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Photo on cover: Italian Ice by Kim Stanford

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COVID-19 UPDATE

The U.S. Leads the World in Cases but Connecticut Stays Successful, and Scientists around the Globe Continue Vaccine Trials

Story and images by Sarah Walsh

At the beginning of Labor Day weekend on Friday, the seven-day average number of new reported cases of coronavirus in the United States was 41,233, a four percent decrease from two weeks earlier. The average number of new deaths reported was 851.

At least 406 new deaths and 31,061 new cases were reported in the U.S. Monday, Sept. 7. The United States remains the country with the highest case count, with over 6.2 million. India is second with over 4.2 million, and Brazil is third with more than 4.1 million cases.

Most of the U.S. is now open, and the recent reopening of college campuses has resulted in more than 51,000 reported cases at more than 1,000 campuses.

Despite surges in parts of the country, the Northeast has kept case reports relatively low. However, new infections have risen across parts of the Midwest and South since the end of summer.



Wait here squares help ensure social distancing at Mystic Aquarium in Mystic, Connecticut.

States where new cases are higher and staying high had a daily average of 15 new cases per 100,000 people over the past week. Within this category are North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Tennessee, Alabama, Arkansas, Missouri, and others.

Mississippi and Georgia are reported as states where case counts are higher but going down.

States where case numbers are lower had a daily average of less than 15 new cases per 100,000 people over the past week. They include Alaska, Virginia, California, and Connecticut, among others.

Some of these states are staying low, while others are going up in cases. Connecticut's cases have gone up 15 percent from two weeks earlier, with an average of 124 cases per day.

In the past seven days, there have been 870 new cases reported in Connecticut, the largest number in Fairfield county, which reported 257, and the smallest known number in Windham county, with 24. New London county, which includes Norwich, reported 66 new cases and 25 deaths.

Although cases in Connecticut had not been rising in July, Gov. Ned Lamont announced on July 6 that he was pausing the state's reopening plan and maintaining the current rules indefinitely instead of moving into Phase Three, which was originally scheduled to begin July 20. Connecticut's Phase Three reopening remains postponed, without a projection for a new start date.

Lamont said the state was "erring on the side of caution."

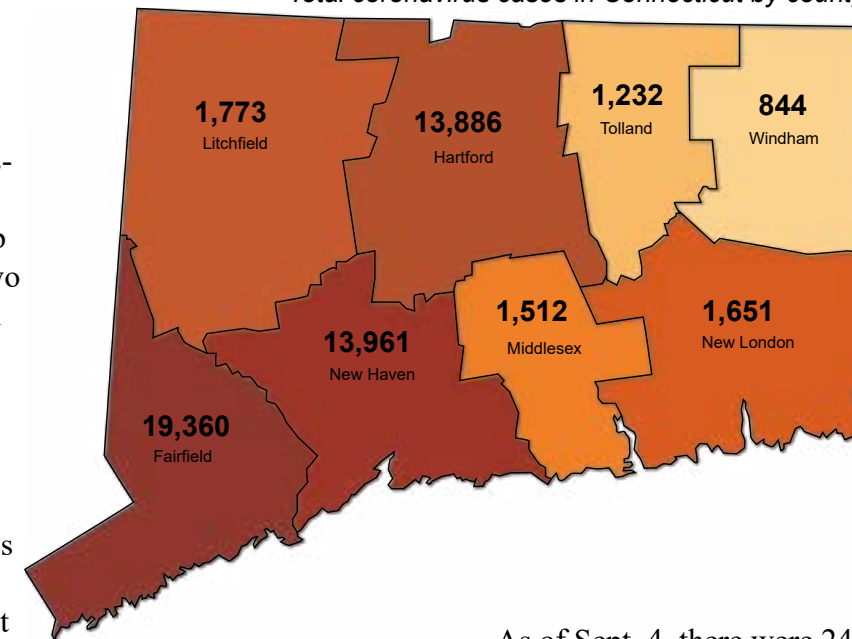
Under Phase Two rules, indoor private gatherings are limited to 25 people, and outdoor private gatherings are limited to 100 people.

These limitations have likely contributed to Connecticut's success in low case counts. Connecticut had a one percent positive test rate Monday, Sept. 7.

The number of daily coronavirus tests being performed in the U.S. is only 62 percent of the level considered necessary to lessen the spread of the virus, but Connecticut is one of 12 states meeting the target.

The nationwide target is 1.2 million daily tests, based

Total coronavirus cases in Connecticut by county



on a methodology developed by researchers at the Hartford Global Health Institute. Connecticut was at an average at 431 tests per 100,000 people and exceeded the target testing levels at 642 percent, Sept. 7.

There are still no coronavirus vaccines approved for full use.

As of Sept. 4, there were 24 vaccines testing safety and dosage, 14 in expanded safety trials, 9 in large-scale efficacy tests, and 3 approved for early use. Researchers are testing 37 vaccines in clinical trials on humans. At least 91 preclinical vaccines are being investigated in animals.

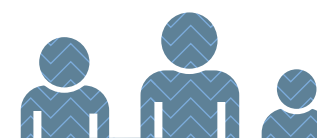
A preclinical test is a test of a new vaccine on cells. Scientists then give it to animals to see if it generates an immune response.

Phase one safety trials are tests of a vaccine's safety and dosage and immune response on a small number of people.

Phase two expanded trials are trials in which scientists test a vaccine by giving it to hundreds of people divided by demographics, such as children and the elderly, to see if the vaccine acts differently in different groups.

Phase three efficacy trials are trials where scientists give the vaccine, and a placebo, to thousands of people and wait to see how many become infected compared with those who were given the placebo.

In June, the F.D.A. said that a coronavirus vaccine would have to protect at least 50 percent of vaccinated people to be considered effective.



CONNECTICUT RENTER HOUSING CRISIS

Is It Getting Better?



State of Connecticut Department of Housing (DOH)
Temporary Rental Housing Assistance Program (TRHAP)

Story and photos by Joseph Victorino

During the pandemic, the ability to take shelter is a necessity but with waves of unemployment affecting much of Connecticut, for many renters, their home is something they are just clinging onto, or have already lost.

Sebastian Bartosiak, 24, is currently unemployed and is still looking to find an occupation. Typically, he would make around \$15,000 a year, but since becoming unemployed, he has not made anything.

“It’s difficult to find a hiring job right now and if you do find a job that’s on-sight you’re risking exposure to the virus,” he said.

Bartosiak has been living in a split duplex in the New London County since moving in on September 3, 2016. He lives there with 2 roommates, both of whom are still employed.

This is not always the case for renters across Connecticut. According to Gov. Ned Lamont’s office, it is estimated that the evictions we see in the state eviction rate will rise from 4.3 percent to 7.2 percent later this year.

According to the CT Mirror last month, this statistic will remain frozen until October. Lamont announced in his news briefing on COVID-19 on August 20 that during this unemployment crisis, there can’t be people losing their homes. Therefore, he’s doing everything in his power to extend the rent freeze.

On July 15, the State of Connecticut Department of House (DOH) and the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) created the Temporary Rental Housing Assistance Program (TRHAP). This is the State of Connecticut’s response to the housing issues due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

“The State will be offering assistance to renters in order to prevent eviction actions. This will address both the arrearage caused by income loss and/or greater expenses due to COVID-19 that have negatively impacted a household’s ability to pay their full monthly rent over the next number of months,” said the State of Connecticut DOH’s official for the TRHAP.

“Due to the large volume of interest and the resulting backlog, the TRHAP Program will be paused for Intake for the next two weeks, beginning Friday, August 28 through Sunday, September 13. During this time, both the Call Center and the Web Form will be unavailable for submission. Program Intake will resume Monday, September 14th at 8:00 am.,” said the Connecticut Department of House and the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority:

Renters who have not yet been able to gain approval for financial assistance will have to wait until September 14.

According to the CT Mirror and the Connecticut Department of Labor, as of July, the state has only recovered 45 percent of jobs lost in March.

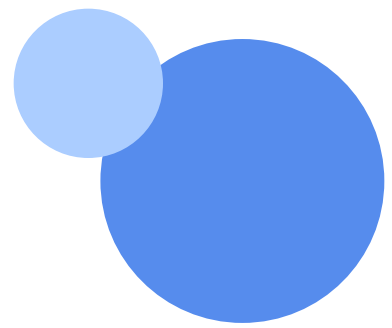
“It isn’t fun to be unemployed and be constantly questioning if you’ll be able to pay your bills or not.”

Bartosiak said.
He said that the job market is incredibly competitive right now, and it’s hard to find anything that will support living.

“Hopefully it gets better,” Bartosiak said.

