

# THE **C**urrent

Issue #4

Spring 2024

February 26th



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SCAN FOR ONLINE ISSUES





# The Current Staff



**Benjamin Garay**  
*Editor / Marketing Manager*



**Jesse Bisunia**  
*Managing Editor*



**Maximilian Hillyer**  
*Photography Editor*



**Derek Denis**  
*Social Media Coordinator*



**Johnathon Santangelo**  
*Graphics Editor*



**Lee Metzger**  
*Copy Editor*



**Kevin Amenta**  
*Advisor / Graphic Design Program Coordinator*



## Sports Gambling

The legalization of online sports betting in Connecticut back in October 2021 has led to an unprecedented surge in the industry, with revenues skyrocketing and advertising efforts intensifying.



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## Club Carnivale

Bursting with Mardi Gras flair, the festivities encompassed an array of engaging activities, delectable food, and vibrant camaraderie.

## Distance Learning



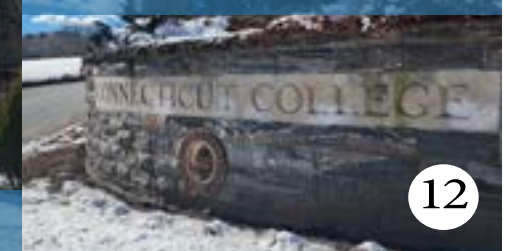
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# Sports Gambling: Opportunity Or Risk

## Gambling addiction can harm college students

Article by: Johnathon Santangelo

Back in October of 2021, Connecticut lawmakers legalized online sports betting, and ever since, the numbers have grown tenfold. In December alone, more than 205 million dollars were placed in the state. Revenue has exploded in this gaming sector, reaching an estimated 75% increase annually. While the sports betting world is booming for all demographics, it's no secret that college students are being targeted the most.

The heightened profits in the gambling industry have prompted a surge in advertising efforts. It is speculated that the overall advertising expenditure across all media channels may reach approximately \$3 billion each year. This encompasses various platforms, including social media outlets such as TikTok, where there is a higher likelihood of young adults encountering gambling advertisements.

Betting machines ready to be used.

A study conducted in the United Kingdom revealed that 72% of individuals aged 18 to 24 have been exposed to gambling ads on social media.

Individuals from diverse backgrounds and age groups can be impacted by gambling addiction, but it poses an elevated risk to college students. Those in the college age bracket are particularly prone to engaging in impulsive or risky behaviors due to various developmental factors. This heightened susceptibility makes them more inclined to take substantial risks and face adverse consequences, amplifying the threat of gambling addiction among this demographic. Southern Connecticut State University College recognizes this problem, stating “students often develop gambling problems at about twice the rate of other adults” and “an estimated 4 to 8 percent of college students are classified as problem gamblers.”

College campuses are witnessing increased accessibility to sports betting. According to a New York Times inquiry, sports betting firms and universities have effectively transformed college life into a scenario reminiscent of renowned casinos. This transformation involves the incorporation of online gambling platforms into the student experience. Connecticut is not shy when it comes to gambling, as Mohegan Sun and Foxwoods casinos create a landmark for the state. These casinos are owned, respectively, by the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan tribes, and they are



Sportsbook in Mohegan Sun.

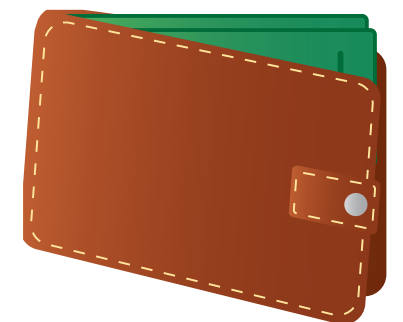
subject to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), which does not mandate responsible gaming programs for consumers.

Recently, it was reported that a federal judge in New Jersey has rejected a gambler's lawsuit against the Borgata casino in Atlantic City and BetMGM, an online betting platform, both of which are owned by MGM Resorts International, based in Las Vegas. The judge concluded that state law does not mandate casinos to safeguard their patrons from compulsive gambling, leading to the dismissal of the lawsuit.

This is no different in Connecticut, where there are no laws that require a casino to stop a compulsive gambler on a serious losing streak from digging himself a bigger hole.

However, Monique Fontenot, public affairs specialist for the National Indian Gaming Commission, stated in an email that “many tribal-state compacts incorporate protocols to address problem gambling that include involuntary and voluntary exclusions.”

Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun have implemented voluntary self-exclusion programs, providing individuals who acknowledge having gambling issues with the option to request exclusion from the casino and/or its online gaming platforms. Additionally, the state Department of Consumer Protection oversees a voluntary statewide self-exclusion list, offering a broader initiative for individuals across the state to exclude themselves from gambling activities.





# Club Carnivale: Uniting Creativity, Diversity And Talent

Every Club united to entertain the audience

Article by: Derek Denis



On February 14th, students at Three Rivers were treated to fun activities and delicious food at the Club Carnivale, hosted by Student Programs, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The Mardi Gras-themed event featured free food, club comradery, games, and a raffle. Each club had a station with a game and information regarding their respective club. Upon completing each activity, students were given tickets to the raffle with a plethora of prizes, including a waffle blanket, plushies, Bluetooth earbuds, and many more.

