with Q&A. Seminars will be held in room C101 on the Three Rivers Campus. Students taking classes for credit should arrive by 5:50 PM; noncredit students/guests promptly by 6 PM. Open to everyone!!

For more info, contact Professor Diba Khan-Bureau at 860-215-9443 or dkhan-bureau@ threeivers.edu		JANUARY	22	Dr. John Lane, United States Geological Survey (USGS)— Water Resources in the Developing World.		29	Dr. Gary Robbins, Professor Geology & Hydrology UCONN — What we can learn from the water systems of ancient Rome?		
FEBRUARY	5	Corrie Folsom- O’Keefe, Audubon Society — Bird Conservation across Connecticut and specifically in the Lyme Forest Block.	12	Dr. Thomas Meyer, Professor Geomatics UCONN — Using GPS to Reveal the Secret Lives of Mountain Lions.		19	Dr. Hedley Freake, Professor Nutritional Sciences UCONN — Approaches to Eating in the United States: Consequences for our Health and Environment	26	Judy Preston, UCONN SeaGrant —The History of the Green Lawn Dilemma; Coastal Water Quality Challenges Connecticut.
	4	Dr. Louise Lewis Professor Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, UCONN— Algal Diversity and Environmental Health	11	Mike Beauchene, CT. Department of Energy and Environmental Protection — The Management of Recreational Fishing, what it Means for Connecticut’s Economy and Environment		25	Dr. Michael Dietz, Professor UCONN Extension Office Program Director NEMO — International and National Concerns of Stormwater Pollution: Stormwater and Low Impact Design		
MARCH	1	Dr. Peter Siver, Professor of Botany and Environmental Studies Director of Environmental Studies Program, Connecticut College - Our Ancient Climate	8	Congressman Joe Courtney - Earth Day....50 years! Environmental Issues in Connecticut and in the USA.	15	Greg Bugbee and Abigail Wiegand, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station — Invasive Aquatic Plants found in CT Lakes.	22	Dr. James O’Donnell Professor of Marine Science, Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA). Global climate change abroad, in Connecticut; consequences and remedies.	
APRIL	29	Hank Gruner, Author & Vice President of Programs, Connecticut Science Center (retired) and Herpetologist - Making sense of the geographical distribution and conservation of Connecticut’s Amphibians and reptiles	6	David Stokes, CT. Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection Bureau of Waste Management and Enforcement — Hazardous Waste Management Regulations					
		MAY							

1. Spaulding Pond, located at Mohegan Park (Photo by Chris Boyle).  
2. Environmental Issues lectures are scheduled for the rest of the semester.



such as: What water source is being used? Does the area have electricity? Is that electricity available 24/7? Is the water itself potable? Are there wet and dry seasons in the area? Is the water available 24/7?

Rain collection is cheap to set up but can be prone to contaminants such as leaf litter or animal feces. Above ground sources are plentiful but are generally contaminated with human, animal, and industrial runoff. Wells have the issues of supply, safety, and contamination.

Dr. Lane's specialty, Hydrogeology, helps to find ideal well sites. "This issue of public access. It's really important to consider and really tricky. There can be some social issues and politics that go into trying to solve a problem. You can very inadvertently

create problems too, by not considering the social issues and the politics."

The solution that Dr. Lane provides for these social and political issues is putting the wells or distribution points in schools or medical clinics.

"Everybody's children go to school. Everyone needs healthcare. This can be one of the ways around some of the social issues and politics."

"Almost invariably the most successful approach (when placing a well) is very intensive community involvement."

Dr. Lane then gave his ideal well site selection criteria. "We would like a persistent (year-round) supply of good quality water that has low salinity, that's clear, that doesn't have a lot of naturally occurring chemicals that could cause the water to look funny,

or smell funny, or taste funny. And certainly we want to treat the water in a way that we eliminate the potential microbial contamination at the source. And that the water is free of industrial contaminants."

Dr. Lane listed some of the best places to look for well sites. Buried valleys, alluvial fans, buried channels (Paleochannels), Fault-zone Compartment, fractured rock, fracture zones, limestone, and sandstone.

Then Dr. Lane gives two examples of what geophysics can detect: magnetic susceptibility and electrical conductivity. "I'm gonna talk about magnetic susceptibility and that basically is a fancy way of saying how easy, how susceptible is a material to being magnetized." "Volcanic rocks have a higher magnetic susceptibility than sedimentary rocks."

"We also have electrical conductivity. This is an intuitive thing. Dry materials don't want to pass an electrical current very well. It's very hard to pass an electrical current through glass or dry sand."

Dr. Lane then shows the students examples of both magnetic susceptibility scanning and electrical conductivity scanning. And discusses how he would place wells in each circumstance.

The next portion of Dr. Lane's presentation is water delivery systems. He gives four examples. Pipeline distribution to home, a pipe transporting water to multiple taps within a home. Pipeline distribution to Tap stands, Tap stands being communal sources of water rather than personal ones. Wellhead delivery, some sort of pump that takes from a well or tank. And Mechanical distribution, a method

where trucks will routinely drive around and distribute water.

Dr. Lane mentions that even if you have a potable source, by the time the water

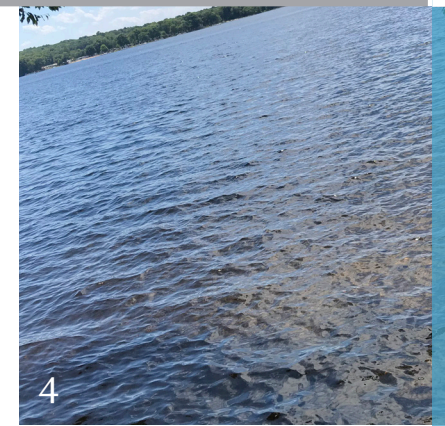
gets to the point of consumption it may be contaminated by other means. To that end the Dr. Lane says that good hand and water container hygiene are essential to keeping water clean.

Other factors, that Dr. Lane mentions, that have an impact on keeping the water sources safe are sanitation and maintenance. Sanitation meaning keeping "Human and animal waste separate from our aquifers" and maintenance meaning keeping wells and all the infrastructure in working condition.

"It took me a long time to come around to this point of view, but I think I have. If a water project is to be

sustainable there has to be somebody who owns it, and that can be a water board in the community, and they have to charge something for the water. The only way to have the money to replace well parts is that some very small amount of money has to be charged for the water and it goes into a bank and it's available to repair the well."--

"... the most successful approach [is] intensive community involvement."



3. Aqueduct at Fort Shantok in Montville (Photo by Chris Boyle).

4. Gardner Lake State Park (Photo by Chris Boyle).



# Three Rivers' Fitness Center

*Three Rivers' one stop shop for a workout*

Story & photos by Chris Boyle

College students, and especially commuters can sometimes find it hard to fit in a workout. Luckily, Three Rivers very own fitness center makes it that much easier.

The life of a college student is fast paced and stressful, and even a simple 30 minute workout could be enough to uplift your day. If you are having a hard time balancing your physical health outside of school, the Fitness Center may be the place for you.

The facility has a wide range of workout equipment. Everything from free weights, to squat racks, and even treadmills.

With such a variety available to students, there is something for everyone at the Fitness Center.

In addition to its weight and cardio rooms, the Fitness Center also has an open studio available to students and clubs.

