



FACURRENT

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COVID RESTRICTION ROLLBACK

 MARCH FOR EQUALITY

 5 WAYS TO MAINTAIN YOUR CAR



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COMMUNITY

COVID RESTRICTION ROLLBACK



MASK MANDATES END AS VACCINES ROLL OUT

BY BRENT MAREVIGLIA

TEXAS – On March 2nd Governor Greg Abbott announced that Texas will lift its mask mandate as of March 10th, making it the 16th state not to require a mask.

Mississippi, Alabama, and West Virginia are among other states releasing the mask mandate this week. Texas being the largest listed and 3rd in the country for Covid-19 deaths.

Being met with both approval and disapproval on social media, Governor Abbott stated on Twitter “Today’s announcement doesn’t abandon safe practices that Texans have mastered over the past year. Instead, it’s a reminder that each person has a role to play in their own personal safety & the safety of others”.

In response, doctors and President Biden warned Governor Abbott that this could create a surge in deaths. In a press conference at the White House on March 3rd, President Biden mentioned it is a big mistake and that “I hope everyone has realized by now, these masks make a difference”.

Dr. James McDeavitt, Houston hospital’s senior vice president and dean of clinical affairs said in an interview with NBC News that he believes the decision was premature. In Houston alone they are still seeing 1000 new cases per day. Dr. McDeavitt stated “if the goal is to reach herd immunity, we are not there yet.

Masking and distancing are an important bridge to herd immunity”.

These decisions are being made just after a deadly winter storm that left millions of Texans without power and heat, leaving some on edge.

President Biden referred to Governor Abbott and Mississippi Governor Reeve’s decision making as “Neanderthal thinking”.



Gov. Greg Abbott @GovAbbott · Mar 2

NEW: Issuing an executive order to lift the mask mandate and open Texas to 100 percent.



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KIDS STRUGGLING TO SUCCEED

THE EFFECT COVID HAS HAD ON CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

BY GILLIAN TAYLOR

Kids across the nations are falling behind in school and some are not attending at all. Since COVID crossed our borders into America kids everywhere are struggling to keep their grades up. Some kids are even taking advantage of online schooling and not attending their classes at all. Since a lot of schools are fully online it makes it easier for kids to just not show up for class. Especially if a parent is not home during the day to monitor them.

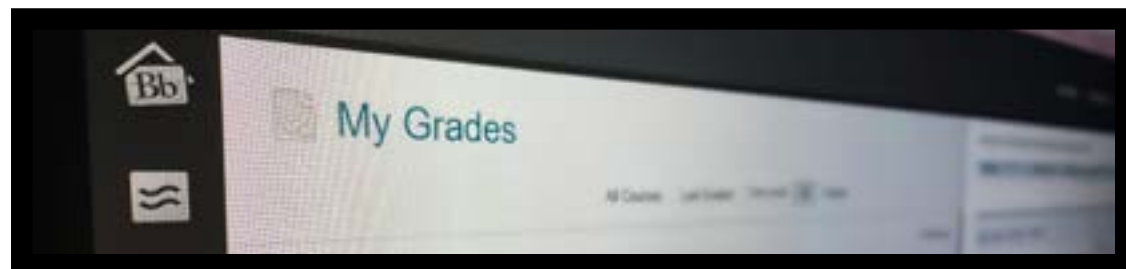
For example, sisters Skyla Martinez (7th grade) and Jasmine Martinez (9th Grade) say that their parents are never home during the day because of work, their parents check to make sure they are in class before they leave for work but then after that there is no one monitoring them. From the website Education Week, they did a survey that showed that student absences have doubled since the beginning of COVID. Before COVID it was documented that the average amount of absences for one month was 5%, after covid began that number spiked to 10%.

Not only has covid made the number of absences rise but, it has made children's grades drop immensely. Kids are having a hard time focusing at home. They have tons of devices and objects to distract them. While every child differs, Jasmine Martinez stated that at least 70% of her friends in school are currently failing. A lot of it has to do with the amount of work that the children are receiving. These two sisters feel that their course load has since doubled since moving to online schooling.

When asked about which classes have become the most difficult since moving to online, Jasmine said that her civics class was rather difficult due to the large work they have been given. Skyla said history for the same reason. Also, classes like gym have become almost impossible for the two sisters to get a good grade in. Since their motivation is already down, they do not have the will power to just go and run a mile by themselves. Also, Jasmine has mentioned that for her gym class she is required to record herself working out which makes her rather uncomfortable, she says she would rather write a paper.

Not only is this lack of motivation present in teenagers but it is also present in young adults and students in college. For many of the same reasons, college students are falling behind on their course loads. They can get easily distracted by the things around them, their cellphones, pets and even family members. Also, many college students already have very full schedules due to having to work one or two jobs to make ends meet, so adding on three to four classes can make them feel very overwhelmed.

COVID has shaken up the world in more ways than you may think. Kids are failing classes and college students are struggling to juggle busy schedules. Hopefully soon the education system will come up with ways to guide these students back to good grades and attending school. Maybe even go back to school, on ground, full time.



A picture of a students grades



DR. JILL BIDEN AND MIGUEL CARDONA VISIT CONNECTICUT

THE RECENTLY APPOINTED SECRETARY OF EDUCATION VISIT'S SCHOOL WITH FIRST LADY

On March 3rd, 2021 Dr. Jill Biden, The First Lady of the United States visited Benjamin Franklin Elementary School in Meriden, Connecticut. This visit was prompted by the appointment of the Biden Administration's Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona.