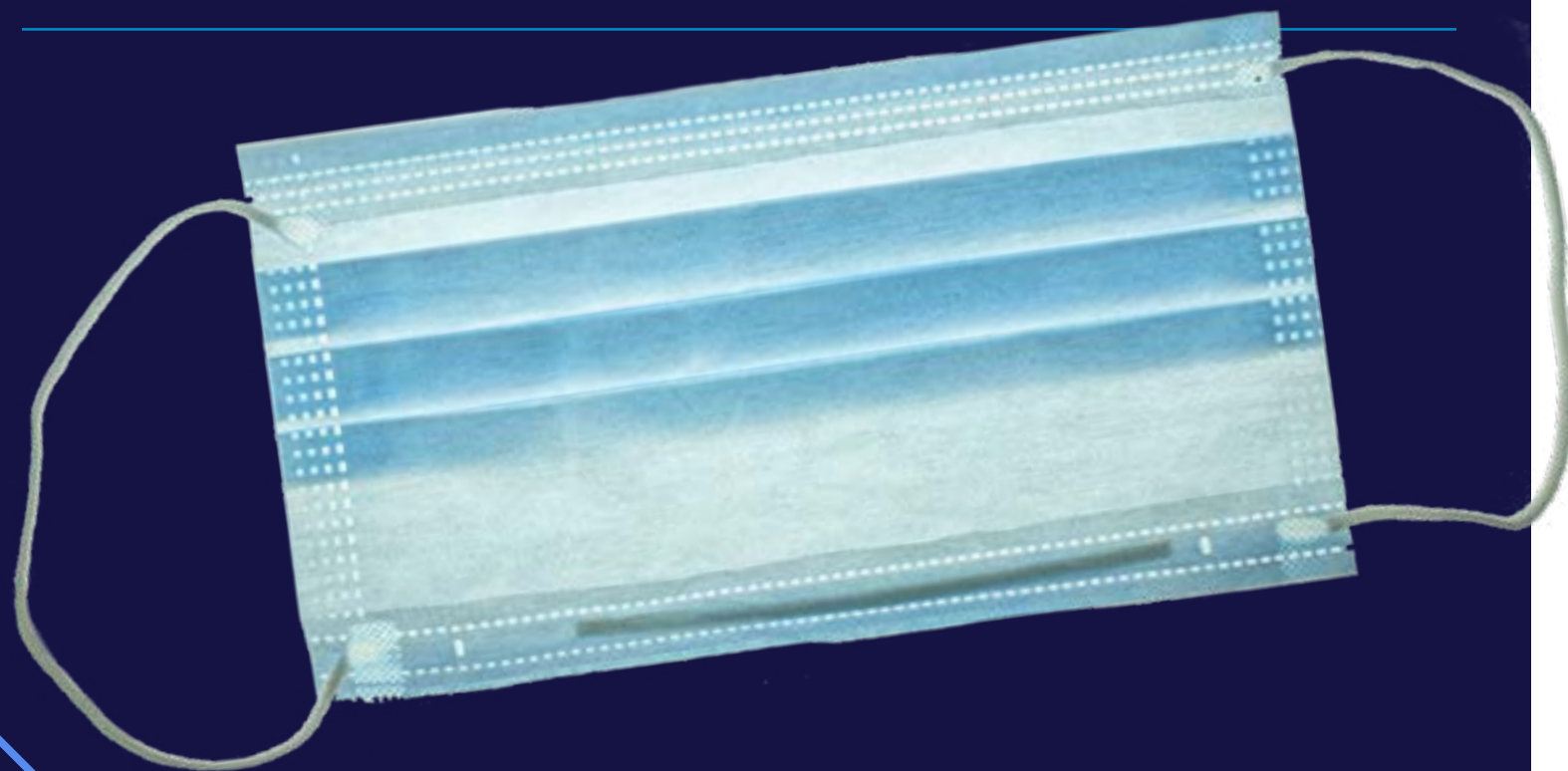


Housing Crisis Eviction Notice



ABOUT MASKS

How to Effectively Choose, Wear, and Wash a Face Mask



Story and photos by Sarah Walsh

Keys, wallet, phone, mask. There's a new item on the mental checklist for most Connecticut residents leaving the house.

Masks are now a required item in 35 U.S. states for people going out in public. Since April 20, masks have been mandatory for anyone over the

age of 2 in a public space where social distancing isn't possible in Connecticut.

Studies have shown that wearing a mask or face covering is the most effective way to prevent person-to-person spread of coronavirus. The virus spreads through respiratory droplets when a person coughs, sneezes, or raises their voice, and is most hazardous for people interacting within six feet of one another.

There are three main types of masks that are successful in preventing the spread of COVID-19: profession respirators, surgical masks, and cloth masks.



Do NOT leave nose uncovered



Do NOT wear mask under chin



DO cover nose and mouth

Profession respirators, also called N95 masks, are in short supply and should be reserved for health care workers, who have these masks tested to ensure a sealed fit. N95 masks are the most efficient for keeping out respiratory droplets in the air because the holes in the fabric are incredibly small.

Surgical, or procedural, masks are loose-fitting and fluid resistant to keep out larger respiratory droplets. These should also be saved for medical workers. They primarily prevent the wearer from spreading droplets, cannot be washed, and must be disposed of after use.

Cloth masks can be cotton or linen, store-bought or home-made. Cloth masks are recommended for use in non-patient care settings and should be washed after each use. A cloth mask should have at least two layers of fabric, and loops or ties for adjustment.

When choosing a mask, it is important to select a fabric that is not difficult to breathe through. Vinyl is a poor choice. John Hopkins Medicine recommends using dense cotton, such as quilting cotton.

Additionally, it is essential to choose a mask that does not have exhalation valves or vents, which allow virus particles to escape. For those who wear glasses, a mask with a nose wire is best to prevent fogging.

Plastic face shields and gaiters are popular alternatives to face masks, but they have not been proven to be effective, and therefore should not be a substitute.

LEFT A procedural mask

The CDC has guidelines for how to properly wear a mask.

First, the wearer must wash their hands before putting it on. Only the bands or ties should be touched when putting on or taking off the mask. It is critical that the mask covers the wearer's nose, mouth, and chin.

A mask should not be touched while it is being worn. It should not be worn under the chin or leave the nose or mouth uncovered. It is crucial that the mask is not removed around others in public. A mask should never be shared.

A cloth mask can be included with regular laundry for cleaning. The CDC advises using standard laundry detergent and the warmest water setting suited to the type of cloth the mask is made from.



Cloth masks hanging to dry

Hand washing is another option. To hand wash, the CDC suggests using bleach containing 5.25% - 8.25% sodium hypochlorite. It is vital that the bleach product is not past its expiration date. A solution can be created by mixing 1/3rd cup of bleach per gallon of room temperature water.

The mask should soak in the solution for five minutes. After the mask is removed, the solution can be disposed of in the drain, and the mask rinsed with cool or room temperature water.

To dry the mask, use the highest heat setting and leave the mask in the dryer until it dries. A mask can also be air-dried if left flat and can be left in direct sunlight for more efficient drying.





Getting an appointment online can be difficult. Places fill up quick.

RHODE ISLAND DMV EXPERIENCE

COVID-19 is Changing the Way We Used to Do Things;
The DMV is Adapting

Story and photos by Francisco Loreda

Anyone who has recently moved to a different address, town or state has had to go through the process of getting their license, plates and vehicle title updated.

Recently Jamie McCutcheon, a new resident to Westerly, Rhode Island had to go through that process.

“Going to the DMV has always been quite an ordeal. Long lines and waiting times, frustrating paperwork, and a lot of red tape through out the whole process,” McCutcheon said.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak when the DMV had to close its doors, they have had to restructure and reinvent themselves. A lot has changed for the better for applicants filing paperwork.

Anyone who wants to go to the DMV must go online and set up an appointment. The processes can be difficult and frustrating due to the overwhelming amount of people trying to get their affairs in order.

However, once an appointment is made, the rest of the process is smoother than it used to be.

It is important to check the list of all the forms and documents needed before heading to the DMV. There is a filter to go through where they make sure people have everything they might need. If they don’t have it, then they must reschedule their appointment and come back later.

The moment McCutcheon got to the DMV, she had get in line outside of the building. The personnel at the DMV then brought her and a small group of people inside, five people at a time to comply with state regulations.

Once inside, McCutcheon went through her first filter and got her documents checked.

When she passed the first filter and she went to the window, “the process was smooth. The clerk was very helpful and answered all my questions,” McCutcheon said.

McCutcheon asked a clerk if she thought it was better for them as DMV workers to have appointments and

small groups of people coming in at once.

“It’s way less stressful for them,” the clerk said.

McCutcheon asked if this whole process was here to stay, and the DMV worker said that this is the way it will be from now on. For McCutcheon, it sounded like good news.

“Going to the DMV pre-pandemic used to be a 2 or 3-hour ordeal. Long waits, crowded spaces, and lots of angry faces”, McCutcheon said.

The visit to the DMV was approximately one hour and McCutcheon said that it was one of her most pleasant experiences with the DMV so far.

Disclaimer: This article followed the process for a visit to the DMV in Rhode Island. Connecticut’s DMV might have a different process and might adopt different measures in the future.

It’s important to have all the forms and paperwork you need to avoid setbacks



FACT OR FICTION?

Three Helpful Fact Checking Sites You Should Know!

Story and image by Maiquynh Truong

In a time where disinformation can spread uncontrollably, it is imperative that we, as those who frequent the online social media environment, are aware of its existence and are actively performing research to verify that the messages we receive are true.

When we hear or see a breaking story from a news source, to confirm that their reporting is accurate, we should find more than one other news outlet that shares similar reporting.

However, the process becomes more complicated when the information we receive originates from familiar sources, such as our own family and friends, favorite influencer, or respected public figures.

In a poll conducted by statista.com, more than 55 percent of those surveyed said that they have shared falsified information. About 10 percent said that they knew the information was incorrect at the time of sharing while more than 45 percent found out about it afterward.

To make sure that we do not fall victim to the inaccuracies seen on a Facebook post, Instagram feed or Twitter update or even a direct text message that we receive on a daily or weekly basis, the practice of fact

checking is crucial.

According to a list established by America University, three reliable fact checking sites are: Factcheck.org, PolitiFact and Snopes. All are non-profit and rely on contributors for both fact checking topics and management funding.

FactCheck is perhaps the most well-known service that is currently being operated by The Annenberg Public Policy Center at University of Pennsylvania. The organization made it their mission "to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics."