When she is not painting in the art room, Mackenzie Gaulin frequents the studio to practice choreographed hula hooping.

"I can do whatever I want in

there because its so spacious," she said. "There's no other place I can go that has mirrors the way the studio does so I can see what I am doing, and how I look doing it.

A good workout can be just the right thing to clear one's mind and take a break from their studies.

Tyler Riddle visits the weight room when he has the time between classes.

"It's great because usually theres hardly anyone there," he said. "There's plenty of space for me to do my thing and I don't feel cramped."

The Fitness Center is located in F105 and is open Monday-Thursday, 8:00 A.M -7:00P.M.--

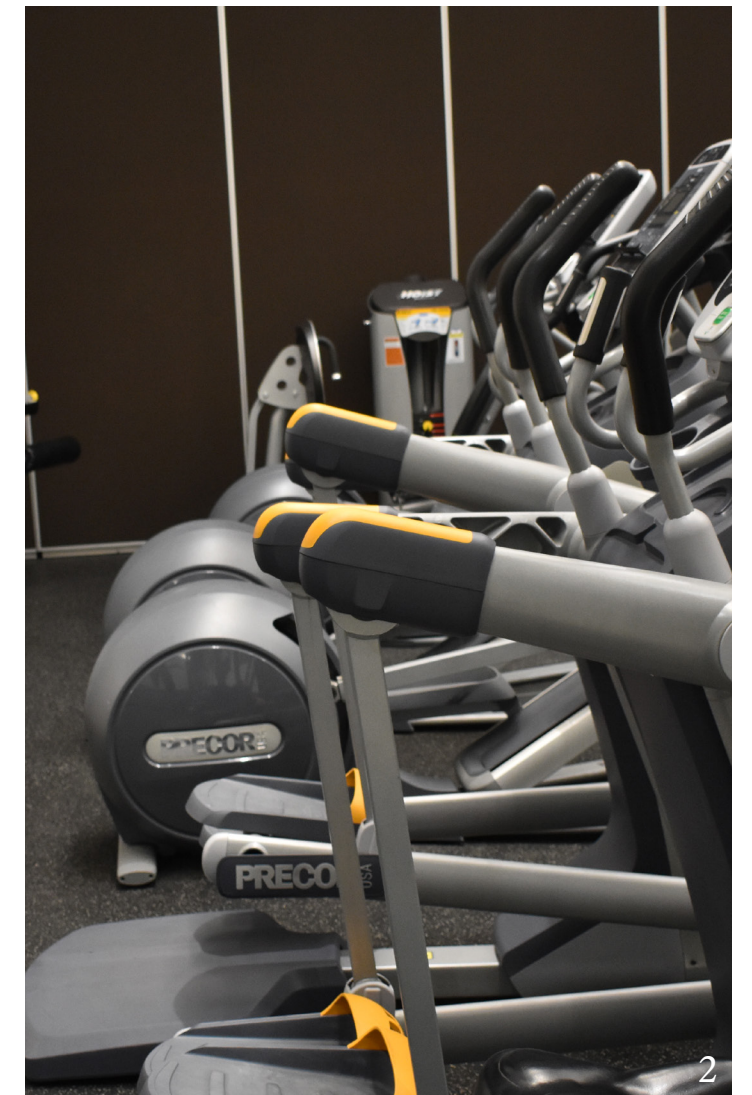
1. The weight room has dumb bells and many free weights for use.
2. Fitness Center has vast array of cardio machines (Ellipticals and treadmills).
3. The Fitness Center also has a spacious studio used by students and clubs (Photo by Samantha Zod)



1



3



2



# Benefits of being a Commuter Student

*Do commuters do it better?*

Story by Jerico Ciliano



Sure dorming sounds really fun, going to parties and staying up all hours of the night. Actually I would never know because I have only commuted but I assume that is what dorming is like.

All I know for sure is that students save a significant amount of money. According to the Student Loan Hero website, "The average cost of room and board is \$10,440 for a public school and \$11,890 at private colleges. Over the course of four years, living in a college dorm can add over \$40,000 to your total cost of attendance" Tretina, K. (2017, March 29). The \$10,000 Question: Is Living in a Dorm Worth It?

College tuition is already pricey alone, the last thing students want to do is spend money. Becoming a Three Rivers Community College student was a smart choice!

According to the Three Rivers Community College (TRCC) website, tuition costs about \$9,112 for 2 years at Three Rivers. The price can be significantly lowered if you are eligible for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The cost of boarding is higher than TRCC's tuition. Isn't that crazy?

One major advantage of attending community college is that you sometimes receive a FAFSA refund. For example, if you do not use all of the FAFSA you were awarded, you receive a refund check. From that point on you can use the money however you want.

The one disadvantage of community college is that you have to travel back and forth to the college since it does not stay open all day. With that said, community college students will find themselves driving many times throughout the week. You'll have to pay for gas at least once a week. It costs about \$30 to fill a whole tank of gas. That adds up quickly. Do not let that discourage you! Since you're in community college you will have the extra funds to cover gas money. --

*1. Bustling cars are constantly moving in and out of the campus' two access points (Photo by George Simones).*

*2. A jam packed parking lot on a cloudy TRCC day.*



# Accessibility at Three Rivers

*Is the accessibility to the standard it should be?*



Story & Photos by Ariana Cloutier

Picking the right college is never an easy task. Especially when having a physical disability.

Three Rivers has been built recently enough that it is quite accessible but, there are definite flaws. Here are a few to start.

Not all entry ways are accessible with automatic door buttons. There are only two on campus and the side entry (A Wing) button is not working 90% of the time.

If your class is in E wing, you must park at the main entrance and use those doors instead of parking right outside of E Wing (where there are handicap parking spots) because those doors are not accessible by button.

That may not seem like a huge deal but, when you are running late to class it makes all the difference.

Also, the library door is quite impossible to open for someone with weak upper body strength because they are huge glass doors. These should

absolutely have an automatic door opener.

The library is somewhere all people of all abilities should have access to with ease.

When it comes to elevators on campus there are four. Which is plenty for a small campus.

Unfortunately, just because there are elevators on campus doesn't make them fully accessible. The one in E Wing on the first floor is the smallest but, the buttons are lower than all of the other elevators on campus. Making it the most accessible elevator.

On the other hand, Three Rivers does a lot of things right when it comes to accessibility.

There is plenty of space in the hallways. They have ramps all throughout the school which makes for easy access to certain wings.

Just that there are automatic doors is a plus (there just isn't enough of them). In the cafeteria, the staff is more than happy to assist with anything that is out of

reach. Most snacks in the cafeteria are on low shelves and easily accessible. There are plenty of handicap parking spots which is a huge plus because, most establishments only have maybe one or two of them.



As a whole, Three Rivers is accessible enough by standard of say the state requirements. As for a student who has a physical disability these flaws could really effect their choice in college or require them to have someone with them at all times and for some that may not be an option. --



1. E-wing has a ramp build into the floor beside a set of stairs.
2. The main entrance of Three Rivers has an automatic button next to the door.
3. Emergency operators buttons are present outside of the E-wing elevator.
4. Buttons inside E wing elevator



# Kem Barfield

*River's Bed: A look at who keeps Three Rivers Flowing.*

Story & Photos by Tucker Noniewicz

**K**em Barfield is the Associate Dean of Academics and the Director of Educational Technologies at Three Rivers Community College. Kem has been at Three Rivers since the summer of 2005.