A few highlights of the event included the photobooth, where students had the

opportunity to wear colorful masks and take festive photos, and “light-up limbo,” courtesy of the Active Minds club. Eventgoers also got to practice their aim with the anime club’s can toss, the AOCC’s clown ball game, and the United Environmentalist club’s ring toss. Guided Pathways Advisor Catherine Ray said the event was, “[...] super colorful, with great music and great food. Everybody here seemed really happy and engaged. It was a terrific opportunity to meet and find out what people are up to.”

Students were able to express their creativity with the Art Club’s arts and crafts and the Veteran’s Club’s mask-making activity. Participants enjoyed the Golf



Club’s mini golf and SPAG’s duck pond activity. All participants in the event were left with smiles on their faces. Club Carnivale brought students together and promoted the many great clubs on campus.

Student Programs’ Jordan Chenette reflected on the event, saying, “[The students] reacted very positively. This is always a really popular event, and it’s one that we’re always really excited to do in student programs, so I’m really happy with the way things are going. The students seem to be really receptive.”

**“It’s a very fun and festive event. There are a lot of clubs I discovered today that I didn’t know about!”** -Anna Laquerre

More information about the various clubs and events at Three Rivers can be found on TRCConnect.



# Virtual Learning Is Ruining Education

The change that affected the way of learning

Article by: Derek Denis

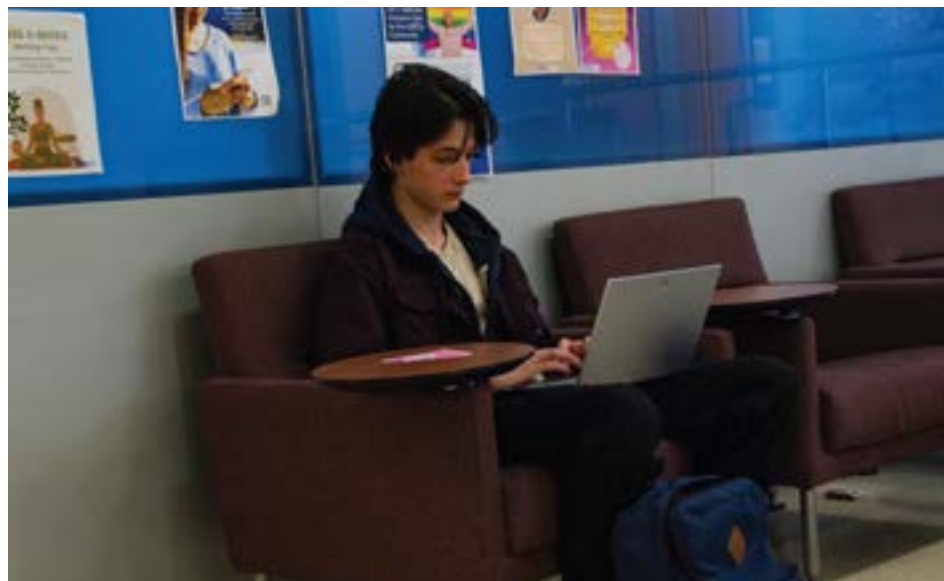
Ever since the Covid-19 pandemic, the implementation of distance learning has been solidified in U.S school systems. Now students have the option to take classes in person, online, or a mix of both. This new way of learning has increased the variety of courses students can take and allows teachers to reach a wider range of students. Students are no longer limited to what courses they can take based on their school campus. Despite these benefits, distance learning has also caused more students to become isolated, and less social. Taking classes at home also means that people who take the class will not ever meet their fellow classmates and teachers. This takes away from the connectivity and community aspect of going to school. Although online learning takes away from the social connectivity of the classroom, many students have benefited from this new form of learning.

According to Drexel University, online learning has given students more flexibility, as well as saving students money. Since there is not

a fixed classroom schedule, people can complete their coursework when it is convenient for them, making them have more free time and the ability to pursue their career outside of education. Virtual learning also cuts costs on expensive textbooks and the cost of commuting. On top of that, it sharpens students' time management skills. According to Drexel, "Online courses teach students how to manage their time better since the student bears the responsibility of engaging with the course instead of simply showing up to class on an assigned day and time." The ability to manage one's time is an extremely important skill to have as an adult, and

online education serves as a great way to teach children and teens this skill.

Although online education is cost effective and flexible, it is also extremely detrimental to students' mental health. Before and during Covid, a study was conducted at Harvard University, young children's development was being tracked in the Early Learning Study. The researchers shared that, "families reported a rise in temper tantrums, anxiety, and a poor ability to manage emotions, especially among the young elementary-aged children during remote learning." Isolating students has proven to be



TRCC student taking an online course.

## Do people learn more Online or Traditional?

According to NIH (The National Institutes of Health)



extremely harmful to their mental health, especially for younger children during the early stages of development. School is a place where adolescents develop social skills, make friends, and learn to collaborate with others. Humans are social by nature. "Social isolation and lack of communication often lead to several mental health issues, such as heightened stress, anxiety, and negative thoughts (Tamm)." According to The National Library of Medicine, multiple studies on college students' mental health were conducted after they switched to distance learning full time. Over 200 first year and fourth year students participated in the research. According to the study, "The results showed that the prevalence of depressive symptoms and anxiety among students was higher during distance learning, compared with similar results obtained during full-time education."