On their website, under the Article tab, visitors can view analysis of recent breaking news claims about the biggest issue in America. The "SciCheck" is also an incredibly useful tool since the feature "focuses exclusively on false and misleading scientific claims that are made by partisans to influence public policy."

As its name implies, PolitiFact focuses on investigating information that originated from the political field. PolitiFact "seeks to present the true facts, unaffected by agenda or biases" where "journalists set their own opinions aside as they work to uphold principles of independence and fairness."

The site utilizes a spectrum grade tool to indicate if the

About 10 percent said that they knew the information was incorrect at the time of sharing while more than 45 percent found out about it afterward.

topic verified is considered "True" or as farfetched as liar, liar, "Pants on Fire."

According to their scorecard index, 60 percent of information shared by pedestrian bloggers is placed in the "Pants on fire" level of falsehood. This is a painful indication of how much misinformation is circulating through to the public by word of mouth.

Thus, the dark side of social connectivity on a global scale lead to the creation of Snopes. Unlike FactCheck or PolitiFact which deal heavily with the U.S. political climate, Snopes offers fact checking services for a multitude of topics that may or may not relate to politics.

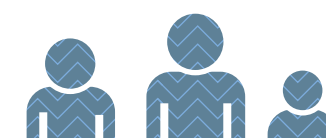
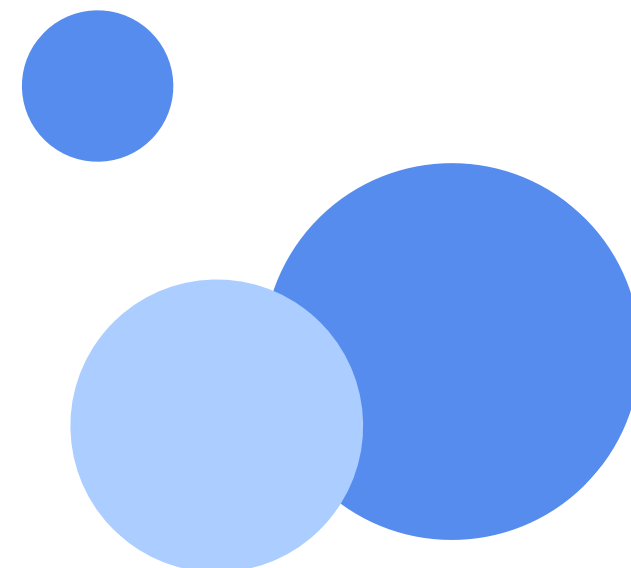
Upon receiving requests, most often for checks on various social media posts touting questionable claims,

Snopes sets out to perform a full investigation and research to validate the subject's authenticity. The site will then upload its findings and confirm if the topic in question is either true, false, miscaptioned, satire or unverifiable due to lack of available evidence.

These three websites are only a small portion of numerous reliable facts checking services available to us today free of charge.

It may be impossible to completely eradicate the cycle and the reach of disinformation in our modern world. However, there are things which we can control, such as what we see and hear and whether we believe the information we receive.

But before passing on the details to others, it is in our best interest, and our responsibility to thoroughly verify its level of accuracy and help reduce the amount of disinformation.



ONION: MIRACLE VIRUS SPONGE?

An Old Wives' Tale
Resurged During the
COVID-19 Pandemic.

**Story and photo by Maiquynh
Truong**

For centuries, onion has been a staple item in every household pantry across the world, and the subject of many wives' tales and folk remedies.

Aside from its versatility, pungent scent, distinct flavor profile and the ability to make even the toughest man or woman cry when chopped, this round shaped root has been known to naturally contain many health benefits for the human body.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes that the juice of a cut onion can pharmaceutical help curb or even kill the growth of several bacteria and microorganisms, especially those involved in causing food poisoning and even the common cold.

However, one particular "old custom" has been brought into question: the usefulness of onion in preventing respiratory infection.

According to an article published by USA Today in June 2020, with the emergence of the new coronavirus, multiple people posted claims that leaving a raw, unpeeled onion around the house will help residents prevent illness. These posts increased in circulation on Facebook and other social media platforms.

It is uncertain when the practice of leaving raw onions at room temperature indoors started, but it is often linked with the onset of contagious diseases such as influenza and was particularly popular during the Spanish flu pandemic.

People at the time believed that the onion could purify the air, cleaning out toxins and harmful invisible microbes floating around the premise by absorbing them.



But sadly, as much as we want such a miraculous and wallet friendly solution to be true, especially in a time of fear and uncertainty, as the human population faces the threat of coronavirus, it is not.

Back in 2009, during the H1N1 (Swine Flu) outbreak, fact checking website Snopes did their own investigation into this folk remedy and found it to be false and not supported by science.

Snopes stated that there is "no medical magic to placing peeled or cut onions around the home: they don't act as sponges that soak up whatever viruses or other nasty microbes are in their immediate vicinity."

And thus, the wives' tales remains as it is: a wives' tales.

By no means, however, is the act of placing onions around the house condemned, though it is unnecessary. Many cultures still believe in its benefits, and a sprouted onion can be an oddly charming little house plant.

But when it comes to preventing illnesses or treating them, seeking appropriate medical attention and scientifically proven methods is the optimal approach.

And in the time of a pandemic, it is imperative to keep a safe distance, wear a face covering when needed and continue the rigorous regimen of hand washing and sanitizing.

A sprouted onion at room temperature



WELCOME WEEK DRIVE-THRU EVENT AT TRCC

Keeping Students Connected
and Informed

Story and photos by Kim Stanford

On Tuesday, September 1, as part of Welcome Week 2020, the Student Programs Office (SPO) held the “Get the Scoop & What’s Poppin” drive-thru event.

The event was held near the clock tower entrance between the hours of 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.

During the event, the SPO crew of Alycia Ziegler (program director), Lorenzo Enderle, Raven Dillon, Kathy Doiron, Dillon Palombizio, Jordan Chenette, and Holly Herzberg handed out reusable Three River’s tote bags. The totes contained a Three Rivers Community College’s (TRCC) water bottle, sticker, and lanyard.

The totes also included important information about student study tips and important Fall 2020 dates. Additionally, there was information about student organizations at Three Rivers, student discounts, and TRCCConnect.

By the way, TRCCConnect (<https://surge.threerivers.edu>) is “where to get the inside scoop on everything TRCC!”.

People who visited the event also received a free bag of Keifer’s Kettle Corn and a choice from four fla-



Left to right: Raina Haase, Dez Rinkes, Jordan Chenette, Dillon Palombizio, Raven Dillon, Holly Herzberg, Kathy Doiron



Three Rivers tote handoff

vors of Italian ice (lemon, blueberry, cherry, or rainbow). Raina Haase and Dez Rinkes scooped the treats provided by Raina Spaziani, owner of Keifer’s Kettle Corn.

The SPO team was excited about the event.

“It feels good to have an event again,” Chenette said.

The enthusiastic crew was pleased with the turn out and are looking forward to the next event.

Ziegler said the SPO team wants “students to stay connected” and to “provide a sense of community... we care.”

The SPO’s team care and sense of community extend beyond the campus events they organize. The SPO is part of a nationwide college network through

Fresh Check Day, a Jordan Porco Foundation. The SPO and the foundation are dedicated to increase awareness of the availability to mental health resources and suicide prevention measures in place for students.

The Jordan Porco Foundation’s mission is to “prevent suicide, promote mental health, and create a message of hope for young adults”.

To learn more about the foundation, go to <https://www.rememberingjordan.org>.

For more information about Fresh Check Day, go to <https://freshcheckday.com> or contact the SPO (call 860-215-9074 or email studentprograms@threerivers.edu).

On September 23rd, the SPO will have a Fresh Check Day online from 4:00 p.m. to 7 p.m.

For more information about the event and to join the event online, visit TRCCConnect (<https://surge.threerivers.edu>).

The SPO has events weekly – check out what they have to offer. The SPO team is always looking new ideas, if you have any, contact them by calling 860-215-9074 or emailing studentprograms@threerivers.edu.

The SPO oversees a wide variety of student organizations. Contact them to find out what is offered or find out how to start a club that is not currently offered.

Follow SPO on these social media platforms:

- Facebook: TRCC Student Programs Office
- Instagram: @trccspo
- SnapChat: @threeriversspo
- TikTok: @trccstudentprograms
- Twitter: @TRCCSPO
- YouTube: TR-Student Programs.



Scooping up Italian Ice



Kettle Korn

BELOW Tote bag contents



INTO THE UNKNOWN

Over the Summer, Faculty and Staff at TRCC Learned to Work Together, Apart

By Sarah Walsh

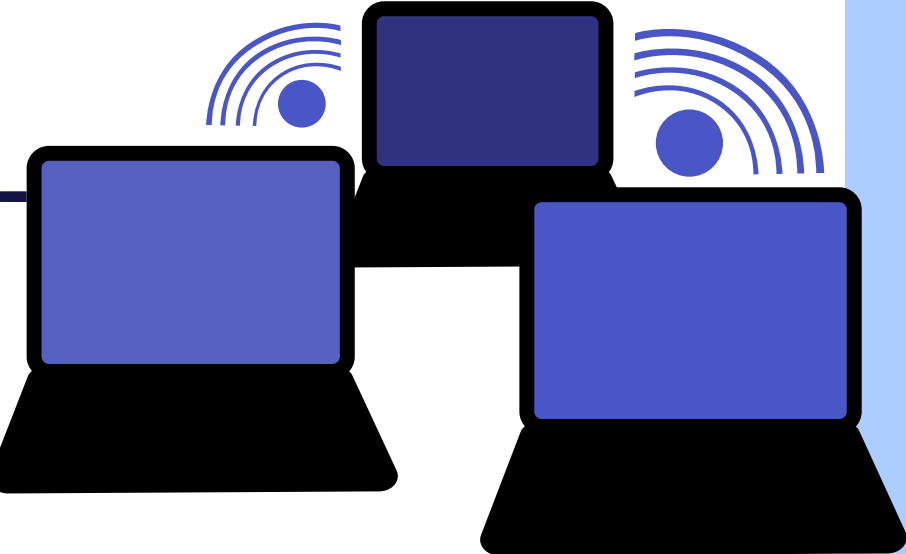
It was a summer without a break for faculty and staff at Three Rivers Community College.