Kem is a Blackboard Administrator for Three Rivers, works with classroom technology, and runs technology training sessions. Kem supervises at the tutoring and writing centers, the Innovative Design in Educational Advancement (IDEA) center, and the Assessment of Prior Learning (APL) center. He also runs website support for the Three Rivers Extranet. In addition Kem has a hand in almost every survey that goes out to students or faculty. Lastly, Kem is in the process of relinquishing the title of Director of Institutional Research to someone new.

**Q: How does your work impact the lives of Three Rivers students?**

So there are a lot of ways. Just about every survey that happens, electronic survey, comes through me.

If you're a distance learning student you are going to get emails from me almost from the time that you sign up for classes. Even if you're not you may be getting some information about Blackboard.

If you have problems with your classes (on Blackboard) in general I'm the one who goes in and kinda solves the technical issues with classes, so students contact me for that.

If there are student complaints that have already gone through the department and are not resolved then those come to me as well. So I talk to students about those things.

Not anymore things, Climate surveys that come through, they are



all me. Plus I mean, I have a number of students who are working with like Digication and other things and if they can't get it resolved through like the tutoring center or IT or the registration office then a lot of times they will come to me because we can usually figure it out or contact the right people who can figure it out.

**Q: What is the most impactful change you feel you've made for Three Rivers?**

Oh I don't know ... There are many things that ... that I've enjoyed doing and I think have made an impact.

So for instance the active learning

classrooms that we have in D207. It was good we had some funding and so we were able to put together classrooms that you can show things on a lot of different monitors and group spaces. So we went away from the rows of desks and chairs that you'd typically see in a lot of classrooms. To something that was spread out and students could plug in laptops and they work in groups.

As well as some of the other classrooms with video capability and smartboards. I think those have been really good things.

I think that we've been good at encouraging faculty to use more technology, especially Blackboard. In a lot of different ways I think that's helped

*1. Kem Barfield, Associate Dean of Academics and Director of Educational Technologies*

the students.

I think it actually helps the faculty when they use it. I always say to the faculty you know, you have this bag of papers and you've got your gradebook and you're always trying to communicate these things out to students and you have things going back and forth all the time.

Gradebook in Blackboard actually helps save you a lot of time, cause you don't have to have an individual conversation where you are pulling out your gradebook and going through the grades and adding them up. Students see that automatically.

I think MyCommNet, which was a project years ago to unite all of the different log-ins. So if you'd been a student in say 2004, 2005 you might have had five different log-ins for our different systems. Different passwords and usernames to log into each one of these.

So we used the Luminous platform system-wide, I was on the committee. We combined all of those so now can get into MyCommnet and essentially you have one password for everything.

That concept has gone beyond MyCommnet even so now you can get into your mail in other ways and into other systems by using that same username and password. So I think it was a big thing.

**Q: Looking ahead, what excites you the most about the future of Three Rivers?**

I think there are a lot of great things that are possible in Education Technologies. So I do think that there



is the potential for us to use virtual technology and that would be the way we did our distance learning classes.

So you would put on your headset, you would meet the instructor in a particular environment, and the instructor could talk to you, students could do group work together. You could actually be at important historical sites.

If you're taking your architecture of the world class you could actually *be* in Greece at a site and your professor could guide you through that with other class members.

This is the same kind of thing I thought was possible with Second Life. With Second Life you were still detached from it, you were guiding an avatar in an environment on a screen.

With this you put on the headset and it feels like you're there. You can actually get up and move around in it. So that is pretty exciting.

I also think, well this is exciting but I don't think that most people will think it's exciting. I think that, so there's been this talk about Big Data. So we're collecting data on everything, and some people are opposed to this Big Data because they don't want everybody to be just a number.

But I also think that having data on education, on the students in education, especially when we have that across large numbers as we have with some of the massive open online classes. I think that probably gives you a wealth of information you can use to support your students.

And we no longer have to spend a lot of time, and have it take so much time that we can't do it in real time. So

now we have tools that can generate that kind of data on the fly, while classes are in progress.

So that when students are having problems there's an indicator of that problem right away and you can intervene. So that the student doesn't drop out of the class or fail the class, or maybe even fail the next unit that you're working on. So I think that kind of data that we can bring to bear on students is gonna be very important. I think that's very exciting the future.

**Q: How has being a faculty member here at Three Rivers made an impact on you?**

I think Three Rivers has given me a greater appreciation for the community college mission. I've worked at a variety of colleges and at a university and in the military before, and I knew about community colleges, but in my mind a community college was just another

place of higher education. You get what you need there and move on to something else.

Three Rivers has shown me that it is actually a special place in higher ed. And it provides value to students who, in a lot of ways, might not get what they need if they went straight off to university, and it does it at an affordable cost.

It has people who are the best practitioners of education. That is, at a university your professor may not know you, may not know your name. T.A. 's are gonna be doing a lot of the work with you. The professor lectures and then the professor is gone.

Our professors actually have the office hours, and they're not doing research so their whole focus is on teaching and on education. That's great

for the faculty but you also have a very dedicated staff that's also all about helping the student get in and get into the right place and get what they need.

And then that support team is providing orientations and they are analyzing information. So if they are advisors a lot of times they are meeting with students very frequently, they are giving the student career advice, which is another thing that you might not get at a university. You're getting it and you're getting it early here. So Three Rivers is the place I gained respect for that mission. --

2. Kem Barfield working in his office.



“...having data on education [will give] a wealth of information you can use to support your students...”



# Could a Summer/Winter Class be for You?

*Thinking ahead on your time off*

Story & Photos by Jerico Ciliano



Piling classes onto your schedule could make your efforts counterproductive and harder to accomplish your goal. Having more than 3 classes is very stressful let alone more.

By having all of these classes you may feel overwhelmed and stressed, this could potentially harm your grades. Winter and summer classes are a great way of quickly getting credits. These classes are worth 3 to 4 credits. Depending on what class you are taking it can be on campus or online.

It's money well spent because you have a higher chance of succeeding. You will only focus on that class and not have other classes to worry about. Go to the Three Rivers Community College website to see if any of your required classes are offered during the winter or summer! Make life easier.

Unfortunately, you have to pay out of pocket for a winter and summer class because Free Application for Federal

Student Aid (FAFSA) does not cover it. You can only receive FAFSA if you are a full-time student, taking 3 classes in a semester. The cost of one winter or summer class is \$632. The class is 3 weeks long, it flies by fast, however the workload is shortened.--

1. A student working on classwork for the summer photography course.
2. Video Filmmaking is offered in the winter with an altered course load.
3. Golden hour highlights the simple but eye catching architecture of TRCC (Photo by Chris Boyle).

## What Niche Does TRCC Fill?

*What makes the school unique?*



Story by Tucker Noniewicz

What sets Three Rivers Community College apart from a larger school? The answer is the intimate relationship between both the academic body and professional staff.

Chris Boyle is a returning student to TRCC after previously attending Eastern Connecticut State University, and later the University of Connecticut.

"Three Rivers' niche is its very unique sense of community" he said.

"Whereas at a larger school you're

just another number or a face in the crowd, TRCC puts genuine effort into giving you a community backing... having people available to you for support, doing the same stuff you're doing, [with] common goals with different backgrounds."