Cardona is a Meriden local and previously taught Fourth Grade at Benjamin Franklin Elementary. The Connecticut native graduated from UCONN and after teaching, became the youngest principal the state has seen at age 27.

BY EMME ROMANELLI

The trip to Benjamin Franklin Elementary was partially necessary for the appointment of the new Secretary and to bring the White House to his roots. But it was also to show what measures are being taken in order to make in-person classes available and safe.

Cardona wants to focus on keeping connections and learning opportunities prevalent in the learning experience across the country.

"The yearlong pandemic has led to fewer learning opportunities," Cardona said. "In Connecticut we did this thing early on: learn together, grow together. ... We will heal together, learn together, and we're going to make that happen at the agency."

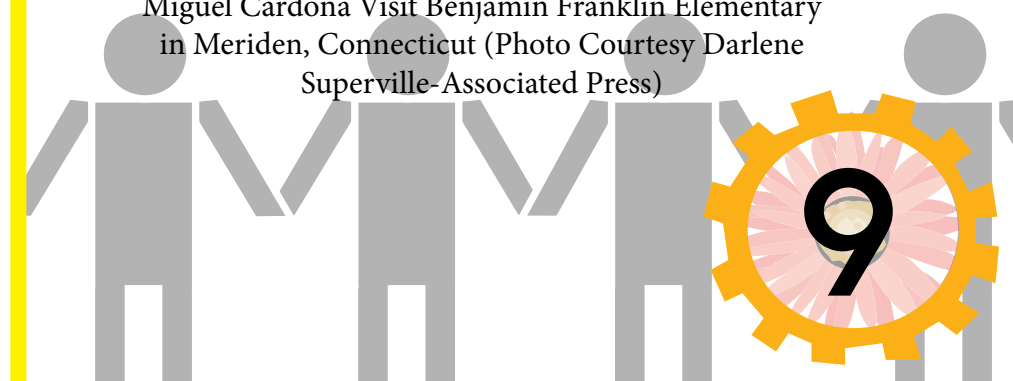
Part of getting in-person classes back to normal and safe involves Joe Biden's American Rescue Plan Act, which utilizes \$1.9 trillion in order to provide financial relief and vaccine distribution to Americans.

With the new administration settled in, it was a positive step to see the new Secretary of Education within a typical American school. Furthermore, Connecticut is very proud to have one of our own in that seat.

Source: Hartford Courant



First Lady Jill Biden and Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona Visit Benjamin Franklin Elementary in Meriden, Connecticut (Photo Courtesy Darlene Superville-Associated Press)





UConn Tuition Increase Cut in Half

THE EFFECTS OF COVID ON TUITION RATES IN SCHOOLS
BY ALEX SLANE

When the pandemic first hit big in the United States, college students were in the second half of their Spring semester of the year 2020. When schools began sending students back home and converting to online learning, questions were brought up of tuition and how this could affect the price of school. With an all-digital environment, some students felt that they were not receiving the same level of education that they can in person and were in favor of a tuition decrease. With the fall semester on the

horizon, some schools decided to act. For example, the University of Massachusetts decided to freeze tuitions for in-state undergraduates for the 2020-2021 academic year.

The University of Connecticut, or UConn, decided act recently as well and proposed some changes in tuition. In recognition of the financial hardship the pandemic has brought into families, UConn proposed that they cut the tuition increase in half for the 2021-2022 school year.

While this is not a direct tuition decrease, it is a step in the right direction. Every year, the university increase tuition slightly to further assist in improving the educational environment for their students. This year, UConn had planned to increase the in-state tuition for students by 4.3%. This means tuition would increase by \$625 dollars for in-state students attending in the fall. The proposal is to cut the increase in half, so instead of 4.3%, they will only increase tuition by 2.2% this year. This comes to \$312 dollars instead of \$625.

During the virtual town hall meeting held to discuss this matter, UConn's executive Vice President Scott Jordan explains the intentions behind this proposal. To maintain the quality of education provided to their students, they wanted to decrease the tuition increase to the bare minimum without compromising the educational experience. Decreasing the tuition increase by this amount helps maintain the affordability without hurting the experience.

In addition to the tuition increase cut, the university also made some new additions to help expand access to mental health assistance. UConn hired four more mental health clinicians and three new health educators, only costing a fee increase of \$28 per semester for Storrs-based students to assist with the funding.



AIR FRYER APPLE FRITTER FRIES

AN EASY SPIN ON A CLASSIC DESSERT
BY EMME ROMANELLI

INGREDIENTS INCLUDE:

- 1 Medium Sized Apple
- 2 Eggs, Beaten
- 1 Cup Graham Cracker Crumbs
- 1/4 Cup Cinnamon Sugar

In the last year, people have been stuck home for various amounts of time. What better way to pass the time than to cook, right?

With the yearning to make good food from home the popularity of the Air Fryer has taken flight. If there is any appliance to have in order to save money and eat healthier, its this.

An easy recipe to satisfy anyone with a sweet tooth is Apple Fritter Fries. They have all the goods of the well loved dessert, but with less calories and no need to spend hours baking.