When Three Rivers moved their courses online in March, discussions about the fall semester were already beginning. Faculty and staff from various departments became part of a Reopen TRCC committee, formed by Three Rivers' President Mary Ellen Jukoski.

The committee examined enrollment management, student life and support, and technical and operational changes that would need to be made to meet COVID-19 requirements.

Under state and federal regulations and recommendations from the Board of Regents (BOR) for Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CONN-S-CU), a decision was made mid-summer to shift most courses fully virtual for the fall.

"Our world turned upside down back in March," said Kacey McCarthy-Zaremba, Assistant to the Academic Dean at Three Rivers. "The transition to online was not even a transition. It hit because of necessity."



Connecting virtually, graphic by Sarah Walsh

Arnie Delarosa, Director of Facilities at Three Rivers, said when the college first moved online, the future was unclear.

**WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER.
WE CAN'T DO IT ALONE.**

"We didn't know what was coming or what was happening," Delarosa said. "It was just a major unknown."

After a reopening plan was formed, Delarosa became part of five subcommittees. He chaired two: one to assess the readiness of classrooms and one on steps to reopen non-classroom spaces.

McCarthy-Zaremba chaired a committee on academic scheduling, deciding on which courses should be provided in which formats.

Most courses at Three Rivers have become Live/Remote Online Courses (LRON), where students and

professors meet virtually on a weekly or bi-weekly basis through Microsoft Teams, Webex, or Blackboard Collaborate. Others are in an online format, where professors post all course materials to Blackboard and students complete and submit their work online without meeting virtually.

"We did so many unique things that we had never done before," McCarthy-Zaremba said.

As part of her work in academic scheduling, she worked with the academic dean, Robert Farinelli, to decide on combinations of LRON and online, online and on-ground, and LRON and on-ground course hybrids in addition to fully online or LRON courses.

Jennifer Nally, Chair of the Center for Teaching and Learning and professor of Early Childhood Development, offered training and one-on-one mentoring for students and faculty about transitioning to the virtual learning experience. In her meetings with instructors, she discussed best practices for teaching, supporting and engaging students in virtual learning, and meeting course objectives.

"The sessions have been great," Nally said. "People are taking advantage of it."

However, for many instructors, the virtual switch has been a learning curve.

"The biggest challenge we faced was that it was so quick, and



McCarthy-Zaremba discusses her role in the process of rescheduling, photo by Sarah Walsh



technology training was what was being offered," Nally said. "We were all thrown into distance learning and many of the instructors and students didn't know a lot of the technology."

During the summer, Nally took a role at the systems office to do statewide mentoring.

"It's not just a Three Rivers concern," she said. "To learn to use this (technology) effectively-that's not going to happen overnight."

Nally's sessions are ongoing. She has department meetings, committee meetings, and statewide meetings through WebEx. For Nally, there are pros and cons to virtual meetings.

"I miss seeing my colleagues," she said. "We still meet virtually, but I miss our meetings being in the same space because we would be more social...you're not sharing your space in a way."

However, she prefers virtual statewide meetings because they minimize time spent on the road.

"And now that so much of the world is using the virtual meeting technology, the systems have gotten so much better."

Three Rivers has had a new virtual option since the first week of August. Through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES), the college received funding for Blackboard Collaborate, a virtual meeting



TRCC building, photo by Kim Stanford

program available through Blackboard.

The CARES Act also provided funding to compensate faculty for preparation of master course shells in Blackboard, a process McCarthy-Zaremba helped them complete.

A master course shell was created for English 096, for example, so all faculty teaching English 096 could utilize and build from the same template.

“If every faculty member had to do that on their own, we never would have made the timeline, and we wouldn’t have secured academic integrity,” McCarthy-Zaremba said.

She said her biggest challenge was the speed with which everything had to be done.

“As fast as I would get one thing done, another thing was on the heels of it...everything was at a lightning-fast pace.”

Working remotely was also trying at first.

“We had to learn to work as a team in a remote environment,” she said, but faculty and staff have been adjusting to the changes with each other’s help. “The teamwork we have virtually now with each other, I think that’s going to stick.”

McCarthy-Zaremba sees the expansion to LRON as an opportunity.

“(It) has opened up our options and it can only help students,” she said.

Working students who weren’t confident in a strictly online format but couldn’t attend on-ground courses can now meet face-to-face with professors without having to visit the campus.

However, virtual formats aren’t without their challenges for students. Nally emphasized the importance of students being vocal when they’re struggling with technology, because professors can’t tell how they’re doing when they can’t see them on a regular basis.

“It’s more important than ever before that we take the time and touch base with each other, and do check-ins, and that students become really actively involved in their courses,” she said.

There are only 30 credits being offered on-ground. These include classes which spread across multiple

programs, like English and Math classes, as well as a small number of labs.

“We wanted to meet the needs of students where if they didn’t have a computer, for example, they could still take an English; they could still take a Math,” McCarthy-Zaremba said.

Only the building’s bigger rooms are being utilized for classes, such as C101 and the Multipurpose room to maximize enrollment. Room and course caps had to be modified, reduced by as much as 50 percent. An organic chemistry class that once allowed twelve students now caps at six.

Over the summer, Delarosa and his team worked on occupancy revisions, spacing out furniture, and rearranging seating in 35 classrooms to accommodate social distancing. In each of those classrooms, they installed a wipe dispenser.

They also installed 30 dispensers in male and female restrooms, and 28 wrist pulls allowing people to open doors with their wrists rather than their hands. 50 buckets of sanitizing wipes were supplied in high traffic sections of the building and more have been ordered. They put limited occupancy signs and signage in many places with instructions to walk on one side of a hallway and COVID-19 guideline reminders.

“A lot of work has gone into making this a safe environment for people to return,” Delarosa said.

Additionally, he and other staff from the facilities department installed plexiglass in the welcome center, library, admissions, financial aid, and student programs. A plexiglass barrier now shields the security desk and portable barriers have been provided for desks throughout the A-wing.

“As much safety precautions have been put in place, it’s only as good, and as safe, as the employees make it here,” Delarosa said. “If we’re all careful and conscious, and everybody does the right thing, then we’re going to be okay here.”

Nally has only been on campus once since the spring semester, to get materials.

IT’S IMPORTANT THAN EVER BEFORE THAT WE TAKE THE TIME AND TOUCH BASE WITH EACH OTHER AND DO CHECK-INS, AND THAT STUDENTS BECOME REALLY ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THEIR COURSES.

“It’s very different,” she said. “They have areas closed off. I had to get to my classroom, so I ended up going underneath the caution tape to get there.”

“But our world is different,” she added. “Everything is different.”

“Empty,” was Delarosa’s one word to describe the campus now. “It’s very empty. Compared to more than 4000 students and building users, we’re down to a small handful.”

Now, Delarosa and his team spend their shifts disinfecting the school. They wipe down high-touch surfaces, door handles, handrails, elevator buttons, light switches, etc. three times a day, 10:30-11:00 a.m., 4 p.m., and at the end of the night.

“The Board of Regents recommended we do it once a day at the end of the day, but we’re going above and beyond doing it three times a day,” Delarosa said. “Everybody has to do their part. We’re in this together. We can’t do it alone.”

DON'T SELL YOURSELF SHORT

A Course Review of Principles of Selling

By Danielle Branch

Not a marketing major? That's ok! In some way, shape, or form, we will all likely be in a position where we need to market ourselves.

Whether you're marketing yourself for a potential employer, clients, or coworkers, the core concepts taught throughout Principles of Selling will likely prove beneficial.

Principles of Selling is designed to target professional selling. Maybe you want to own your business? Or offer a service to a targeted demographic? Maybe you just need to successfully pitch an idea to your peers or colleagues to gain recognition?

The course will introduce you to the seven steps in the sales process: prospecting, approaching, presentation, demonstration, handling objections, closing, and following up with potential clients. Learning how to prioritize the consumers wants and needs while highlighting what you bring to the table will be crucial to your success.

So, what's the big deal?

Did you know that communication is dependent mostly on nonverbal tendencies? Only about 7% of communication is verbal, 38% is tone of voice and about 55% is body language. Basically, even if you know your material front to back, people may still gravitate to the person with whom they feel they can communicate with most effectively.

In Principles of Selling, Professor Irene Clampet will



Professor Irene Clampet, *The Current* stock photo

teach you how to read others' body language and take their cues, so that you can respond to them in a way that they will be more receptive to. These skills can help you through job interviews, or even strengthen preexisting relationships and friendships.

Principles of Selling keeps students engaged through various classroom activities, role play and active discussion. Students will also learn how to gracefully handle and respond to objections while maintaining a focused and positive argument, which, let's face it, will always come in handy.

It's believed that in the first seven seconds of meeting someone, they will form a solid impression of who you are. Don't sell yourself short. Let Principles of Selling help you make that first impression a great one!

YOUTUBE: BLUE LIGHTNING TV

Marty from Blue Lightning TV will Help You Improve Your Photoshop Skills for Free!