Staring at a computer screen for multiple hours at a time is unnatural. Learning from a teacher in a classroom encourages a student to actively listen and participate in class. Spending time

in a classroom also encourages social interaction and discussion. With distance learning, all of this is taken away. Students are no longer encouraged to participate in class or talk to their peers. Without the classroom, education is desolate, mundane, and anxiety inducing. Not only does the quality of student's mental health suffers, but so does the curriculum itself. According to Brookings.edu, several studies have reported a significant decline in academic performance by college students due to distance learning. "Students in online courses generally get lower grades, are less likely to perform well in follow-on coursework, and are less likely to graduate than similar students taking in-person classes (Cellini)."

Online learning is simply less effective than in person classes, because of the lack of hands-on learning, as well as the overall quality of online coursework. Not every course translates to the online format well, because of the decreased level of dialog between the students and teacher. Hands on courses like public speaking should be taught in a face-to-face environment. The curriculum for

an online course must be carefully refined, so people who take the course are able to learn as well as if they were taking it online.

Distance learning has proven to have more weaknesses than strengths for the education system. Although the increased accessibility and lower costs have allowed people to receive an education without disrupting their everyday lives, but the social isolation, lack of communication, and decline in course quality, have shown that this method of learning is extremely flawed. Distance learning is extremely detrimental to the mental health of students. The benefits of online learning simply do not outweigh the downsides of it. Students should limit the number of online courses they take. Only courses that fit the structure of online learning should be implemented. Classes with hands on learning should be left to the classroom. Schools should also promote study groups and periodic classroom visits for online students as a way to maintain a connection to the school they are a part of. Without the classroom, education is a shell of what it can and should be.



# Snowstorm Preparations

## Essential tips to prepare for the worst

Article by: Benjamin Garay

It is February, and we are in the winter season. The cold and strong winds are common at these times, as are freezing nights, and what represents winter the most is snow. Lately, snowstorms have been frequent in the eastern part of the United States. This month, we have had about two snowfalls in a week, and we still don't know if there will be more in the future. For this, we must be prepared in case these snowfalls intensify even more. Although right now it's less likely that one will happen anytime soon, it's a good opportunity to review and give some tips to prevent snowstorms from getting even worse.

### Before the Storm

It is always important to be cautious before any disaster. It is important to prepare for the unexpected that could happen during the storm.

- It is likely that the electricity will go out during snowfall. In that case, it is always good to have your cell phones fully charged so as not to be left without communication in cases of emergency.
- Have food prepared for the snowstorm. People who forget to shop for food before the storm are left without being able to eat well for hours.
- One last recommendation is to have a bag of ice melt salt ready. It spreads, especially on the roads located outside the house and the sidewalk. It won't prevent everything from disappearing, but it will be easier when it comes to cleaning.

Williams Park full of snow after the storm.



### During the Storm

At the time of the snow storm, there is not much to do, but there are certain points that we must take into account at this time.

- To maintain the heat of the heating. Close doors to unused rooms to keep heat in one area.
- If the heating is not strong, you can stay warm by covering yourself with a quilt or blanket and wearing warm clothes to feel comfortable during the snow storm.
- Something that most people do is put towels or rags under the doors because there are some that have openings where the cold wind enters, thus preventing the cold from entering.

**Solidarity Tip:**  
Try to help those  
around you,  
especially the elderly



New London Downtown after snowstorm.

### After the Storm

The time has come where the most work is carried out. The snow has finished falling, and it is time to clean up.

Car covered in snow.



- Start by clearing the snow from the entrances, the paths around your house, and the sidewalks. and always adding a little more ice melt salt to melt the little snow that remains on the ground.
- If you have a car, the next thing you should do is clean it. Remove all the snow that is on it, and also clean the parking lot and the path to go out to the track.





# Security Breach At Connecticut College

An information theft that cannot be ignored

Article by: Jesse Bisunia



Connecticut College Campus.

Connecticut College in New London reported a data security incident and is undertaking a thorough forensic investigation as cybersecurity experts are addressing the breach. The school claimed that an unauthorized party accessed and acquired files on the college's computer systems, including personal information from current students. The college claimed that, so far, they believe none of the stolen information has been misused. They are offering

free credit monitoring services to those whose information was compromised. The college is taking extensive measures to make sure those students won't have to worry about any fraudulent activity involving their personal information. Interim President Les Wong sincerely apologized to the campus community for the incident that occurred and said the college is committed to maintaining the privacy of personal information in its possession and has taken

additional precautions to safeguard it. In addition to the safeguard, the college proposed that all students who have been notified of this security infraction place a fraud alert on their credit file, consider placing a security freeze on their credit file, and obtain a free credit report. A spokesperson for Connecticut College said that because this is an ongoing investigation, they are unable to provide any additional information on the subject matter.



Connecticut College Entrance Sign.

**"If it happens to other students, obviously it can happen to you"**

**-Zach Giugno,  
Senior at Connecticut College**

**"Nobody wants their information out like that, ...that's super serious. It's definitely alarming"**

**-Claire Himmel,  
Junior at Connecticut College**



Connecticut College Symbol, since 1911.

If your personal information is compromised or stolen, consider the following immediate action plan:

- Place a fraud alert on your credit report.
- Close out accounts that have been tampered with or opened fraudulently.
- Report the identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).
- File a report with your local police department.



# Hit-and-Run Suspect Brought Into Custody

Routine morning for Groton citizens takes a tragic turn

Article by: Jesse Bisunia

**O**n January 18th, at about 6:10 a.m., emergency services were called to the scene of a pedestrian who was evidently struck by a vehicle, who then fled the scene and drove off, near the intersection of Benham Avenue and Forest Street in Groton.