HOW TO MAKE:

Slice your apple in as many wedges as you'd like without leaving any of the core. Peeling the apple beforehand is optional.



In a bowl, beat both of your eggs until the yolk is well mixed with the white. Put your graham cracker crumbs and sugar in a separate bowl and whisk together.



Individually dip each apple wedge into the eggs, and then place them in the graham cracker and sugar mix. Coat the wedge completely.

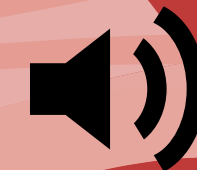


Place each wedge in a single layer in the air fryer. Cook at 380 degrees for 8 minutes or until golden brown (I recommend flipping them halfway through to get an even amount of crisp).



These can be eaten on their own or with popular apple toppings such as caramel or vanilla ice cream. All of this should take no more than 15 minutes, so enjoy your sweet, healthy, and quick apple dessert!





MOXIE: A MOVIE REVIEW

A COMING-OF-AGE MOVIE MADE TO INSPIRE THOSE WHO STAND FOR EQUAL RIGHTS.

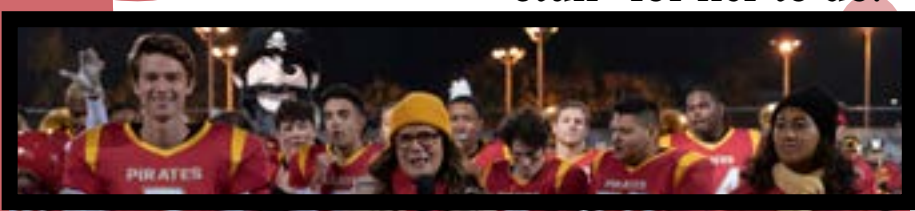
BY GILLIAN TAYLOR

Moxie is a new Netflix Movie that came out March 3rd of 2021. This film starts off with a 16-year-old girl who is starting her junior year in high school. This girl's name is Vivian, and she was filling out college applications. She was asked to reflect on a cause that she is passionate about and explain the significance to her and what she could do to make a difference.

Vivian is stuck because she has nothing to be passionate about, so she reaches out to her mom who says that 16-year-olds did during her time started revolutions. Vivian began snooping around her mother's old belongings and

came across music and documents proving the revolutions that women started for equal rights and sexism.

This movie is heavily based in a high school setting. Football is the main sport of this school and the most focused and cared about thing. Even the principal sides with the captain, Mitchel Wilson. As the movie starts to begin to unfold a new girl named Lily has arrived at school and Mitchel Wilson immediately begins harassing her and making her uncomfortable. Lily tried to go to the principal, but the principal brushed it off as him bothering Lily and that the word harassment would make a lot of "stuff" for her to do.



The Principal announced the winner of the sports representative and scholarship.



Vivian holding the first making of the Moxie booklets.

Our main character Vivian sees this behavior and it is inspired by her mother's teenage years and creates Moxie. Moxie is not given a name or identity, it is a movement that calls out the crude behavior going on in the school and empowers the girls at the school to start small movements like putting hearts and stars on their hands, wearing tank tops to repent the dress code, and finally causing a large walk out to protest.

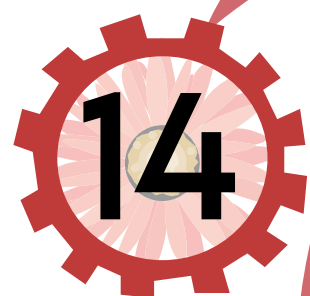
This movie was very moving for a young woman like myself to watch. It can motivate those who are feeling scared or afraid to come forward with experiences they have had. It also shows that with a little will power and a lot of motivation for a cause you can make a change, even if it is just your local high school.

Not only was the storyline very motivating and inspiring but the actors and actresses chosen for the roles were great. Hadely Robinson did an awesome job at portraying a teenager who was struggling in finding a way to make a stand and bring forth the problems at the high school. Patrick Schwarzenegger is the handsome football captain Mitchel Wilson. Due to his good looks, it landed him the role of the arrogant jock of the movie. Patrick was able to take on the burden of this role and portrayed this persona very well.

Overall, this movie is filled with side stories about relationships and friendships while not veering away from the important plot of empowering the girls of this high school to take a stand against the boys and men who oversexualize them and do not give them the voice they deserve.



The movie poster for Moxie





ENTERTAINMENT MARCH THROUGH THE AGES



A WALK-THROUGH OF HISTORICAL EVENTS IN THE MONTH OF MARCH

BY ALEX SLANE

Every now and then, it is good to take a moment and look back on history. Being educated about the past is very important for a multitude of reasons. Being aware of what has happened in the past and understanding what went well and what did not can help us grow as a society. The famous term, “History repeats itself” can be avoided altogether by remaining educated. In this case, looking back on history can also be a fun activity to remind people of certain events they may have forgotten about.

MARCH 1ST, 1872

Yellowstone becomes the United States’ first National Park. Yellowstone is located primarily in Wyoming, with parts reaching into Idaho and Montana as well. Home to wildlife and beautiful sights, Yellowstone also hosts the iconic landmark, Old Faithful geyser.

MARCH 12TH, 1912

The Girl Scouts of the United States were founded. Originating in Savannah, Georgia, the Girl Scouts organization was founded by Juliette Gordon Low. The Girl Scouts aim to build girls of courage, confidence, and character, and they deliver amazing cookies on the way. With a membership base of over 1.8 million girls, the Girl Scouts reach their 109th anniversary this year.