Students at TRCC have much in common. This commonality creates a strong sense of community in the schools population.--

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# The Constant Cold

*How to stay warm in the cold*



1

Story & Photos by Axel Soto

When it comes to that time of the year where the temperature gets to a low point and no matter what clothes you wear, you're constantly feeling cold. It's always important to maintain a normal body temperature.

Stay warm by staying in indoor environments. Most buildings will have heat running around the facility like retail stores, restaurants, or schools. You don't even have to go anywhere if you have heating at home. It's best to find a place that fits your own personal interior preferences.

The clothing we wear is a way of expressing our personalities. We dress how we want others to view us as. But wearing some of these articles of clothing may not be suitable for the upcoming seasons.

We sometimes try to excuse ourselves into thinking that maybe it's 'not that cold' just so we don't have to carry around a jacket with us.

Go shopping for a puffy jacket or a winter coat. Coats/ jackets also have a lot of pockets so there's the additional benefit of having space to place small utensils.

There are some alternative pieces of clothing to choose from like thermal shirts/ pants, double layering clothing on top of another, and winter boots. Invest in accessories that'll keep you warm.

You'd probably pick items that are lightweight yet effective. Carrying a pair of gloves or a scarf with you would bring benefits to having constant cold hands and having the breeze hit

your face. These items are also the most inexpensive out of them all so they shouldn't be a big problem to purchase.

Consume foods/ beverages that are warm are what'll keep you from freezing. Having hot foods will make you feel satisfied compared to more colder foods like ice cream. A hot cappuccino or food straight from an oven is always a good commendation. --

1. There are endless possibilities of winter clothes that can fit your style.
2. There may be a lack of snow, but the winter season is far from over.



2



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# Soup 4 U Chef's Challenge

Local chefs compete for best soup in Norwich

Story & Photos by Chris Boyle



Eleven restaurants from around Norwich competed for the title of best soup February 7th in Chef Ceil Vardar's "Soup 4 U Chef's Challenge." The event was held at the Wauregan Ballroom.

The public could purchase tickets to the event that included a tasting of each soup and the ability for a guest to vote on their favorite. There were two serving times that were available for ticket purchase on the day of the event; 5-7pm or 7-9pm.

Tickets were purchased online for \$18 and included 11 tasting tickets for each competing soup as well as one red voting ticket, of which were presented at the door. Participants of the challenge receive a certificate of their entry, and the winner is presented with a custom made



trophy ornamented with a Le Creuset soup pot.

The event is currently kept exclusive to Norwich owned restaurants. The participants of this year's challenge are Brick and Basil, Cafe Otis, Canggio, Craftsman Cliff Roasters, Harp and Dragon, Illiano's Grill, Lazizah, Royal Punjabi, Tulli's, These Guys Brewing, and Uncle D's Blazin' BBQ.

Each restaurant chooses their own soup to prepare for the event, and no two soups are exactly alike.

Last year's sold out competition was held at Epicure Brewing and was attended by 200 people. Some participants felt they were under prepared as they were not expecting such a large turnout.

Vincenzo Race, owner and operator of Illiano's Grill, participated in the event last year and will be returning to compete. He will be making gluten free and vegan minestrone to highlight the restaurant's menu options for a variety of diets.

"I made eight quarts.. This year

I want to make twenty-two," he said.

"There were so many people, over one hundred. It was just incredible."

Chef Ceil Vardar, local chef and winner of Food Network's *Chopped*, is a self-taught chef whose passion for cooking lead to the creation of the competition. She came up with the idea for the competition as a way to highlight Norwich business.

Since last year's installment of the event, there have been ideas in ways to change how it is structured and who should be able to compete. Vardar said that they have talked about expanding the competition, but she would like to keep it limited to only restaurants located in Norwich.

"I want to keep the contest in Norwich to keep the business in Norwich," Vardar said.

All proceeds for the event go to benefit the Norwich Events Organization that oversees community events such as the competition itself. This money goes towards parades, fireworks, and other events.

Last year's Soup 4 U Chef's Challenge raised \$3,000.

"I love the community of Norwich," said Illiano's Race. "Whatever I don't use is a donation and even just that is special."--



1. Typical minestrone soup is made with ingredients such as pasta, beans, onions, celery, carrots, and other vegetables.

2. The winning soup gets a custom trophy (Photo by Ceil Vardar).

3. The competition will be held at the Wauregan Ballroom.





1. Use hand sanitizer only when you are not able to wash your hands, as it is aggressive on skin (Photo by Chris Boyle).

2. Washing your hands with hot water removes germs better (Photo by Chris Boyle).



## Stay Proactive in Flu Season

*Do your part to keep yourself and others healthy*

Story John White

Flu season is in full effect and consequently has been causing a stir in the community. In the past month, Mitchell College was forced to cancel classes for nearly a week after many of their students had contracted the flu.

As the media promotes the fear of the looming threat of global pandemic causing a nation wide frenzy, it is important to remember that “flu season” is to be taken seriously. This year, experts have said that the virus is expected to be just as severe, if not more, than previous years.

Symptoms of the common flu can come on suddenly. These include things like high fever, severe muscle aches, weakness or fatigue, chills, flushed skin, headaches, dry cough, sore throat, and runny nose.

While at first these may seem like manageable symptoms, it is important

to remember the flu should not be taken lightly. Children and the elderly are particularly susceptible to the virus. During the 2019-2020 flu season, the CDC reported 10,000 people have died and 180,000 were hospitalized from the virus.

To protect yourself and the community, the first step experts recommend is to get vaccinated. The CDC recommends “everyone 6 months of age and older get vaccinated every flu season.”

In addition, it is recommended you wash your hands thoroughly and avoid touching your face to prevent spreading the virus from surfaces to oneself. For situations where you are not readily able to wash your hands, carry an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. --





## 2020 is the Year of the Rat

*An in-depth description of what it means to be born in the Year of the Rat*

Story Ariana Cloutier

In 2020, Chinese New Year festivities fell between the dates of January 25<sup>th</sup> to February 4<sup>th</sup>. This year happens to be the year of the Rat.

If born in the following years, consider yourself a Rat; 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008, and 2020.

According to folklore the Rat represents the beginning of a new day.

The zodiac animals are made up of twelve different animals. The Rat happens to be the first on the list.

A myth created by the Jade Emperor determines the order of the zodiac animals. It is based off of which animal showed up to his party first.

The zodiacs also have corresponding elements that change every year. There are five elements, wood, fire, water, metal, and earth. This year happens to be

metal. Officially, this year is called, "The Year of the Metal Rat".

Traditionally the year of your zodiac will often come with some bad luck. For 2020, the Rat will have some better luck than normal career wise. Unfortunately, some relationship and health struggles may arise.

It is said that, people born within a year of the Rat are well liked. They are quite emotional people but, tend to have a stubborn side.

The most popular attributes of the Rat are, good with money and smart.

Be prosperous in the year 2020!

Gong Hei Fat Choy! (Happy New Year).--

1. Red lanterns, traditional for Chinese New Year (Photo by Pexels).

1

## New Semester Means New Strategies

*Ways to stay energized this semester*

Story & Photo by Axel Soto

### Planning:

When you get back into the learning process, you may have a hard time trying to get back into it. Coming from the winter break, back into doing schoolwork can be difficult to adapt to.