Blue Lightning TV's channel has almost 900,000 subscribers

Story and photo by Francisco Loreda

Anytime I was struggling with an assignment related to Graphic Design, Marty from Blue Lightning TV was my go-to guy.

Marty Geller, the face behind Blue Lightning TV, has had a long career as a graphic designer. His website, www.bluelightingtv.com, lists that he has worked with the NBA, ABC, CBS, VH-1 and agencies and magazines.

With almost 900,000 subscribers and more than 700 videos, Blue Lightning TV has proven to be a successful YouTube channel and website. His channel focuses on Photoshop tutorials and his videos have almost 90 million views combined.

Whether you're a beginner or a more advanced Photoshop user, you will find that Marty's style for teaching is excellent for you since he explains what every tool he uses is for. This is incredibly useful for people with

not much experience with Photoshop, or people who are rusty or simply not used to newer versions.

His voice volume range and the pace he follows throughout the videos make it easy to follow the steps while practicing along with him. He uses simpler words and doesn't overcomplicate things.

Marty does not settle with one style or type for his tutorials. They range from photo manipulation to graphics and typography creation. This variety of styles and techniques make him a versatile designer to follow.

Blue Lightning TV uploads videos once a week and all their tutorials are free. Any time you are struggling with an assignment or if you simply want to learn a bit more about Photoshop, make sure to check out his channel and the variety of tutorials in it.



PUBLIC SCHOOLS REOPENING RAISE CONCERNS

Skeptical Mothers Know Best

Story and photo by Joseph Victorino

Schools across the nation are opening their doors this school year. Most are giving parents the option to skew away from distanced learning in favor of hybrid learning, in hopes of returning their child to some semblance of normalcy. Though hybrid learning may be a popular decision at the moment, much of how it will play out in the near future is still uncertain.

Rather than approaching a more traditional school setting with hybrid learning, schools should instead play it safe and remain with distanced learning for the time being.

The Center of Disease Control (CDC) encourages the reopening of schools. The CDC states that, "The best available evidence from countries that have opened schools indicates that COVID-19 poses low risks to school-aged children, at least in areas with low community transmission, and suggests that children are unlikely to be major drivers of the spread of the virus."

Freda Elon, 40, says she thinks otherwise. Her daughter, Jada, 15, will be attending full distance learning until October. Jada is in Grade 10 and is attending the Science and Technology Magnet School of Southeastern Connecticut.

"I decided to have her attend full-time distance learning for the time being due to what I've heard and watched on the news. Almost every school that has opened recently had a high outcome of kids being infected with COVID," Elon said.

She said she does not agree with the schools approaching a more traditional in-person format. She thinks schools are rushing to meeting a quota and not really thinking about the safety of employees and students.

Sarah Braga, 37, is wary for her kids as well. Braga has three children. Her eldest daughter, Adrianna, is in Grade 8. Her middle child, Mariah, is in Grade 3. Her youngest, Kaia, is in Grade 1.

Like Jada, the three are all aimed for distanced learning this school year. Braga said that this is because of their health problems.

She is concerned with how her children would keep their masks on all day. She is also uncertain about the quality of airflow throughout the classroom, and she is curious on how schools will be able to accomplish keeping a six-foot distance between little kids.

The CDC acknowledges the risks involved with allowing the students back into schools.

According to the CDC, "The best available evidence indicates that COVID-19 poses relatively low risks to school-aged children. Children appear to be at lower risk for contracting COVID-19 compared to adults."

The CDC stated, "as of July 17, 2020, the United States reported that children and adolescents under 18 years old account for under 7 percent of COVID-19 cases and less than 0.1 percent of COVID-19-related deaths.

Despite children and those under 18 having lower risks of contracting COVID-19, this does not mean that it is impossible for them to develop symptoms. Lower risks do not ensure the complete safety of students and faculty.

In fact, the CDC acknowledges this as well, "The best available evidence indicates if children become infected, they are far less likely to suffer severe symptoms. Death rates among school-aged children are much lower than among adults."

Even if they are less affected, children should not have to run any risk of being exposed to a virus that has



Fitch High School

already claimed the lives of 189,000 people in the U.S. alone.

Marisa, a Junior from Fitch High School, said that she will be doing hybrid learning because she struggles to learn online. She said it is more beneficial for her to learn with a teacher in front of her.

Marisa thinks it is a good idea to safely bring back some signs of normalcy during this time through hybrid learning. Though, she also says she feels that the situation will bring her academic performance down because transitioning from online to in-school learning might be a challenge.

"I am mainly concerned about whether there will be any new COVID cases and what will happen if there are," Marisa said.

Mary Rose, a Senior also from Fitch Highschool said that she is only taking hybrid learning because one of her classes requires in-person lessons.

"I'm concerned with my safety of being COVID free

when I go to school for two days and I'm concerned with how I'm going to do through online classes," Mary Rose said.

Mary Rose said that ideally, she would prefer for the school to not have opened yet.

The Center for Disease Control points to many issues with schools remaining closed for prolonged periods of time. The CDC says that in person schooling is integral to the proper growth and livelihood of children.

Still, is it worth potentially putting the lives of children in danger? Regardless of how small or minute the risks or symptoms, they are still present and plausible.

All in all, with the school year just starting in Connecticut, we can do nothing but wait, and hope that all stays well during the influx of hybrid learning.

SHOULD WE STAY OR SHOULD WE GO?

The Choice is Ours, or is It?

Story and photos by Danielle Branch

Back to school doesn't look the way many people expected it to. Then again, not much has looked the way we would have expected over the last several months.

What started as a two week break to flatten the curve in March, has morphed into an expansive national shutdown and journey to find a vaccine. But at what point is enough enough?

The COVID-19 pandemic has kept everyone on their toes with its ever-changing statistics. There is no doubt that this virus is very real and that it is affecting people worldwide. But should our economy, education, and livelihood be held hostage until officials deem it safe?



Backpack and mask

With retail stores, gyms, and restaurants reopened and operating with safety precautions in place, why, when it comes to schools, is it different?

Many are scrambling to figure out why keeping schools closed is necessary, especially if masks and social distancing guidelines are truly helping mitigate the transmission of COVID-19.

The pros to in-person instruction go much deeper than just the educational value.

Students in school are provided a safe learning environment where their social and emotional skills are supported, and they are able to connect with peers. Schools are a vital aspect of our infrastructure and many people are being stripped of the choice to pursue a quality education.

According to the CDC, "Reopening schools creates opportunity to invest in the education, well-being, and future of one of America's greatest assets—our children".

Researchers at Brown and Harvard Universities did an evaluation of 800,000 students who used Zearn, an online math program, both before and after schools



closed in March 2020.

The results showed that through the end of April, student progress in math decreased by nearly half, with the negative impact more evident in low-income zip codes.

Achievement gaps that already existed before COVID-19, such as gaps across income levels and races, can worsen and cause serious, irreparable damage to student's educational outcomes.

Several districts have chosen to reopen schools, some without restriction. Others are operating on a hybrid plan, while others remain 100 percent virtual.

The CDC suggests reopening schools is the right choice, while some families are transitioning to home-school programs and continuing to quarantine. While there is no evident "right" path to take, we, in the very least, deserve to have the choice.



Heading to school

KIM LOVES KAYAKING

A Great Way to Relax and Unwind



Story and photos by Kim Stanford

Kayaking is great activity for body and mind. Paddling can be great for the upper body and core and taking in the beautiful scenery and observing nature can reduce stress. Connecticut offers several spots for kayaking. Here are a few to consider or revisit.

ASPINOOK POND/QUINEBAUG RIVER

Boat launch location: 67 Butts Bridge Road, Canterbury, CT.

This a popular destination for fishing, kayaking, and canoeing, The Quinebaug River has several launches. A popular boat launch for this site is Butts Bridge State Boat Launch. There is ample parking, but the launch can only accommodate one fishing vessel at a time.

To travel downstream, from the launch turn left. This empties into the Aspinook Pond which covers 301 acres. Aspinook Pond provides water goes deeper and more open waters. Traveling up stream, there is Quinebaug River which is approximately 69 miles long with several dams on the way.

The Quinebaug River route can be a relaxing experience with its winding route. Since many of the larger craft tend to head towards Aspinook Pond, a kayaker a can travel a great distance enjoying the beautiful scenery while being entranced by the sounds of wildlife without seeing another soul.

Kayaking Quinebaug River





Waterlily

LONG POND

Boat launch location: 690 Lantern Hill Road, North Stonington.

There is ample gravel-surfaced parking with the concrete plank launch area. This site also provides a seasonal chemical toilet.

Long Pond is a popular destination for fishing, canoeing, and kayaking which covers approximately 109 acres. This excursion is an easy paddle, where tranquil scenes of water lilies blooming and swans bathing along the shore can bring peace of mind.

MANSFIELD HOLLOW LAKE

Boat launch location: 84 Warrenville Rd, Mansfield Center.

There is abundant parking and a seasonal chemical toilet. The lake covers 460 acres and is a popular spot for kayaking with an easy access launch area. Kayak rentals are available at this location. This is popular spot for paddling which is easy and enjoyable.

MOODUS RESERVOIR

Boat launch location: 18 Shore Road, East Haddam.

Vessels can be dropped off at the boat launch, but parking is across the street in a gravel lot which has a seasonal chemical toilet. Kayaks can be launched on either side of the dock on concrete planks.

Moodus Reservoir covers 486 acres. Hours can be spent paddling the perimeter and checking out impressive houses that dot the landscape. A variety of wildlife (turtles, cormorants, herons, and ducks) can be spotted. There are also a few inlets for exploring.