The pedestrian was immediately transported to the nearest hospital and is expected to make a full recovery. The police department reported that community members had assisted the victim in any way possible to get him the help he needed. Around 2 weeks later,

the police identified the suspect as Russell Ledger, 67, of Groton, who was charged with evading responsibility, causing serious physical injury, tampering with evidence, and failing to use care to avoid a pedestrian.

No description of the vehicle used in the hit-and-run was available, as officers are asking for the public's help to identify the vehicle and are calling for anyone who witnessed the pedestrian get hit or noticed any sort of erratic driving at around that time to call officials. Ledger was held on a \$30,000 court-set bond.

**Each year there are  
7.3 million motor  
vehicle accidents  
recorded in the U.S.**





# Cookie Dough Brownie

## For Sweet Enjoyers

Article by: Max Hillyer

Sweets and treats are among many people's favorite things to snack on and enjoy. A favorite to many people is the cookie brownie dessert. This dessert takes the combination of a cookie and brownie and puts it into one. It's like having the best of both worlds!

**People who have tried this have said,  
"Super chocolaty & easy dessert on a time crunch."**

### Ingredients:

- Box of Brownie Mix
- Container of cookie dough
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup of water

### Cookware:

- 8"X 8" Pan
- Spoon
- Measuring Cup
- Large Bowl



Ingredients placed on the stove.

### Steps:

**1. Preheat oven to 350 Degrees Fahrenheit.** While the oven warms up, gather your ingredients and prepare your baking pan

**2. Mix the brownie batter.** Use a sturdy whisk or spatula to blend the wet and dry ingredients together, ensuring a smooth and velvety texture.

Take care not to overmix, as this can result in tough brownies.

For the brownie batter, you will mix:

- Box of brownie mix
- 1 egg
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup of water

**3. Place cookie dough on bottom of glass, making a thick layer.** Take your time to ensure an even layer, as this will contribute to the overall presentation.

**4. Pour brownie batter on top carefully.** With this step, we have the pan ready to bake.

**5. Place in oven for 50 minutes.** Try to use a stopwatch to measure time. After 50 minutes, check if it is ready using a toothpick to ensure if the dough is

still raw. If the dough still comes out raw, I let it bake for another 5 or 10 minutes.

**6. Enjoy and eat.** You can add turned cream to give it a good presentation and an extra flavor to taste. Share it with those you love most.

An easy way to make delicious brownies that you can prepare for special occasions. These brownies are sure to impress your guests with their rich fudgy texture.



The final product.





# Bass & Guitar

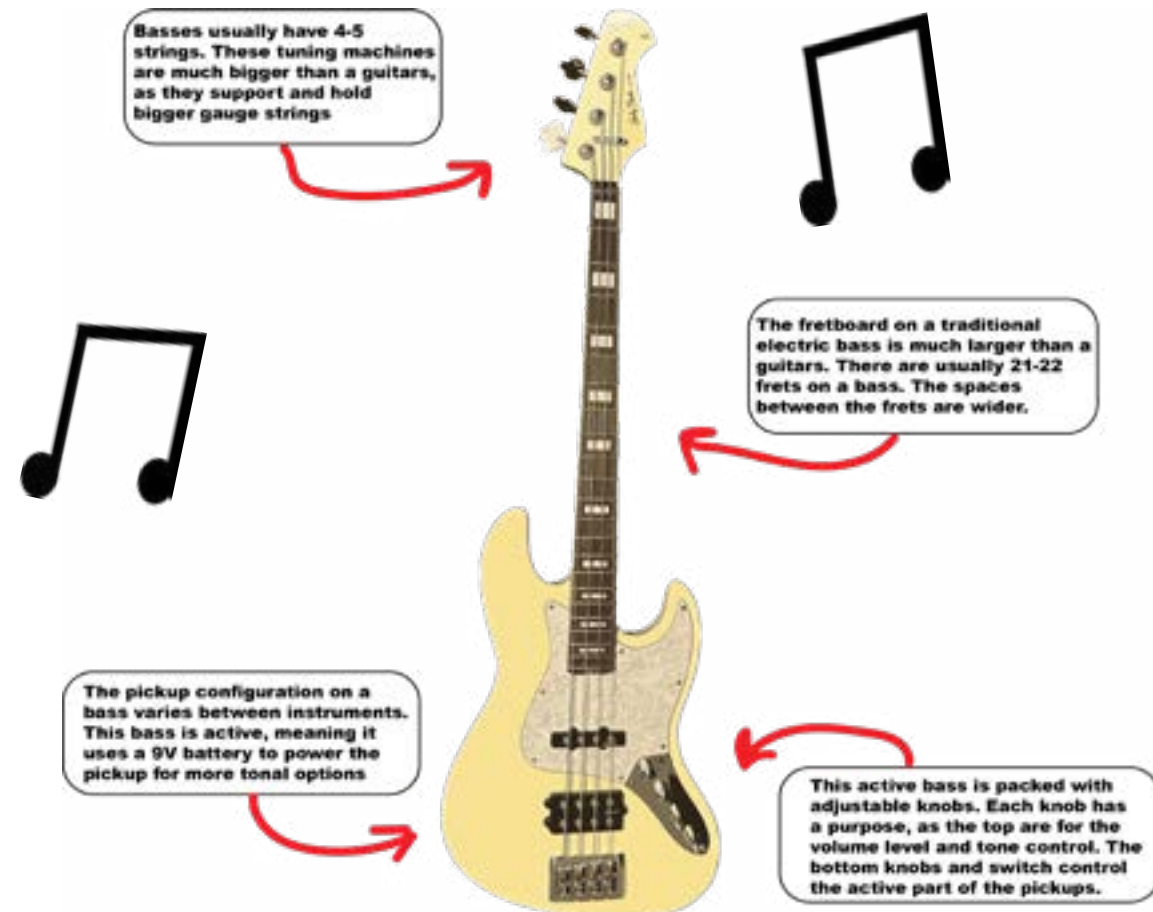
## Totally different from what many people believe