It'll then lead to waiting until the last minute of doing homework and staying up all night. Trying to cram all your work together into a huge list of assignments just to get half-baked attempts of unfinished work.

To fight this attitude, you must manage your time with a personal planner. Set times to when you're going to finish said assignment and get it done by that time.

It's best to have a plan than just waiting every time. If you feel it might be too much work effort put onto yourself, take frequent breaks, relax, and return to it later.

The earlier it's done, the better. This isn't just a tip for school, it's life advice as well.

### Sleep:

It is sad to say that students aren't getting enough sleep as they should be getting. Some of the reasons are due to stress, sleeping disorders, and overhaul of work.

To try to get as much sleep as possible, there are a few steps to prevent yourself from staying up all night.

Relief thoughts: It's not healthy to be thinking so negatively, especially when getting sleep

Avoid anything that might distract you: Leaving the television on or using your phone are influences that keep you up at night.

### Eating Breakfast:

It's important to eat a decent breakfast. Students might believe that skipping breakfast isn't a big deal and might not see the importance.

According to Rush University Medical Center, one of the advantages of eating breakfast in the AM is "Having better performance (memory and attention) (for school-aged children)."--

2. The many possibilities of breakfast can be just as simple as bread with butter.



2





# Make Time for Self-Care

*Are you taking the time to fulfil your needs?*

Story & Photo by Jerico Ciliano

Why do college students develop poor eating habits? Students may not be eating three meals a day because of financial, mental, or physical reasons. What happens when a student does not eat enough during a semester?

A college education is not cheap. Students will find themselves paying for classes, textbooks, and school supplies in order to succeed in college. Some college students might struggle financially in general. With this burden on their shoulders they neglect their basic necessities. Students are on the go most of the day, whether it's going from one class to another or going to work. According to Consumer News and Business Channel (CNBC), "Researchers surveyed 43,000 college students at 66 schools and found that 36 percent of students on U.S. college campuses are considered "food insecure," meaning they do not get enough to eat" (CNBC, 2018). There

is not a wide variety of healthy food available in the cafeteria and restaurants are very pricey. Eating food at school can become pricey, especially if you spend your whole day there.

According to journalist Vanessa Romo, from the National Public Radio (NPR), said "... just 29 percent of college students today are 'traditional students' — those who enroll immediately after high school and depend on their parents for financial support. The vast majority — 71 percent — don't follow the narrative of the 'typical' college student." (NPR, 2019). All ages attend colleges these days. Older students may be juggling school with children, money, or a job.

Unfortunately, students will sacrifice their basic needs in order to live comfortably outside of school. Most college students resort to unhealthy and innutritious food options, such as fast food or junk food. Junk food is high in

calories but low in nutrients and is very cheap.

Another factor to lack of self-care is stress. Studying and working on assignments becomes a priority and must be done in order to succeed. However, it feels as though your needs can be attended at a later time. This problem can be avoided if you plan your meals ahead of time and spend the time making them.

Making food for yourself is not as time consuming as you think it is. Skipping meals cannot be that bad for you, right? According to self.com, your blood sugar and energy levels drop. Your glucose, a simple sugar that is an important energy source in living organisms, can deplete if you do not eat. Low levels of glucose will cause you to feel tired and weak. Not eating can cause you to not think straight because your brain needs glucose as well.

The busy life of a commuting college student can make it hard to prioritize self care. The easiest thing to do is make small changes that are attainable in your every day life.

Here are a list of target areas to focus on to make sure you are giving yourself the care you need:

- 1. Get a good night's sleep.**
- 2. Manage your time to avoid the stress of the crunch.**
- 3. Never skip meals. Pack a lunch if you know you will be out for too long.**
- 4. Exercise; even a simple 20 minute workout can make all the difference.**
- 5. Take a break from your work; know when its time to step away for a bit, get snack and come back energized.**

As difficult as it may be for college students to take self care into account, it is just as important as getting their homework done on time. --

*1. A good breakfast when you wake up can make all the difference in your mood and energy for the day.*



# Students Today, Wallets Forever

*Be thorough in research before transferring*



Story and Photos by Chris Boyle

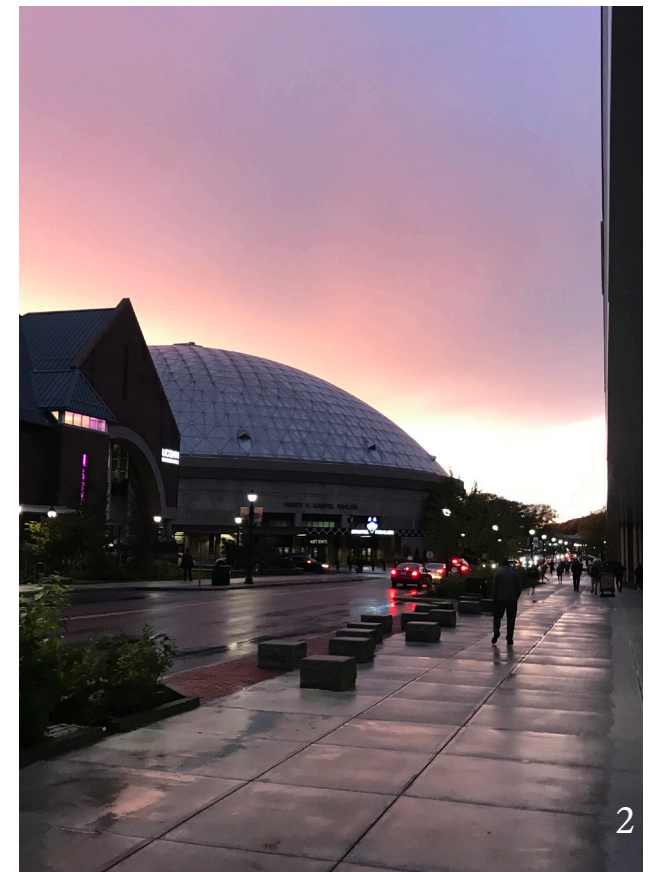
The University of Connecticut is considered among some of the more elite schools in the country, and an iconic name in our area. Everyone knows a UConn Husky, and in the Fall of 2019, I was that Husky. After a few semesters under my belt at Three Rivers, I decided to transfer to UConn in favor of the opportunities I had thought the school would open up for me. I want to specifically critique UConn with the lens of a transfer student, as many of us at TRCC will be or are in the process of transferring soon.

UConn is extremely particular about what credits they do and do not take. I would go as far as to argue the school is overly selective. When I began the transfer process into the school, however, the people I had met with on UConn had walked me through my credits to make it sound like I was ahead of the game. They assured me that my previously earned credits filled requirements, and I was good to go. This was, in fact, not the case. As it turns out, the vast majority of my credits obtained would transfer to UConn only as “electives.” In terms of my program, Graphic Design, I was starting from square 1 again. On Orientation Day, I met with faculty to discuss the credits more in depth, but was more or less shooed away to keep the line moving.