After a leisurely paddle, check out Berryhill Farm Stand located on the main road (300 E. Haddam Colchester Turnpike). Ask about duck eggs. They are surprisingly like chicken eggs.

QUIMBAUG COVE

Boat launch location: across the street from the Quimbaug Cove Professional Center (107 Wilcox Road, Stonington, CT).

The launch is hard to spot and there is very little street parking. Be ready to carry your kayak across the street and down a small, slight rocky incline which leads to a very small launch area.

Although parking and launching are not ideal, Quimbaug Cove can offer a few different experiences. The cove itself is not that large but is located near the Knox Preserve/Avalonia Land Conservancy. While paddling in the cove, you may catch sight of a jellyfish swimming near the surface of the water.

A more adventurous experience can be found by



Eagle spotted on Salmon River

heading to the right and paddling under the train bridge into the Long Island Sound. It can be tough entering the sound if there is a strong current coming in. In the sound, take in the sights of the beach fronts, rocky shores, fish jumping out of the water, and birds perched on rock formations. It is advisable that beginners do not enter the sound. There is no shelter from winds which can produce large waves.

SALMON RIVER

Boat launch location: 117E Haddam Moodus Road in East Haddam on the Connecticut River.

This is very popular spot that feeds off the Connecticut River. The boat launch area has ample parking and a large boat launch that can accommodate small craft like kayaking and larger craft like party boats.

To reach the Salmon river, bear right- this area is shallower, so small craft travel this way. The day can be spent exploring since the Salmon River covers approximately 496 acres and is 10.8 miles long.

The Salmon River boasts beautiful scenery and an array of wildlife. Bass feeding on minnows, mallard ducks frolicking with their ducklings on the river's edge, cormorants showing off their fishing skills, ospreys perched in their nests, white egrets standing in shallow water can all be seen. If lady luck is present, catch sight of a mighty eagle soaring above.

Before venturing out onto the water, be safe and to bring safety equipment (for example, a life vest and whistle). Also, check tides before leaving since some areas are shallow.

Being an early riser has its benefits. Amazing sunsets can be seen and there are less people out (if any at all). With the start of fall around the corner (weather and water temperatures permitting) take in a different vantage point of the fall foliage to enjoy and unwind.

Visit [abovehouse.com \(https://abovehouse.com/benefits-of-kayaking/\)](https://abovehouse.com/benefits-of-kayaking/) for more information on the kayaking and its benefits.



N64 COLLECTOR'S TIPS: DON'T GET SCAMMED!

**Tips for Those Interested
in Collecting Retro
Videogames**

*Story and photos by
Francisco Loreda*

Video games have been popular since the 80's. Our generation has grown around videogames and my generation has been molded by consoles like the PlayStation, NES, SNES and N64, this last one being my preference.

A feeling of nostalgia, reminiscence about simpler days, and the fun that I had playing for hours as a kid are the factors that led me to wipe the dust off of my old N64 and start trying to collect cartridges from the games I loved back then, and even some that I might have never played.

It is important to know a couple of things, so you do not end up being ripped off when trying to buy N64 or other older Nintendo cartridges online. Here are some tips.

SET UP A BUDGET

Lately, the popularity for these games has grown and so have the price tags. It is important to know how much money you can afford to spend and trying to stick to that number is important. Websites like www.pricecharting.com are a good way to get a better idea of how much to pay for a game.

LOOK FOR SIGNS OF AUTHENTICITY

Check feedback on the seller's website if you are buying online. It might seem like an obvious tip, but some sellers even admit selling copies on the fine print. Pay attention to the labels. As we know these games are old, labels should have some wear and tear if the game is in used condition, labels that look to new should require some further examination.

Pay attention to the Nintendo logo engraved on the back of the cartridge. The dot on "I" for Nintendo should be a square, not a circle. This is something I recently learned, and a quick Google search helped me realized it was true.

Some of the most popular, and therefore most expensive games are: The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time and Majora's Mask, Super Mario 64, Mario Kart 64, Golden Eye 007, Donkey Kong 64, Conker's Bad Fur Day, among many others.

Whether it's just nostalgia, a trend, or you're simply an avid game collector, the most important things to remember are to be careful of people trying to scam you out there, and have fun!



Notice the dot in the "I" is square; most fake companies have a round dot

THE SHOW TO SHARE WITH YOUR FRIENDS

A Review of "New Girl"

By Elizabeth Exley

What's a better way to bring your friends closer together than to watch a funny and heartwarming show?

A couple of years ago my best friend had me watch her favorite show called "New Girl" about a woman named Jessica Day who moves into a loft with 3 men. I ended up falling in love and recently went to re-watch it in my new house of roommates.

Little did I realize that the 3 boys I now live with would fall in love with the show too and make it a point to all watch it together every night. The more we watched, the more we all realized how accurate the show was to our own living situation.

Jessica Day is a colorful and witty schoolteacher who puts her pieces back together with her new dysfunctional family, Nick, Schmidt, Winston, and her best friend Cece.

It starts you off with a bang when you learn the reason Jess had to move into this loft was because her boyfriend cheated on her while she was away.

She quickly moved out of her boyfriend's house and stumbled upon a loft in LA where she would form an unlikely bond with the three men that live there. We quickly learn what role each person will play in Jess's new life.

Winston is an ex pro basketball player who is full of pranks and is not afraid to show his soft side. Schmidt seems to be the player of the house with just a touch of OCD that can create some head bumping between him and Jess. He is well known for needing to put money in their version of a swear jar whenever Schmidt says something inappropriate. Nick is the lazy one who has some growing up to do, but will surprise you in the end. Each character brings in new experiences to the loft and will surely make you laugh as you watch them all grow into their own.

As my roommates and I continue to watch this show, we keep getting sucked into the romantic tension and fantastic humor it brings. If you have ever seen and enjoyed the show "Friends", you will get a very similar feeling about "New Girl". They both have very unique and relatable characters and you will want to know where they end up. "New Girl" feels like the present day or modern version of the same kind of humor that "Friends" had in its time.

Although the show is no longer airing new episodes, they were able to come back for a final season and closed it off where the fans are left satisfied. Even after watching it through a second time, the jokes still made me laugh and some of my favorite scenes made me tear up.

I couldn't recommend watching this show more, so if you are looking for something to sink into, "New Girl" is a fantastic choice.

Image from Shutterstock



ALTERNATIVE TV VIEWING OPTIONS

Less Expensive Ways to Watch Your Favorites

Story and photo by Kim Stanford

Is viewing cable or satellite TV stressing your budget? A little hesitant about dropping these subscriptions in case it means missing out on your favorite shows? Not too worry. Currently there are a variety of options that are budget friendly.

Here is an overview of some of the options:

AMAZON PRIME VIDEO

Gives free access to Amazon original series and large selection of popular TV shows and movies with a Prime membership (membership fee is \$119.00 per year). No Prime membership - no worries, a Prime Video membership is \$8.99 per month.

Amazon Prime Video as has options for add-ons for a fee. Additionally, if the service does not include a show, there are buying options available.

Amazon Prime offer a student discount deal. Get the first six months free, then it is \$6.49 per month until graduation.

APPLETV+

Offers original programming and a small library of licensed shows. Amazingly, the monthly fee is only \$4.99 a month. With a purchase of an Apple device, viewing AppleTV+ is free for a year.

DISNEY+

They own just about own everything, so it is a logical step. This streaming service offers Pixar, Marvel, Star Wars, and National Geographic programming. Fees are \$6.99 per month or \$69.99 per year. A Disney+, Hulu and ESPN+ package is available for \$12.99 per month.

FUBOTV

Stream live TV and sports from 100+ channels. For \$59.99 a month, Fubo standard provides 109 channels, 30 hours of DVR-cloud storage, and viewing two screens simultaneously. Fubo Family costs \$64.99 per month for 109 channels, 500 hours of DVR-cloud storage and three screens at once. Fubo Ultra offers 179 channels, 500 hours of DVR-cloud storage, and three screens at once for \$84.99 per month.

FuboTV offers Latino Quarterly that includes 33 channels of Fubo Latino. Also included with this package is 30 hours of cloud DVR and three screens at once for a \$19.99 per month. FuboTV also offers a variety of add-ons for a fee.

HDTV ANTENNA

These are not the rabbit ears you may remember (if you are old enough, of course) – TV antennas have vastly improved. Miss watching the local news on the big screen? Consider this option for free viewing or a streaming service does not offer local channels. Prices vary but there are articles, reviews, and rankings on the internet.

HULU

View shows right after they broadcast or watch Hulu original programming. Stream Hulu for \$5.99 per month (30-day free trial), \$11.99 per month with no ads 30-day free trial), or \$54.99 per month for Hulu + Live TV (7-day free trial). Currently, Hulu is offering a package that includes HBO Max (Hulu for \$5.99/month plus HBO MAX for \$11.99/month) for 12 months.

Hulu offers a student special pricing package – Spotify Premium + Hulu for \$5.99 per month.

LIBRARY

This maybe a bit old school but check out your local library (if it is open). Norwich's Otis Library is open by appointment. Libraries offer a wide variety of free loans for up to two weeks (check with your local library for their terms). Also, check to see if your local library offers online digital rentals.

PEACOCK

Free current-season NBCUniversal and Telemundo programming including live news from NBC News Now. Signing up for Peacock Premium unlocks premium perks



Remote

including access to Peacock Originals, more TV series, and kid shows. To unlock more programming, it will cost \$4.99 a month with ads and \$9.99 a month without ads.

PHILO

Offers 61 channels of conventional cable channels for \$20.00 dollars a month. With Philo, TV shows can be recorded and saved for up 30 days. Stream up to 3 devices at one time. Philo offers Epix and STARZ add-ons.