Article by: Max Hillyer

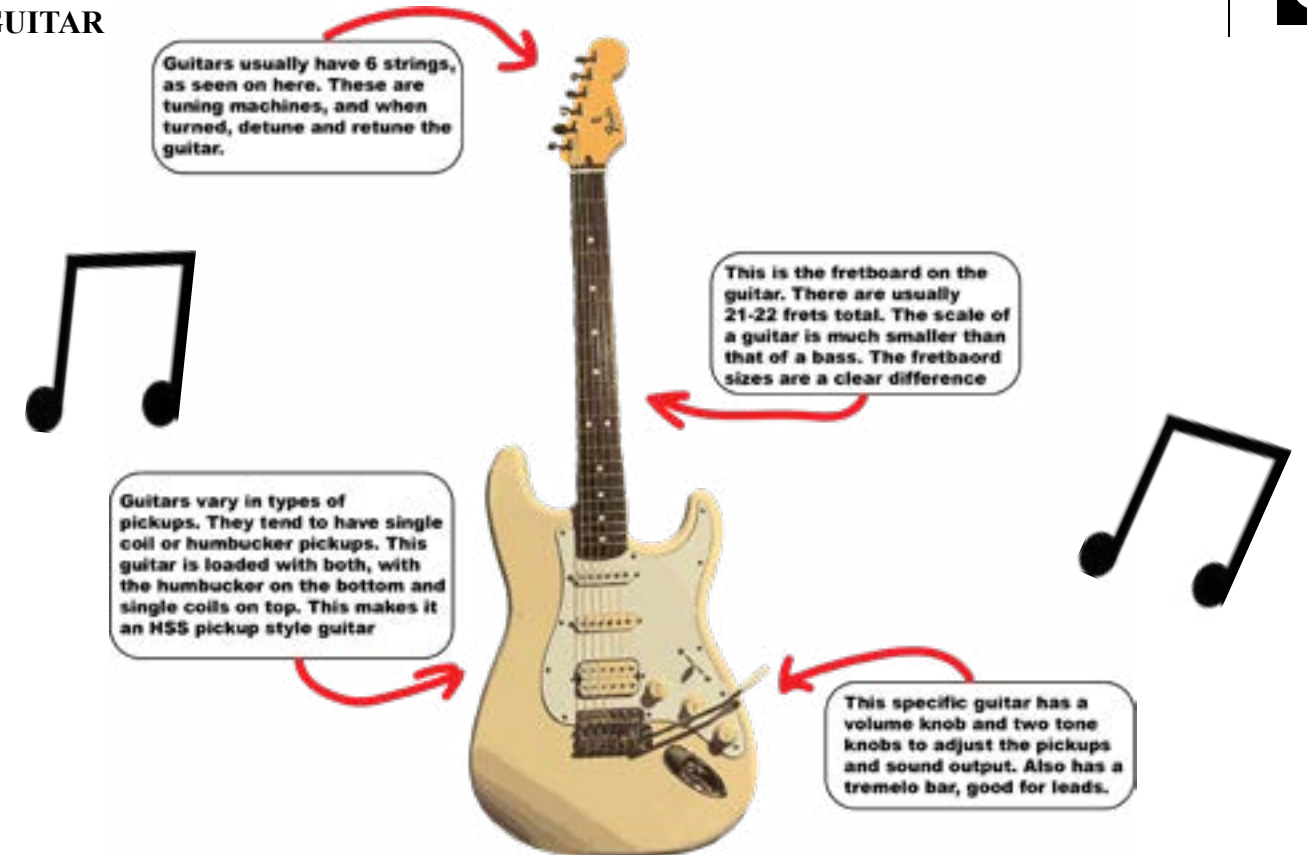
**B**ass and guitar look pretty much identical to some people. They look very much alike, but you would be surprised to know that they are both completely different and unique in their own way. In a band setting, the bassists job it to keep the groove and low end tight throughout the playing. The guitar would take control of the higher end of the mix, creating melodies. Each together produces a well-rounded sound, as each instrument covers a certain area in the sonic space. The guitar is usually less heavy and smaller than a bass. The gauge of the strings is smaller because each open note is pitched

an octave higher than a bass. There are usually six strings on the guitar, which is perfect for all the riffs, melodies, licks, and tricks you can make. The scale length of a guitar can vary, but it sits around 24.75" to 25.5." This is a good difference compared to the average scale length of a bass, which is 34." Bass guitars will likely have fewer strings than a guitar, as the main bit of playing will just be on the lower end of the fretboard. Bass strings will make up the same first four strings of a guitar: E, A, D, and G. Both are awesome instruments to learn, and when played together, they create something special.