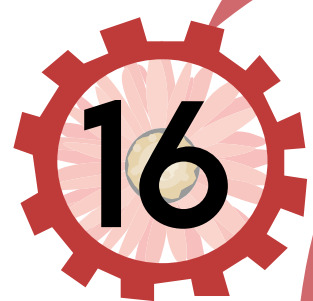
MARCH OF 1958

Elvis Presley joins the U.S. Army. The rebellious king of rock and roll was drafted for the U.S. Army and served between March of 1958 and March of 1960. His military service took place near the peak of his musical career, making this a unique case. Being a famous musician, going into the army had its pros and cons. The older generation at the time such as parents and teachers disliked Elvis as they found him rebellious and a rebel to society. They were thrilled to hear of his drafting as they wanted him gone. His time in the military gained the respect of the older audience and it was overall beneficial to his career. Unfortunately, after he was to be stationed in Germany, his mother had died of a heart attack. His run in the army also began an unfortunate addiction to stimulants and barbiturates.

MARCH 30TH, 1964

Jeopardy! airs for the first time. Originally hosted by Art Fleming, Jeopardy! is a game show where contestants are presented with clues in the form of answers and must respond in the form of a question. The original debut of the show was on NBC and aired until January 3rd, 1975. Through a few more iterations, you eventually get to the show we know today, which was hosted by Alex Trebek until his unfortunate death in 2020. Trebek hosted the show from 1984-2020.

JEOPARDY!



ENTERTAINMENT MARCH FOR EQUALITY

BY WILL SILVA

Following the Civil War, the 15th Amendment, ratified in 1870, prohibited states from denying a male citizen the right to vote based on “race, color or previous condition of servitude.” However, in the ensuing decades, various discriminatory practices were used to prevent African Americans, particularly those in the South, from exercising their right to vote.

Mistreatment and violence were two things that voting rights activists in the South faced during the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. During the month of March voting rights activists stopped waiting for equality and took matters into their own hands. One event that outraged many Americans

occurred on Sunday, March 7, 1965. On this day peaceful participants in a Selma to Montgomery march for voting rights were met by Alabama state troopers. After they refused to turn back protesters were surrounded with tear gas as they were spat upon, overrun by horses, and attacked with Billy clubs and bullwhips. Some protesters ran for their lives while others were severely beaten and bloodied. The incident was captured on national television.

In the wake of the shocking incident, President Johnson saw that change was needed. Johnson called for comprehensive voting rights legislation. In a speech to a joint session of Congress on March 15, 1965, the president outlined the devious ways in which election officials denied African American citizens the vote.



OUT OF THE MOUNTAIN OF DESPAIR,
— A STONE OF HOPE

Black people attempting to vote often were told by election officials that they had gotten the date, time, or polling place wrong, that they possessed insufficient literacy skills or that they had filled out an application incorrectly. The African American population suffered a high rate of illiteracy due to centuries of oppression and poverty. They often would be forced to take literacy tests, which they sometimes failed. Johnson also informed Congress that voting officials, primarily in Southern states, had been known to force black voters to “recite the entire Constitution or explain the most complex provisions of state laws,” a task most white voters would have struggled to accomplish. In some cases, even black people with college degrees were turned away from the polls. After Johnson’s speech changes were implemented. On May 26, 1965, the voting rights bill was passed in the U.S. Senate. After debating the bill for more than a month, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the bill on July 9. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law on

August 6, 1965, with Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights leaders present at the ceremony.

Even after the Voting Rights Act passed, state and local enforcement of the law was weak, and it often was ignored outright, mainly in the South and in areas where the proportion of Black people in the population was high and their vote threatened the political status quo. Regardless of this the Voting Rights Act gave African American voters the legal means to challenge voting restrictions and vastly improved voter turnout. In Mississippi alone, voter turnout among Black people increased from 6 percent in 1964 to 59 percent in 1969. African Americans finally had the opportunity to be heard.



MILFORD VACCINE PUSH

VACCINE EFFORTS IMPROVE AS MILFORD'S EDUCATORS RECEIVE COVID-19 VACCINES BY BRENT MERAUVIGLIA

MILFORD – Nurses worked together on March 3rd to make sure almost 2000 school employees received their first vaccinations. The same day Johnson and Johnson vaccines were first arriving in the state.

Three clinics were held by the Milford Health Department on March 3rd, two clinics on March 5th and two clinics on March 10th. All vaccines were distributed at the Parsons Government Building.