PLUTOTV

Ok, get this – hundreds of free TV channels with thousands of movies and TV shows for FREE!! Available on all your favorite devices. PlutoTV provides older programs with ad breaks like ones viewed on commercial TV.

NETFLIX

Binge to your heart's content! Enjoy a great mix of movies, commercial-free original programming and after-season shows. The basic package is \$8.99 per month (1 device); the standard package is \$12.99 per month (2 devices with HD viewing); and the premium package is \$15.99 (4-devices with HD viewing).

Netflix also offers Netflix Party, a way to watch remotely with friends.

SLING TV

View live TV with no waiting until the program has

aired. Sling offers 50+ channels. Sling Blue offers streaming 3 devices simultaneously and free 10-hour DVR. Sling Blue which is good for news and entertainment shows has a base price of \$30.00 per month.

Sling Orange offers streaming over 1 device and free 10-hour DVR. Sling Orange which good for sports and family shows has a base price of \$30.00 monthly.

Sling also offers add-on packages or combine Blue and Orange packages for \$45.00 per month.

YOUTUBE

Last but not least. Watch an instructional video on just about anything, see the best cat videos ever, view videos you wish you never seen, and catch some classic shows and movies for free.

To add to your viewing pleasure, for \$64.99, YouTubeTV allows streaming of more than eighty-five channels. To sweeten the deal, it includes 6 accounts and unlimited storage for recordings.

Also worthy of mention is premium channels like HBO and STARZ monthly streaming standalone services which can be viewed on several types of devices. Also, some major networks may offer their current programs on their websites for a limited time free.

Be aware that offerings and pricing may have changed.





Sadler's pan seared scallop and asparagus Risoto

MORE THAN JUST ORDINARY!

A Review of Sadler's Restaurant & Bakery

Story and photos by Maiquynh Truong

Situated in the humble town of Marlborough, Connecticut, Sadler's Ordinary, a family owned restaurant, has been serving local and adventurous patrons for more than 40 years.

Why use the term Ordinary instead of Restaurant?

As it turns out, the restaurant is built at a location where, centuries ago, a man named John Sadler kept a place in which travelers commuting between Hartford and New London could rest their weary feet and enjoy a hearty meal. And such an establishment is often referred to as an "Ordinary."

Sadler's hospitalities continued when owner, Kevin Haggerty, took on the mantle of serving timeless recipes and creative cuisine to local patrons and passer-by alike.

It is no surprise that a new standard for great restaurants in this peculiar time is how strictly they follow the state-issued guidelines, and Sadler's took great care and promptly adhered to Connecticut's COVID-19 virus safety and prevention.

From the kitchen staff to waiters and waitresses, every personnel's temperature is taken at the start of the shift



Sadler's sampler menu

and their health conditions are monitored throughout the day. At almost every visible counter, large bottles of hand sanitizer are available for guests to use.

Staff members are not only welcoming but are also very diligent in covering their face and wearing gloves when interacting with the customers.

Upon arrival, visitors are asked to wear a mask until they are seated and are then free to enjoy the dining experience. Other than the interior area, the restaurant also offers a moderately spacious outdoor patio, which has become even more popular as of late.

While guests take their time to peruse the restaurant's daily sampler menu, they are served with a generous portion of complimentary fresh bake bread slices and butter, as a soothing playlist of classic blue tunes strum on in the background.

Despite the humble name of an 'Ordinary,' Sadler's menu is pleasantly and surprisingly diverse. For those who prefer a more casual meal: sandwiches, tasty arrays of soup & salad and even a delicious homemade chicken pot pie are sure to satisfy those hunger pangs.

On the other hand, anyone who is looking for a more sophisticated feast can choose from their selection of freshly caught seafood to high-quality steaks, ribs, and poultry. Their pan seared scallops with asparagus Risoto is not to be missed.

If you fancy a glass of wine or a cocktail, Sadler's will certainly not disappoint since they offer a great arrays

of mixed drinks and refreshments.

After a scrumptious meal, guests can enjoy some incredible in-house desserts including the blueberry peach cobbler and Linda's Famous Tiramisu.

Want some delectable snacks to munch on while on the way home? Why not venture inside and check out Sadler's modest bakery?

Upon entering, you will be immediately greeted by a glass display of mouth-watering sweets. From cookies to strudels to brownies, all are baked right there at the restaurant.

At Sadler's Ordinary, you are guaranteed to leave with a satisfied belly and a charming dining experience.

Bring a small group of friends or your family. This lovely restaurant situated just off the CT-2 East will certainly not disappoint.

And as an added bonus, venture a bit down

the road from the restaurant and you'll stumble upon the fantastic view of Lake Terramuggus, a perfect place to sit down and enjoy the natural sight as you bite into the delightful pastries from Sadler's bakery.



A cool drink with fruit



SPOILER FILLED MOVIE REVIEW: THE NEW MUTANTS

Fresh Heroes, Rotten Execution

By Joseph Victorino

PLOT [SCORE: 2/5]

Following the story of Cheyenne Native American Danielle Moonstar, viewers are taken through her journey of becoming a mutant. She wakes up from a nightmare only to be swept out of her house by her father, as their reservation is being swept by some sort of storm. Next thing she knows, Dani wakes up in a rehabilitation facility. There she meets Dr. Reyes, who has the ability to create impenetrable forcefields, a giant one of which keeps everyone trapped there. Dr. Reyes tells Dani that she is the sole survivor of the catastrophe, and that she's been admitted here to learn what her power is.

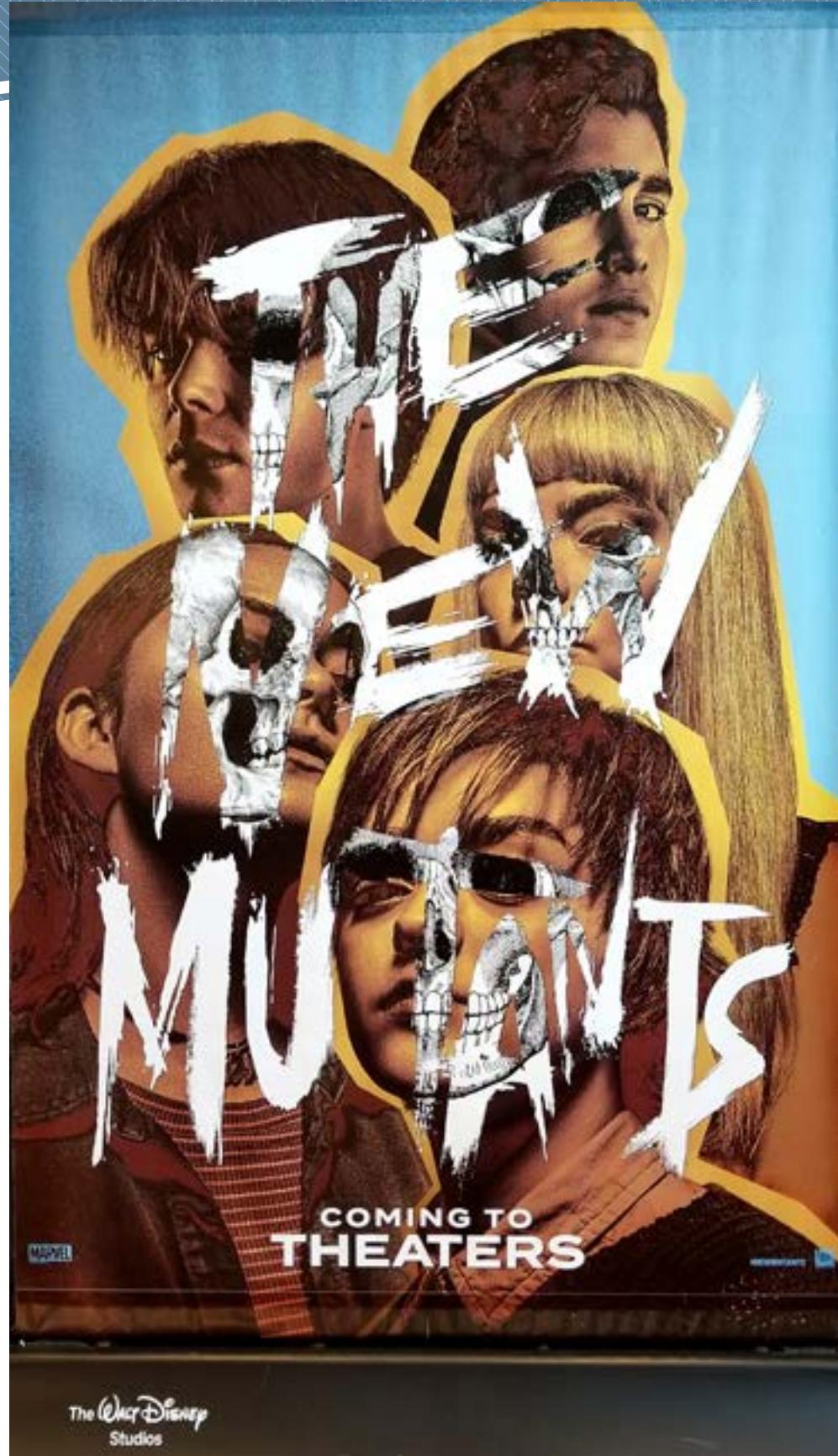
Following this, she meets the rest of the gang. First, we have the Scot: Rahne Sinclair. She was demonized and branded as a witch due to her ability to possess the attributes of, and turn into, a wolf. Next, we have Roberto de Costa, who has the power self-immolate. Following is Sam Guthrie, who can propel himself at max speeds. Lastly, there's the most interesting of the bunch: Illyana Rasputin, who has the ability to conjure both armor and a blue flame sword, and travel to Hell, granting her the ability to teleport. Additionally, she has a pet dragon.