### BASS



### GUITAR



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# March: Events of Interest

## Activities you can enjoy with friends and family

Article by: Benjamin Garay

This March don't miss the following local events that you can enjoy with friends or family.

### Events:

#### 19th Annual Mystic Irish Parade: March 24th

Organized by the Mystic Irish Parade Foundation, the annual St. Patrick's Day parade will be one of the events that will attract many people to appreciate the parade. On Sunday, March 24, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., the parade will take place, full of floats, bands, shops, and a pleasant atmosphere full of many people. The starting location will be the south parking lot of the Mystic Seaport, so get a parking spot early and enjoy this event with your friends.



#### Eggtopia: March 23th



This March 23, Griswold Elementary School will host an early Easter celebration. The festivities begin with an exciting Easter egg hunt, promising thrills for participants of all ages. The event, scheduled from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. This offers a perfect opportunity for families to come together and embrace the spirit of Easter. Best of all, this community event is completely free filled with music and fun. Don't miss this exciting celebration.

#### Norwich Saint Patrick's 10th Parade: March 3rd



Norwich is enthusiastically joining in the festivities with its own vibrant celebration. On March 3, starting at 1:00 p.m. m., Norwich's historic center will come alive with the sights and sounds of the St. Patrick's Festival, marking its illustrious tenth anniversary. The highlight of the day is the long-awaited St. Patrick's Parade, which features a variety of colorful floats and lively bands marching through the streets. Meanwhile, the festival offers an eclectic mix of live music, engaging vendors, and plenty of activities for all ages to enjoy. With this year's milestone anniversary, the festivities promise to be more memorable than ever, making them an event not to be missed. Join the jubilant atmosphere and immerse yourself in the rich traditions of St. Patrick's Day in Norwich.

#### New London Saint Patrick Day Parade: March 17th

The neighboring city of New London is gearing up for its own spectacular St. Patrick's Day parade, organized by the New London Association. Set to take place on Sunday, March 17th, at 1:00 PM, the downtown area will transform into a vibrant celebration of Irish culture and heritage. With a lineup of local bands, lively music, and an array of activities, this year's parade promises to be bigger and better than ever before. Spectators can expect a wider view and enhanced viewing experience, making it the perfect opportunity to gather with friends and family to revel in the festive atmosphere.





# Places of Interest to Visit

Now you will know where to go

Article by: Benjamin Garay

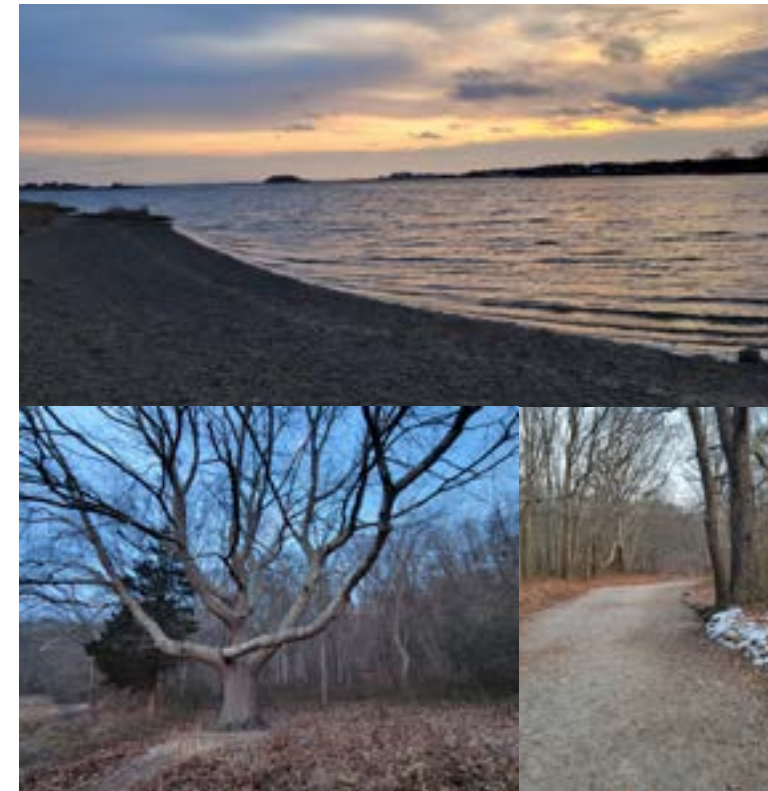
## Nature's Art Village

If you want to spend a day full of activities and fun things to do, this entire town is dedicated to fun and curiosity for the whole family. Nature's Art Village has several places where you can enjoy various things. antiques, minigolf, museums, fossils and many more curious things to explore. The most notable places this season are the antique shop and ancient fossil shop. Gems are one of the most abundant things in this town, they sell different types of precious stones and curious shapes. There is also minigolf although it is not available now, but during the spring you will be able to access this activity. You could plan a day to explore this entire town.