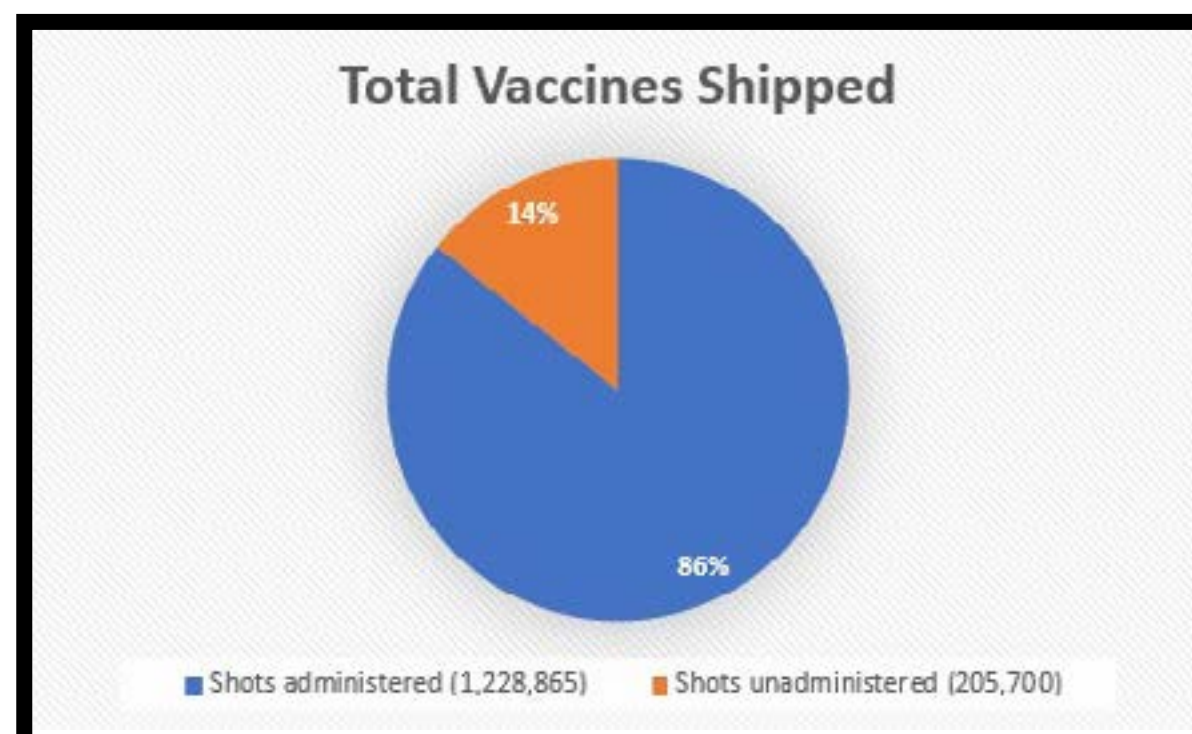
Deepa D. Joseph, MPH, the director of health for the Milford Health department stated, “right now we’re pretty fully booked for the next several weeks, but based on

our vaccine allocation and supply, we’re going to try to open up appointments as we can”.

Nearly four months after the first vaccination was administered in Connecticut, it is finally becoming more accessible for the public. According to the CDC, 883,000 first shots have been administered in Connecticut making at least 24% of the state safer from the virus.

Of the 1,434,565 doses reported to have been distributed to CT, 85% have been used. The Connecticut Department of Public Health reported that almost all towns in Connecticut have reached a 10% administration rate except for Hartford, Bridgeport, Waterbury, and Sterling. Some towns such as Old Saybrook have reached a 30% administration rate. The 39,000 Johnson and Johnson vaccines that arrived March 3rd provided more hope for those patiently waiting. The director of pharmacy at Hartford Healthcare, Eric Arlia, was excited for the launch.

He stated in an interview with the Hartford Courant, “Every time we do one of these launches of a new vaccine it really represents hope. Another vaccine, another option, more vaccines, our ability to increase how quickly we’re able to vaccinate everyone.” As of now, covid vaccines in Connecticut are reserved for healthcare personnel, medical first responders, long term care facilities, educators, childcare providers, congregate settings, and individuals 55 and older.





NFA CELEBRATES THE WORK OF ELLIS RULEY

AN ARTIST WITH A MYSTERIOUS DEATH.

BY ALEX SLANE

Ellis Walter Ruley was an American Folk Artist who began painting back in the 1930s. Ruley mostly painted from his home in Norwich, Connecticut, and would primarily use house paint on cardboard or Masonite. Masonite is a type of engineered wood made of steam cooked and pressure molded wood fibers.

Norwich Free Academy frequently showcases work from Ruley in the form of exhibitions in their art gallery and has recently taken it one step further. Within the school is the Slater Memorial Museum which holds many wonderful pieces of art. Now, they have installed a new wall in the Connecticut Artists of the Twentieth Century gallery which features the paintings of Ellis Walter Ruley.

Ruley was born on December 3rd, 1882. He was the oldest sibling and was not able to attend schooling regularly due to having to work to support his family. Ruley went on to work in construction, building stone walls, some of which can still be seen today. Ruley married twice in his life, the first time to Ida Bee, who had their daughter Marion but died shortly after. He then went on to marry Wilhelmina Fox.



Ruley had received some money from a work-related truck accident and used it towards a house on Hammond Avenue. He renovated the house and installed gardens so he could raise his own food. By the 1950s, Ruley had retired from work. Ruley had met the director of the Slater Memorial Museum around that time, Joseph Gualtieri, and he sponsored Ruley's sole art exhibit during his lifetime in December 1952. He also would participate in the annual art exhibit "Art in the Open" which was sponsored by the Norwich School of Art and would sell his paintings for \$15 each.

Ellis Ruley died on January 16th, 1959. His death was met with suspicion due the circumstances he was found in. They originally had found him about 200 feet from his home, partially frozen and with a gash in his head. According to the Norwich Police Department, Ruley had been at a restaurant and drinking and went to take a cab home.