Almost nothing I had previously taken was going to transfer into a meaningful slot. The university went as far as to argue that my Art History I & II, one taken at ESCU and the other at TRCC, was not of the same caliber as the UConn brand of the same class. I coined the term “UConn brand” as a label for most my classes that semester because they were essentially catch-up work for the Graphic Design Degree program at UConn. Moreover, for classes I was involved in that were specific to the Graphics program at the university, I was already well ahead

because of my 2 years’ experience at TRCC. For instance, I was placed in an introductory digital media class that was essentially a brief and haphazardly put together class to expose new students to basic Adobe software. In short, my impression of the Graphics Program as a whole was just that; haphazardly put together.

Unfortunately for me, the faculty I reached out for guidance were the very ones that put the program together. In my experience, help from faculty at the university was nonexistent. When I began to have second thoughts on whether or not UConn was the right place for me, I reached out to my assigned advisor. After being ignored for a week, I decided to play a game with myself and send one



*1 Student posing with UConn merchandise- a common sight in our area.*

*2. Living on campus is convenient, but have you fully tallied the cost?*



additional follow-up email per day. After three days, my advisor reached out and offered to meet with me to discuss my experience. When we did in fact meet, the session devolved into more of an hour long argument as to the merit of the classes I was involved in, and annoyance that I came with questions rather than compliance.

It is important when discussing UConn to make mention of its price tag. My semester, including room, board, and estimated cost of textbooks, was about 16,000. This does not include the numerous fees and dues that suddenly just seemed to appear. For instance, the university attempted to charge me 500 dollars when I withdrew; 3 months before the next semester even started. How you can be charged for a lack of service so far in advance is beyond me. After a bit of back and forth with the administration via email, I was assured the mystery charge would be removed.

College is expensive, no doubt, and there is not a single person reading that needs to be told that. UConn, however, is an entirely different beast. In fact, after talking in depth to other students in my program who had



attended the university a lot longer than I, it seemed their programs were specifically structured to cost you, the student, time and subsequently money.

Uconn, in my experience, favored money rather than the quality of their education. When questioned, the faculty would dig their feet in the ground, puff out their chest, and argue a UConn education is worth whatever price they deem necessary.

For new students to TRCC, and those of us getting ready to graduate, I want to stress the importance of fully researching and understanding what is the best course of action for your education as well as your wallet. Kathleen Gray- TRCC counselor who works closely with the transfer process between schools- explained to me that a smooth transfer, and to UConn especially, requires as early forward thinking as you can get. Though her one person office seems spread thin amongst the student body, Gray said students with even an idea to transfer should meet with her and “take the time to pick the brain of the faculty that are here for

you.”

I am not without fault in my UConn ordeal, and I understand that. I did not take the time to fully understand the necessary components involved in the transfer process. I did not talk to enough faculty to think ahead to a UConn transfer, and I did not take into account the culture shock that comes with transferring to a much larger school. If there was any advice I could give to students thinking about transferring to a university after their time at TRCC, and especially those with prospects of UConn, take the time to fully understand your options. It is crucial that you meet with your advisor, research the school, and make time to visit the campus. The student is responsible for understanding what they are getting themselves into. I was lucky enough to have faculty at TRCC who, even though I was no longer a student, were still on my side.

As many of my classmates and I go

into what will be our last semester as students of Three Rivers Community College, I want to stress how important it is to take full advantage of the resources and faculty available to students. With many of us looking ahead to our next chapter, take the time to get all you possibly can out of TRCC. Talk to your advisors, make time to visit Kathleen Gray, and work towards what is in your best interest. Not just now, but 5 years time. Value the relationship between student and teacher found at TRCC, because they are truly on your side and not just there for a paycheck.

To respond to this editorial, email:  
**christopherjboyle2@gmail.com.--**

3. What the university lacks in program coordination it made up for in its scenery from its vast fields of green.

4. Advertising for sporting events on UConn campus is easy to come by; but should advisor help be so as well?



1

# Netflix & Chill'd Flavor Review

Could the new flavor on the block be your go-to?

Story & Photos by Chris Boyle

When it comes to ice cream, I try to keep it plain and simple, to always know what I am getting myself into. I have been known to toss and turn at the mere thought of quickly scanning a menu board full of extravagant flavors, then settle on vanilla. Whether out of respect to my comfort zone, or respect for the poor worker who has to wait on such an indecisive customer as myself, I never find myself wanting to branch out. That was until a friend of mine told me about a new flavor of Ben & Jerry's ice cream coming out: Netflix & Chill'd.

At first glance, the flavor is everything I tend to avoid in ice cream and everything a normal taster would love. The new flavor is a mouth-watering combination of peanut butter ice cream with sweet and salty pretzel swirls mixed in. Not only that, but there are fudge brownie pieces mixed in as well, and large pieces at that. The flavor is one of the newest additions to the Ben & Jerry's lengthy menu board, and has already become a hit among customers.

On my first sample of the flavor, every item in its description made itself well known to my taste buds. Peanut butter ice cream was a delicious change from my usual vanilla, while the fudge brownie pieces were bold and flavorful. I was actually taken aback by just how large the fudge pieces are, and how plentiful they are in just a sample. This new flavor is quality and quantity in one delicious package. I found that the best part of the ice cream, however, lies in its inclusion of "sweet and salty pretzel

swirls" mixed in. Such an iconic flavor combination like this turned out to be a welcome addition to an ice cream, regardless of my initial questioning of its use.

Wanting to be thorough in my analysis, I made a point to try the new flavor in a variety of different ways. A flavor as bold and brilliant as this demands more than just a sample spoonful. In a cup, the ice cream stands on its own as a large savory scoop that is sure to leave ambitious customers satisfied. Netflix & Chill'd is so flavorful that you would feel like you are missing anything with it simply in a paper cup, accessorized with a wooden disposable spoon. Of course, the next natural progression would be to enjoy the ice

cream in a cone, and what better than a freshly made waffle cone. The addition of the waffle cone might not seem all too bold at first, but something about the way it wrapped the ice cream in question was both visually appealing and more tasty than I thought was possible.

Lastly, I made a point to try the ice cream as my personal favorite frozen dairy treat: a milkshake. At first thought, one would think that the fudge brownies would not lend themselves well to the nature of being enjoyed through a straw. Surprisingly, these nay-sayers would be wrong. The ice cream and all its contents was smooth and flavorful just the same. To me, in fact, it enhanced it.

Netflix & Chill'd was an overwhelmingly satisfying flavor. It has made me rethink my plain vanilla-ways, and made me a believer in more innovative flavors. I give the ice cream 5 out of 5 stars. --



2



3



1. Ben & Jerry's at Mohegan Sun.
2. Netflix & Chill'd shaken... not stirred.
3. Ordering a creatively named flavor results in more smiles than ordering a standard vanilla.
4. The new flavor looks appetizing and trendy, accessorized with a wooden disposable spoon.

4



# YouTube Vs. COPPA

*New YouTube policies are making waves.*

Story by Bianca Lane

By now, everyone has heard about the YouTube vs the FTC event that happened. What you probably do not know is what that means exactly for youtube creators or anyone that uses YouTube.

But first a little about the Child Online Privacy Protection law of 1998, or better known as COPPA. According to the Federal Trade Commissions (FTC)

website, “COPPA imposes certain requirements on operators of websites or online services directed to children under 13 years of age, and on operators of other websites or online services that have actual knowledge that they are collecting personal information online from a child under 13 years of age”.

Which means, website operators, in

this case YouTube, get a list of criteria they must follow, or else be in COPPA violation and face the consequences.