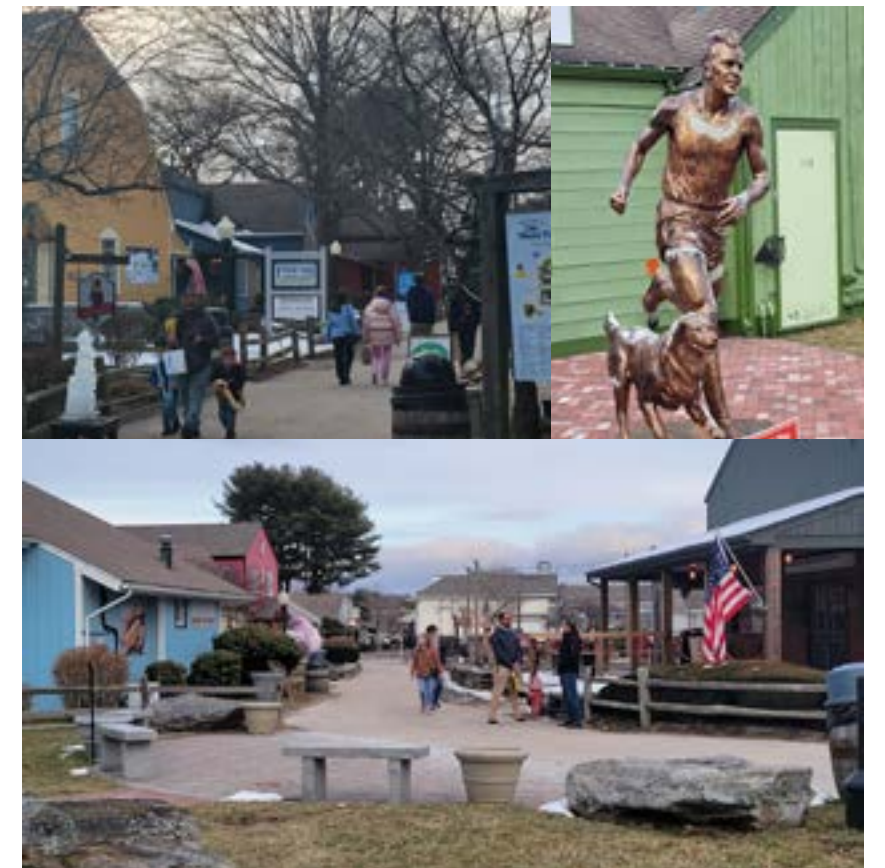
## Bluff Point State Park

For those who like to walk or run, Bluff Point State Park is one of the natural destinations that will catch your attention. It is a long path through the forest that ends up reaching a ravine above the sea. A beautiful ocean view and one of the most beautiful sunsets in Connecticut. Perfect to spend an afternoon with your partner and have a long chat with friends while walking. Right now the park is not so visited due to the weather but in spring times you can see the beautiful nature growing so it is a nice place to consider to see the trees and flowers grow. The park is open from 8:00 a.m. until sunset.



## Olde Mystic Village

A beautiful town full of restaurants, shops, and attractions that you can visit any day of week. Located in the town of Mystic, this place is one of the main places where you can visit if you ever decide to hike through southeastern Connecticut. There are shops for all tastes and ages, so anyone can have fun in this small town. From 1963 to the present, Olde Mystic Village has been a destination that many people prefer to visit. In addition to being close to the mystic aquarium, you can easily spend a whole day touring the place.





# Bob Marley: One Love



The path of one of the most iconic singers

Article by: Max Hillyer



Bob's Marley Promotional Poster.

In the past few years, there have seemed to be more biopics and discographies of musicians and bands coming out in theaters. Movies about the lives and music of Elton John, Queen, and Elvis have been in widespread media. Directed by Reinaldo Marcus Green, the newly released movie, Bob Marley: One Love, is nothing short of big news in the movie industry.

The film, which spans around 1 hour and 44 minutes, talks about the life of Bob Marley and his band, The Wailers. His music would share and spread the ideas of love, equality, and fairness to all. The movie does not hold back on sharing that message. The movie shares everything from the personal issues, achievements, and goals Bob Marley had and overcame. The movie touches on time all throughout Bob Marley's life, on and off the stage. The drama in the movie goes through a roller coaster of events that are not left disappointing.

The movie looked visually stunning, as it really took the viewer back in time with the dress wear and style. One thing that could have been lacking in the film is more attention to details about Marley's life. The movie focused heavily on movie-based drama issues, like the love life between him and his fellow bandmate, Rita. Rotten Tomatoes gives this film a 43% in the tomato meter and a 93% as an audience score. Problems in the film were how it lacks a certain depth behind Bob Marley and focuses more on the story aspect of it. Overall, the film does a nice job of providing the audience with a solid movie that shows the grand scheme of Bob Marley, his music, and the importance behind it.

# Mickey Mouse In Public Domain



The most popular Disney mascot in everyone's hand

Article by: Derek Denis

Every year, a new set of creative works enters the public domain and becomes available for the public to creatively use and profit from. When creative material enters the "public domain," it is no longer protected by trademark, copyright, or patent laws. Although a work in the public domain is free to use without permission, it cannot be owned by anyone else. For a work to enter the public domain, the copyright must expire, or the copyright owner must deliberately place their work in the public domain. A creative work can also enter the public domain if the owner fails to follow copyright renewal rules.