The cab safely delivered him home, but Ruley had stumbled and hit his head on a stone wall. He must have been able to get on his feet but was disoriented and walked the wrong direction before collapsing. However, this story has been challenged on multiple occasions. While there is not enough evidence to call it one, many believe his death was a murder. Around this time, it would not be unbelievable if Ruley's death was an act of racial animosity. According to Dr. Michael Baden, because the lack of knowledge linked to his death is slim, it cannot be categorized as a homicide, but Ruley's empty wallet was found 20 feet from his body.





ENTERTAINMENT ROLLER SKATING MAKES A COMEBACK



THE WELL-LOVED ACTIVITY FINDS
NEW LIFE IN 2020

BY EMME ROMANELLI

Roller skating came to popularity in the 70's, and was a great activity for kids and teens in the decades later, but up until about 2010, it really dropped in popularity for a bit. With 2020 putting everything at home and outdoors, people started getting creative. Being that gyms were one of the first places to close and not everyone has a treadmill, young people looked to different outdoor activities. With the help of TikTok, roller skating really picked up on the trend list from Gen Z-ers to Millennials. So how does one get started to hop on the trend?

First and foremost, roller rinks have gone down in the past few years, and roller rentals aren't exactly Covid-friendly. So it's probably better to look into getting a personal pair.

While they are an investment, roller skates come to just a bit cheaper than a complete skateboard. The most popular sites to get skates from are Impala Skates and Angel Skates, these companies provide great quality roller skates starting at about \$90.

Next Is To Find A Spot To Skate At. With the resurgence of the activity and slow openings of public places, skateparks are a great place to enjoy the activity. If a park seems too intimidating to learn at, tennis courts and safe, empty parking lots are great places to get the basics. If your town has a rink, then having your own pair of skates will save a rental fee! Now Ready, Set, Roll!

The best part of skating is the more you do it, the easier and more fun it gets! It's important to really stick with it if the ease doesn't come on your first day.

THE MOST COMMON PARTS OF GETTING INTO BEING COMFORTABLE ON SKATES ARE:

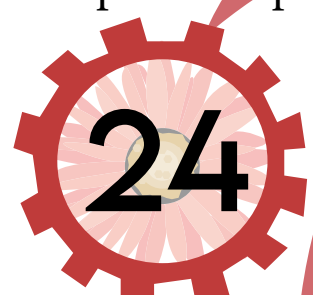
-Learning how to stop: gently bend your knee on whatever leg feels most comfortable and point your toe to the ground to slow you to a stop.



-Learning how to cruise: With whatever foot feels more dominant, push forward and slightly off to the side, and then repeat with the other foot. As you do this more, it'll feel more natural.



With the weather looking up this is the best time of year to get outside and try something new. With the very basics of being on skates, you can try more tricks and get out for skate sessions as much as possible!





ENTERTAINMENT

5 WAYS TO MAINTAIN YOUR CAR



EASY WAYS TO KEEP YOUR CAR UP AND RUNNIN SMOOTHLY

BY GILLIAN TAYLOR

Almost everyone owns a car, meaning they have the headache of keeping up with the maintenance of the vehicle. A Lot of people will just take it to the garage to get it done, but a lot of the time the bill can grow quite high. Most people do not realize how easy and inexpensive it is to do the maintenance yourself.

1. OIL CHANGE

Changing your oil is one of the most important things you need to do to keep your car up and running. It is a good rule of thumb to change your oil every 6 months to a year, depending on how much your driver your vehicle.

Before changing your oil, you want to make sure that your engine is cool, this way you do not accidentally burn yourself with hot oil. You will also need access to a jack to be able to get under your vehicle.

The first step is finding your oil pan, this should not be too difficult. Then you will unscrew the oil plug, make sure you are draining your oil into a container. Once you have completely drained your oil pan you will replace the plug.

Next, you will move under the hood of your vehicle. This is where you will replace your oil filter. You will want to make sure you lubricate the rubber gasket on the new oil filter with some new motor oil.

To finish replacing the filter you will fill the new oil filter about two-thirds of the way with new oil and screw in the new oil filter. Make sure to hand-tighten it only, if you use a wrench it may make it difficult to get off in the future.

Finally, you will fill your engine with new oil. Make sure to check it is just the right amount by pulling out your dipstick, it will have a marker that says full.

2. CHANGING AIR FILTER

Changing your air filter is important because it helps keep the air circulating through your engine clean.

First you will want to locate your air filter under your hood. It is usually a black rectangle box with clips on the sides.

Next, you will take out the old filter, make sure to take note of which way the filter faces. And then simply place the new one in and clip the top back on!

3. REPLACING SPARK PLUGS

Changing your spark plugs every 30,000 miles will help prevent too much gas entering the exhaust system and will keep your car running well.

First you will want to locate your spark plugs, they are attached to thick rubber wires. There will either be four, six or eight plugs depending on how many cylinders your car has.

Next you will remove the wire from the first spark plug ONLY. DO NOT remove all the wires at once, the plugs need to be installed in a certain order. To remove the spark plugs you do need a specific attachment for a ratchet that is made for spark plugs.

Then you will hand tighten the new spark plugs down and then tighten with the wrench, DO NOT over tighten. And finally reattach the wires then you are all set!