Throughout the movie, each character mysteriously relives their most traumatic experience which lead to their admission into the facility. It is revealed that Rahne is there because she mutilated the pastor after he branded her. As for Roberto, he was sent there by his parents after accidentally burning his girlfriend to death. Sam's there in hiding after having a claustrophobia-induced panic attack during which he killed his father and most of his crew in a mining incident.

As for Illyana, she's there because she killed a bunch of guys in cold blood.

Dr. Reyes says that they are there because they can't control their powers. She tells them that once they prove their control, they can move up to her superiors, whom she claims are Professor X and his X-men. It is later revealed that Dani's power is bringing to life people's worst fears, thus explaining the trauma everyone had to relive. It is also revealed that Dr. Reyes has been lying the whole time, and that the facility is meant to groom young mutants for an irrelevant evil organization known as the Essex Corporation.

In the climax, Dr. Reyes attempts to kill Dani for being "too powerful". She is then saved by the other 4, but Dr. Reyes traps everyone in their own respective forcefield and begins to crush them all. Why didn't Illyana just warp out? I have no idea. Anyways, Dani's worst fear in the form of a giant winter toting bear breaks in and eats Dr. Reyes. This bear is then revealed as the destroyer of Dani's reservation. The final battle ensues and before



The New Mutants poster, photo by Joseph Victorino

the team is defeated, Dani learns to tame the beast. With Dr. Reyes gone, the team is now able to be free.

This movie tried so hard to set up questions and an open ending in hopes of a sequel. I doubt that will happen.

GENRE / TONE [SCORE: 1/5]

This movie felt tonally insecure. It really didn't know what it was trying to be, and therefore tried to be too many things. A coming of age story? Thriller? Horror? Mystery? Superhero action flick? This movie tried to be all of them, and frankly, not very well.

Ultimately this resulted in a jumbled mess that was embarrassingly put on the big screen. This wasn't helped by the trailers either. I recall seeing these ads everywhere prior to my viewing. Each of them all

had this similar horror

movie vibe. Yes, there was quite a bit of horror in the movie, but these trailers really oversold that aspect, leading for many to feel pretty duped.

ROMANCE [SCORE: 1/5]

Another issue I'd like to touch upon was the chemistry between the main protagonist, Dani, and other "new mutant" Rahne. Don't get me wrong, I love seeing a lesbian couple on the big screen, let alone a PG-13 flick. The more LGBTQ+ representation, the merrier. But come on! This was by far the most forced and uncomfortable romance I have ever experienced. Yes, there was a significant amount of build up to their first kiss, but I just was not convinced.

I place the blame on two factors, the tone-deaf writing and Blu Hunt's (Dani's) performance. First and foremost, most of the time, the flirting felt off and inorganic. Secondly, Dani's actress, not just in these scenes, but throughout the film, felt boring and lifeless. In sum, the screen writing and script to this for not only this portion, but the majority of the movie very much felt like the Wattpad fanfic of what The New Mutants film could have been.

MAIN CHARACTER [SCORE: 1/5]

Speaking of Blu Hunt's dull and limp performance, way to go on making your main character the most boring of the bunch. It felt really off that throughout the movie that we as an audience are forced to root for Danielle Moonstar when we have four characters with far more interesting backstories and personality traits. Of the other four, I would actually want to see more from Illyana. Anya Taylor-Joy really carried the rest of the cast on her back. Her performance was incredible. She was the most intriguing of the five. Being able to magically conjure mystical armor and a flaming sword? Plus using her own portal to Hell to essentially teleport anywhere? Having a purple plush dragon puppet that becomes an actual dragon? She completely outclasses all of the other mutants both in character and power.

MORAL [SCORE: 3/5]

The movie for the most part discussed the duality of



man. At the beginning and end of the movie Dani narrates a story her father used to tell her about a bear. She says that each person has a bear inside of them; a bear that seeks to destroy. At the end of the film she shares the rest of the story, in which she says that the bear only has power if you choose to feed it. This ties into the rest of the movie quite well. Despite each of the five having been admitted to the rehabilitation facility due to being a danger, they ultimately have the choice on whether to let it define them, or overcome it. The takeaway is that everyone has a good and evil side to themselves, but we have the choice on which we choose to feed. It's not a bad moral, especially for a movie aimed towards early to late teenagers.

THE SPECIAL EFFECTS [SCORE: 5/5]

On the bright side, the special effects were definitely the strongest attribute of the film. Throughout this mismanaged collection of scenes are brief periods of pure bliss in the form of action sequences. During these moments, we are spoiled by various superbly detailed computer-generated images glittering in neon effervescence and lighting up the big screen. It was a blessing any time we got to escape the subpar Disney-channel-teenage-drama-prime-time-movie level performances.

These moments are best seen during Iliana's sequence in which she showcases her mutant powers. The camera pans down her arm as she dons her hellfire-blackened armor, each plate magically cascading distally from her shoulder to her hand. We then witness her generate a hilt which then erects a daunting blade which immediately ignites in blue flames. Moments like these were what nudged the film closer to potentially being a bearable viewing experience. Was it enough to forgive the movie for the grueling and awkward interactions and dialog? No. Though it did help. Honestly, I have no gripes whatsoever with the visual effect of the film. In fact, the practical effects featured in this film were quite impressive as well. From blood, to cuts, to bruises, to scars; this film had pretty believable effects.

THE CINEMATOGRAPHY [2/5]

The cinematography was okay, nothing to write home about. The setting was your run of the mill mental hospital. Not quite American Horror Story, Asylum either. Way more vanilla. There were some creative shots here and there, where reflections and air vents were shot in unique ways, but overall, nothing too memorable.

THE EDITING [SCORE: 1/5]

A big contributor to why the movie exuded an uncomfortable aura was due in part to the editing of the film. To juxtapose my gleeful delight over the salt and pepper seasoning that was the visual effects of this film, there was the bland undercooked mashed potatoes of the film itself, and beneath all of that was the cracked and dirty Styrofoam plate that was the editing.

Instead of giving us intriguing and engaging transitions through editing in these subjectively boring sections of the movie, we are given nothing. Moreover, there were certain segments that looked like they were supposed to lead into something bigger. An example of this would be Dr. Reyes dropping her Essex Corp pin after fighting Rahne. This was never brought up again despite being heavily focused on. Overall, it was blatantly clear that this movie was re-shot and edited multiple times, resulting in a less than cohesive product.

VERDICT [SCORE: 2.125/5]

Honestly, The New Mutants would have fared better as a TV series. With a cast of 5 characters, this film felt lacking in the amount that it should have showcased and developed each as a person. As a TV series, this franchise could definitely have more time to fully flesh out each of the 5's backstories and personalities. This would have been leagues better than the brief scenes and dry exposition we got in the movie.

This was the first time I ever wanted to walk out on a film whilst at the movie theatres. Had it not been for fantastic performance by Anya Taylor-Joy, the dazzling visual effects and, quite frankly, this review, I would have left the theatre halfway through.

FAMILY WITH SCALES

Caring for a Bearded Dragon

Story and photo by Elizabeth Exley

As far as reptiles go, Bearded Dragons are one of the easiest to take care of and are very resilient.

Having a reptile means that you have to be able to stick to a routine and be comfortable with feeding them live bugs. For Reggie, my Beardie, I turn on a UVB light and heat lamp at 9 a.m. and then turn them off at around 10 p.m. to ensure she gets a proper sleep cycle.



Reggie in her tank

Bearded Dragons have a lot of good instincts and can figure things out fairly well, but I have learned that there are a few things like glass, mirrors, and white painted walls that they just don't quite get. Because of this, they tend to try and climb those things and end up stressing themselves out, so it helps to put up a background around the sides and back of the tank so they don't see their reflection and think it's another Bearded Dragon.

A lot of people put sand or some type of substrate in the tank for their Beardies, but that can cause issues like compaction that can make them sick. The best thing to put at the bottom of their tanks is tile because it makes it easier to clean and also files their nails as

they run around so they don't get too sharp.

As a juvenile, or baby reptile, it is best to feed them the small crickets so that they don't choke on ones that are too big. You can go to any pet store and ask for however many small, medium, or large crickets you need. Because they are live crickets, you will have to keep them in their own small container with food and pieces of egg cartons for them to hide and climb. It's also a good idea to feed them hornworms, mealworms, or super worms as treats to help them gain fat as they grow.

Bearded Dragons need a healthy diet of bugs, fruits, and veggies so in the morning, Reggie gets her own little salad, while at night she gets her bugs. Beardies need leafy greens every day like Bok Choy, Kale, or Collard Greens and other veggies like carrots or bell peppers every other day/every few days. It's also not good to give fruits every day, so they will eat raspberries, strawberries, bananas, etc. every few days if possible.

When I first got Reggie, she was about a month old and could easily fit in the palm of my hand; now she is nearly a foot and a half long and still growing. Beardies can grow to about two feet long and can weigh a little over a pound.

You wouldn't think a reptile could have their own personality, but they absolutely do. When Reggie isn't running around exploring everything she can find in my room, she is buried under a soft blanket for a nice nap. If I am wearing a t-shirt and zip up sweatshirt during the cold winter, she will make her way under my hoodie and sleep on my shoulder where it's warm.

I learn something new about how they go about their day all the time. I wouldn't trade my girl for the world, and I couldn't be happier to have her.





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