As of January 1st, 2020 Youtube has begun to dramatically reduce the data collection from videos marked as “made for kids.” Which means YouTube has disabled a lot of different features on these videos.

These features, include but are not limited to, targeted advertising, Comments, Channel notifications and these videos can no longer be saved to watch later. These videos will also no longer show up on the search engine.

What does this mean for creators? Creators are now required to set future and existing videos as made for kids or not. They may do this on a channel wide level, or on an individual video level.

Labeling at the channel level, will

set all future and existing content as made for kids or not. At the video level, creators will need to set each existing and future video as made for kids or not.

Now, a creator’s revenue is largely generated by the ads placed on the videos. Because of the new changes, creators’ revenue will be cut and they will earn less pay.

Not only will creators lose revenue, but for each miss labeled video, A creator can be fined civil penalties of up to \$42,530 per violation. --

*1. A screenshot of new YouTube channel settings.*

Advertisement

ECONOMICS  
101

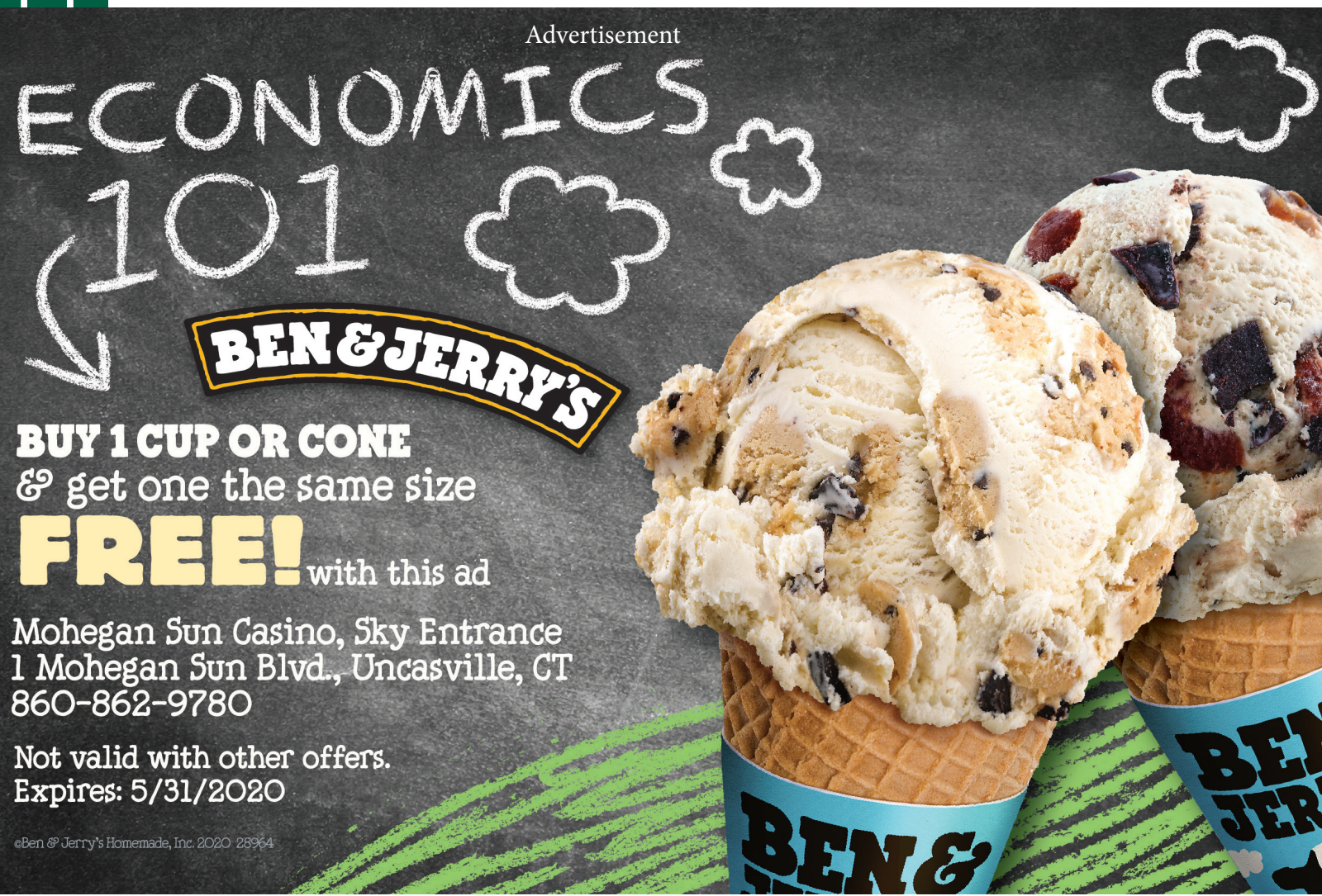
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**BUY 1 CUP OR CONE  
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860-862-9780

Not valid with other offers.  
Expires: 5/31/2020

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Settings

General Channel Upload defaults Community

Basic info **Advanced settings** Branding

Audience

Simplify your workflow by selecting a channel setting. If you skip this question, you'll be required to identify each video on your channel that's made for kids. This setting will affect existing and future videos. Settings for individual videos will override the channel setting.

Do you want to set your channel as made for kids?

Regardless of your location, you're legally required to comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and/or other laws. You're required to tell us whether your videos are made for kids. [What's content made for kids?](#)

☐ Yes, set this channel as made for kids. I always upload content that's made for kids.

☐ No, set this channel as not made for kids. I never upload content that's made for kids.

☒ I want to review this setting for every video.

Google Ads account linking

[LINK ACCOUNT](#)

CANCEL SAVE



# Nana's Banana Chocolate Chip Cookies

*An exclusive look at a family favorite*

By Ariana Cloutier

## Ingredients

2/3 Cup of Shortening (ie. Crisco)  
1 Cup of Sugar  
2 Eggs  
1 Package of Milk or Semi-Sweet Chocolate Chips  
1 tsp. of Vanilla  
2 ¼ Cup of Flour  
2 tsp. of Baking Powder  
¼ tsp. Baking Soda  
½ tsp. of Salt  
1 Heaping Cup of **ripe** Mashed Baking\* Bananas (about 3 medium sized bananas)

*\*Baking bananas means that they are very ripe. They will have mostly brown skins. These bananas should be nice and soft for best results.*

## Directions

**Oven Setting:** 350 Degrees

1. Hand mix shortening and sugar together. Then, add eggs. Mix this together well!
2. Stir in chocolate chips and vanilla
3. Sift all dry ingredients and combine with shortening mixture.
4. Add in mashed bananas
5. Scoop spoon sized dollops of batter on to a baking sheet. (Should be able to fit 12 cookies onto a normal sized baking sheet)
6. Place in oven for about 12 minutes or until light golden color is achieved.

*(For best result don't use blender or mixer. Blend by hand!)-*

**1. You'll go bananas for these home made cookies!**

1





1



Adobe Sketch



Adobe Draw



Procreate

# First Steps to Digital Drawing

*Tips and Tricks to get you started as a digital artist*

Story & Photo by Bianca Lane

These digital drawing tips and tricks are primarily for digital art applications, such as Ibis Paint X, MediBang and Sketchbook, but can be used in others such as Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator or Paint tool SAI.