4. CHANGING WINDSHIELD WIPERS

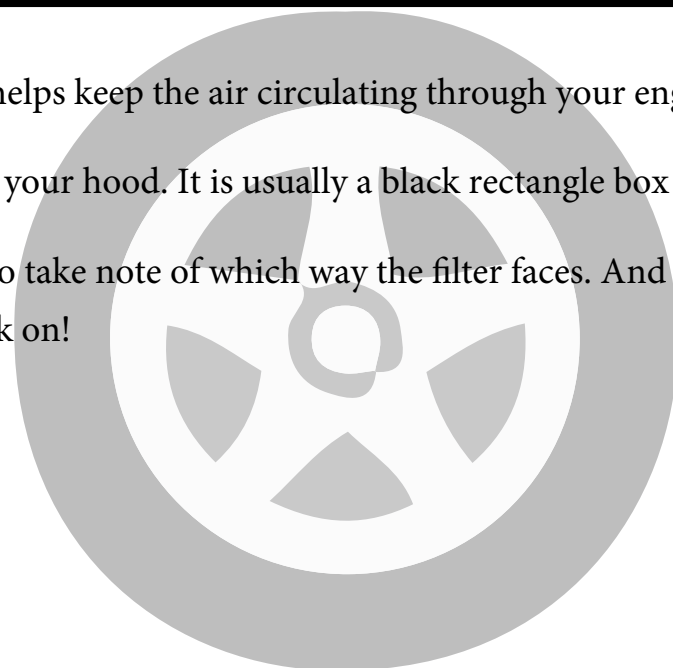
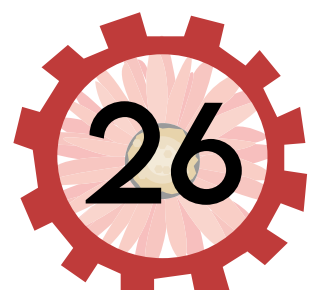
Replacing the windshield wipers is an easy maintenance job you can do yourself on your car.

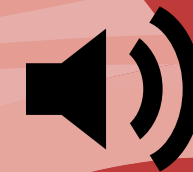
First you want to take the old wipers off, most cars have a tab that you will press to release the old wiper. Make sure to pay attention to which way the windshield wiper faces.

Then you simply slide on the new blade and you are set to go!

5. KEEP UP WITH FLUIDS AND TIRE TREAD

To keep your car up and running you want to keep an eye on the fluids in your vehicle. Make sure your oil does not get low, an engine cannot run with no lubricant. Next you want to make sure your coolant is always full, without this your car can easily overheat. Also, you want to check your transmission fluid about once a year, this fluid does not need to be filled often if your car is running as it should.





ROBINHOOD FACES ONSLAUGHT

45+ INCOMING LAWSUITS AFTER STOCK HALT

BY BRENT MERAVIDLIA

Robinhood, a trading app with over 10 million downloads is facing 50 lawsuits after halting GameStop stock as well as a few others back in January.

GameStop (GME) was being shorted by hedge funds looking to make a profit. However, users on Reddit turned their attention to Wall Street and worked together to buy stock against the short and caused the stock to rise over \$300.

Due to this, hedge funds lost billions of dollars on their short position. S3 Partners, a data power company, reported that short sellers lost 13 Billion on just GameStop alone. This is known as a “Short-Squeeze”. Robinhood claimed to halt the trading of GME (GameStop), NOK (Nokia) BB (Blackberry) and AMC (AMC Entertainment) due to its high volatility and unpredictable price to protect their users. Customers were still able to sell these stocks, but could not buy, resulting in the price of the stock to drop.

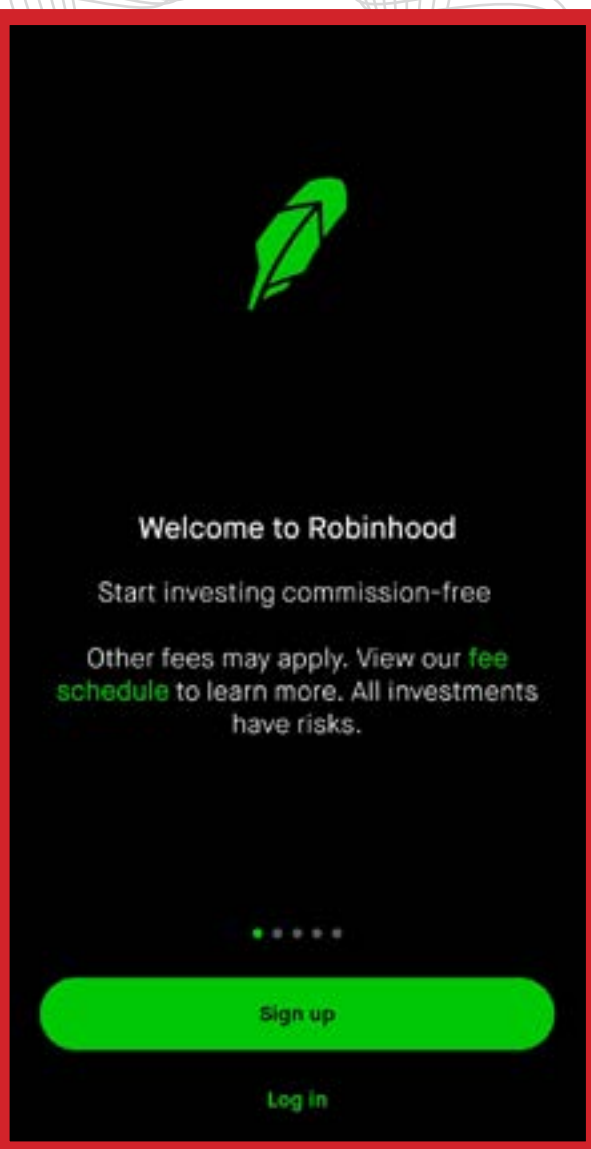


However, hedge funds could still freely purchase the stock. This presented a situation allowing hedge funds to close their short position while the average trader could not hold their position against them.

This prompted the response of lawmakers and political figures to defend user complaints. US Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez posted on twitter “This is a serious matter. Committee investigators should examine

any retail services freezing stock purchases in the course of potential investigations - especially those allowing sales, but freezing purchases”. She gained the support of former presidential candidate Ted Cruz along with thousands of others online.

According to Robinhood, “46 putative class actions and three individual actions” regarding the stock halt was reported after an annual audited report. Until a court certifies the class for these class action lawsuits, users will have to wait until the cases can proceed.



BY WILL SILVA



Though hailed as “heroes” early in the pandemic, the nation’s 3 million grocery workers are treated as less than other essential workers when it comes to vaccine priority. Just 13 states have begun inoculating such employees as the broader vaccine rollout is affected by widespread delays. According to the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), which represents 800,000 U.S. grocery employees “The threat of this pandemic for essential workers is worse now than ever before,” Marc Perrone, the union’s president, told reporters this month. “Simply put, the failures in early vaccine distribution under the past

administration have left millions of Americans and essential workers defenseless.” Connecticut grocery store employees have also been put on the back burner when it comes to vaccine priority. Unions representing thousands of grocery store workers vented their frustration Monday night with Gov. Ned Lamont’s decision not to prioritize the group in the next wave of vaccinations.



Even though grocery store workers may not be performing surgeries on patients or being called for emergencies their job affects all the people in the area, and people rely on them to survive. “We’re disgusted, we’re frustrated,” said Mark Espinosa, president of Local 919 of the UFCW, which represents about 7,000 Stop & Shop grocery chain employees in Connecticut. “They are front line employees. They are essential. Let’s face it, if they’re not in the stores, people are not eating.”

Lamont abandoned the state’s previous methodology for a vaccination rollout. This previous plan had prioritized people with underlying medical conditions and certain types of workers in essential, high-risk jobs. With this change in methodology, grocery store employees are uncertain when they will be prioritized for their work.



COMMUNITY

BIRTH RATES DURING COVID

BY WILL SILVA

Many expected birth rates to skyrocket after months of romantic partners quarantining at home together. However, according to researchers at the Brookings Institution, this expected baby boom failed to come true. Rather, it is quite the opposite: Melissa Kearney and Phillip Levine, economics professors at the University of Maryland and Wellesley College, respectively, say they expect 300,000 fewer births in 2021, in what they are calling a COVID “baby bust.”

Their finding is partially based on evidence that shows a 1% increase in the national unemployment rate corresponds with an equivalent 1% drop-in birth rates. To account for the fact that there is a public health crisis layered on top of an

economic one, Kearney and Levine examined the impact of the 1918 Spanish flu on births. They concluded that spikes in flu deaths resulted in a decrease in the number of births nine months later.

When looking at increases and decreases in birth rates Kearney and Levine found that the changes were impacted by unemployment levels. They found that “When the labor market is weak, aggregate birth rates decline; when the labor market improves, birth rates improve.” This is an alarming trend when the unemployment rate is controlled by a pandemic. Like the dependency birth rates have on unemployment, they also fluctuate depending on income. Kearney and Levine noticed that at the “individual level, there is also a well-documented link between changes in income and births: When income increases, people often expand their families; when people experience job or income loss, they have fewer children.”



With all the factors of having a child along with the burden of a pandemic, a lot of people are having doubts about having children. The Guttmacher Institute conducted a study and found that more than 40% of women said they were altering their plans for when to have children or how many children they would have, and more than one-third of women said the pandemic had made them decide to delay pregnancy or have fewer children. Just 17% of respondents reported wanting to have children sooner or to have more of them because of the pandemic. Women have suffered some of the highest rates of unemployment in recent months, and mothers especially have been pushed out of the workforce because of school closures and lapses in childcare.

The fact that women are reconsidering plans for having children is only an acute symptom of a much larger problem. Birth rates have been falling in the United States for years now, the result of a confluence of social, cultural, and economic factors that have made childbearing less desirable for many people.

The most obvious among these factors is the lack of government support for parents. The U.S. continues to be the only industrialized country that does not have a universal paid family leave policy in place. It also lacks both universal childcare and preschool policies, which can make it more feasible for people to have children.

Kearney and Levine say it is possible birth rates will begin to rebound to the original numbers, since some people are delaying pregnancy, not abandoning the desire to have children altogether. But the longer the pandemic the less that may be true, which could lead to long-term consequences, like a shrinking workforce. “As of now, we stand by our prediction of a COVID baby bust of around 300,000 fewer births,” they report. “But the longer the pandemic lasts, and the deeper the economic and social anxiety runs, it is feasible that we will see an even larger reduction in births with an increasing share of them averted permanently.”





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