**Tip #1 Cleaner Line Art**  
PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE! That is the number one rule to get better at anything. However that is only part of it.

To get cleaner line art, start by trying to get your line done in one stroke. It will be hard at first, but that is where the practice comes in. Do not be afraid to erase the line a couple dozens of times before you get the line you want. You are not the only one.

**Tip #2 Easy coloring/Clipping/Alpha lock**  
There are two easy ways to keep the strokes of color within the line art.

There are the Alpha Locks and the Clipping Mask. First, let's talk about the Alpha Locks. Using Alpha Lock lets you lock a layer's transparency. What that means is that, once you apply an Alpha Lock on a layer, you will only be able to paint inside what already on that particular layer.

To put it simply, it's a one layer only deal and you do not want to mess up.

The second way to color in the line art, is to use a clipping mask. Clipping Masks let you clip multiple layers to the content of one layer, allowing for non-destructive alterations.

To do a quick color job using a clipping mask, all you have to do is take your magic wand tool, tap outside your line art then invert the selection. You can then hide your line art, but still see the outline because you made the selection. Next you will want to take your paint bucket tool, and plop a base color layer

down. That way your clipping mask color job will have something to hold onto. You can then turn your line art back on and create a blank layer between the color base and the line art. Then you can click the option called "clipping" and begin to draw.

You can also use the Alpha Locks and Clipping mask to color your line art.

If you are using photoshop all you have to do, is click the lock button for an alpha lock, or place your mouse between the two layers you want to add a clipping mask to, hold down alt and click your mouse once.

## Tip #3 Shading/Highlighting

The third and final tip, is how to shade and highlight a drawing without adding black or white to the color.

Let's begin with the shading. Now, when you go to get a color to shade with, do not go straight to black. Instead, move around your color wheel to get a different color.

Take yellow for example, to shade that color, you would move closer to an orange color to shade. As your shadows get darker, just keep moving around the color wheel, until satisfied that the shadows pop.

Now for the highlighting. You will want to go back to the base color to begin anew.

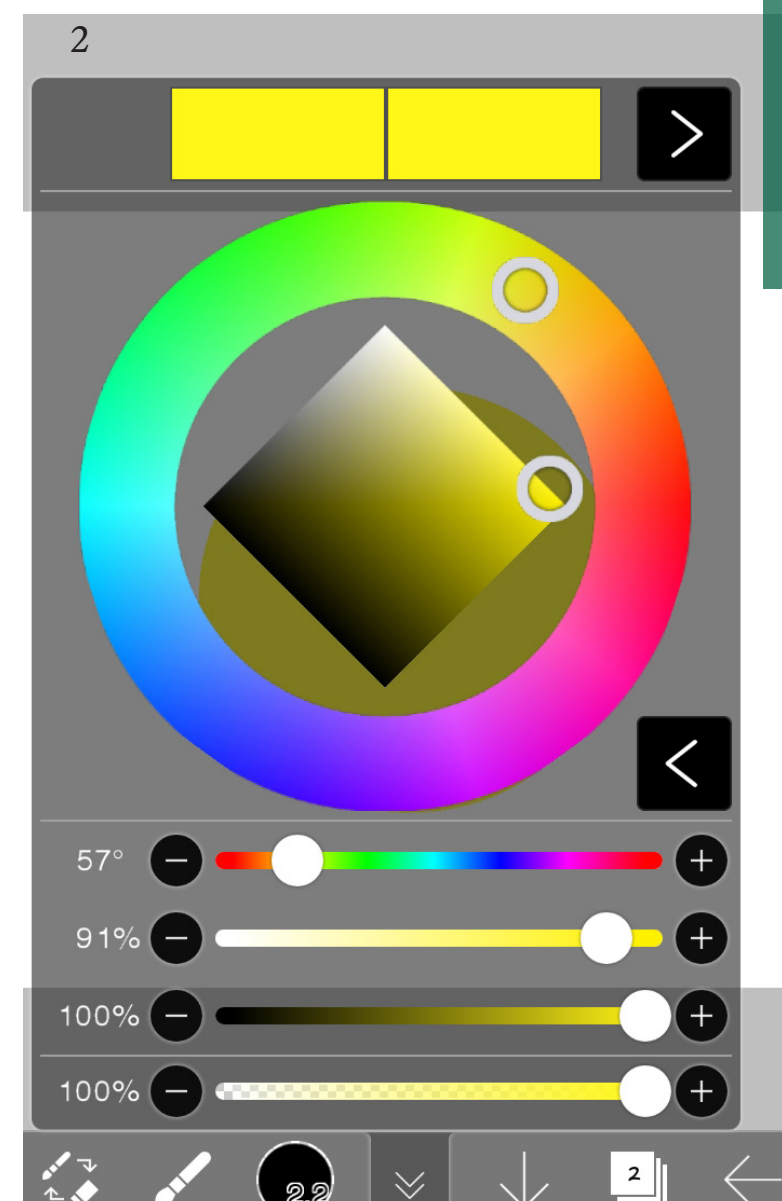
For the highlighting, you will want to go around your color wheel once more, only this time in the opposite direction of the shadow colors. Just a tiny bit, and for highlights, you will want to move the tone of your color ever so slightly towards the white to get a lighter color.

So, with the yellow example, you will want to use a softer yellow, that has a slight green tint to it.

And you're done!--

1. There are a number of digital drawing programs to choose from. Find the one that works best for you!
2. A screenshot of new YouTube channel settings.

2







## Mr. Beast and #TeamTrees

*YouTube Star Making a Difference*

Story & Bianca Lane

**J**immy Donaldson, or better known as American YouTube personality Mr. Beast. He is mostly known for his crazy expensive exploits and quite recently the Team Trees Campaign.

Mr. Beast had teamed up with the Arbor Day Foundation and together they launched the Team Trees campaign October 25th, 2019. His goal for the campaign was to raise 20 million dollars to plant 20 million trees before the clock struck 2020. But he was not alone in his endeavor to save the planet.

His fellow YouTuber Mark Rober had also partnered with the Arbor Day

Foundation to raise the money and get the trees in the ground.

Even Elon Musk, of Tesla and SpaceX fame, gave Team trees \$1 million dollars and changed his Twitter name to "Treelon" to support the cause.

As of December 19th, 2019 MrBeast and his partners reached the 20 million tree marks. Since then another 1 million trees have been donated, leading up to a grand total of 21 million trees planted.--



1. Mr. Beast himself, a still from his video titled "Planting 20,000,000 Trees, My Biggest Project Ever!"

2. Trees are an essential part of life on Earth (Photo by Samantha Zod).

Watch for  
Issue 8 of  
The Current,  
out March 4.



# The Current

## A Look Ahead...

To have your event featured,  
contact Chris Boyle at  
[christopherjboyle2@gmail.com](mailto:christopherjboyle2@gmail.com)

**Feb 19**

**Last Day to select audit  
option**

**Feb 26**

**Club Carnival  
(Multipurpose Room)**

**Feb 28**

**Last day to apply for May  
or August graduation**

**Mar 3**

**Resistance and Resilience  
(Multipurpose Room)**

**Mar 8**

**Daylight Savings**

**Mar 16-22**

**Spring Break-No Classes**

### **Too Gool for School #1**

*Comic by Chris Boyle*



*"Wait, we have to apply to graduate?"*