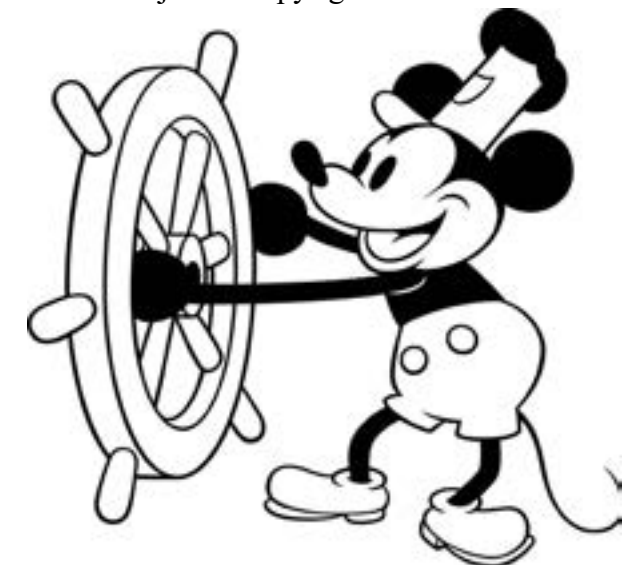
The most notable work to enter the public domain this year is Walt Disney's "Steamboat Willie." The 1928 script was the first cartoon to feature Mickey Mouse. After 95 years of copyright protection, anyone in the U.S. has access to creatively reuse this pop culture icon. Although the "Steamboat Willie" version of Mickey Mouse is free to use, the modern version of Mickey is still copyright protected by Disney.

When the original cartoon was first released in November 1928, it was revolutionary. "Steamboat Willie" was one of the first animated films to use synchronized sound, and because of this, it quickly took the world by storm and gained widespread critical acclaim.

Disney has fought to maintain ownership of

this work for many decades, to the extent of even lobbying the U.S. government to change copyright laws. In 1976, copyright laws were changed, allowing owners to retain ownership for the duration of the author's life plus 50 years. In 1998, Disney successfully convinced lawmakers to change the law once again, resulting in copyright owners maintaining protection for the duration of the author's life, plus 70 years.

Despite Disney's extensive efforts to maintain ownership of "Steamboat Willie," it finally entered the public domain in January 2024. Disney recently made an official statement regarding "Steamboat Willie." According to the Associated Press, they said, "We will, of course, continue to protect our rights in the more modern versions of Mickey Mouse and other works that remain subject to copyright."



Mickey Mouse from "Steamboat Willie".



# Losing Ma'Damn Mind over Madame Web

Does the new web heroine live up to the hype?

Article by: Lee Metzger

First and foremost, it really wasn't that bad. People were coming out of the woodwork to claim, "Madame Web may not only be the worst movie of the year, but perhaps the decade. Perhaps the century!" But this hypothetical doesn't take away from the fact that Madame Web was bad, but it wasn't that bad.

We open with a flashback to some year of 1970's, and we see a young Constance Webb, a scientist (?) and her security detail, Ezekiel Sims. I am not a huge comics fan, so take this review with a grain of salt. I do, however, know a little bit about who these characters get their namesakes from, and to me, it seemed like this Ezekiel guy had almost nothing to do with the Ezekiel Sims from the comics, outside of having a loose-fitting suit and walking around with bare feet. Ezekiel, played by Tahar Rahim, has fallen victim to yet another trope the greater Marvel Cinematic Universe is always itching to whip out: he is a bad guy who does bad things because he is a bad guy. He always wants more "power." So he steals a magic spider, shoots a pregnant Constance, and schleps out of the rainforest, no problem. And thus, the movie begins. The main issue I had with the film up to this point was that the dialogue was absolutely horrendous. There are a few cardinal rules in filmmaking, one of which is "show, don't tell." The amount of times Constance turned (almost) to the camera to say something like "We're here looking for a magic spider because the movie needs me to" gave me a double dose of agita coupled with intense whiplash. Ezekiel would look (almost) directly into the camera and say something like, "I'm here to work

as your bodyguard, but I also want a spider so I can be a cool spider-like man, NOT SPIDER-MAN, no. But here is where things turn. Constance gives us a line that equates to "We've been here for months; we'll never find the spider," and then cuts to Ezekiel rifling through her belongings back at camp. Constance walks out of the jungle holding a jar and says, "Ope! I Found the bugger!" and then good old



Madame Web Promotional Poster

Zeke straight up shoots her. After this moment, things actually get kind of good. She goes home to her shockingly apartment and lets the dirtiest cat in the world onto the same table she eats on (disgusting). Johnson then gets roped into doing "girl stuff" with a pregnant Mary Parker, played by the ever-delightful Emma Thompson. She has some very funny (sad) bits about her mom getting shot in the rainforest, and it's so effortlessly awkward and genuine. Oh yeah, she has powers now too. She climbed into a car, fell off a bridge, and died for a little bit. Now she can manipulate time. Pretty cool stuff, actually. Compared to the similar Sony property Morbius, the visuals looked kind of cool, and Johan Soderqvist's soundtrack worked well with the nebulous and sinewy scenes of Johnson floating through the web of time. The filmmakers must have read a Wikipedia article in between acts as well, because the show-don't-tell of it all was prominent in how Cassandra began to develop control over her powers.

That is one of the main issues with the first act. The filmmakers didn't trust us as the audience to have the capability to follow their plot. If you can't trust yourself as a filmmaker enough to put the things in your film that will signify to the audience that something is happening and then trust the audience that they will understand the things you are putting in your film well enough to pick up, then your film will be doomed to fail. Madame Web began doing this in the second act, and the movie was much better for it.

Eventually, Sidney Sweeney's Julia Cornwall, Isabela Merced's Any Corazon, and Celeste O'Connor's Mattie Franklin show up and are all tied together within Cassandra's gasp web. The four of them escape the initial baddie interaction. Cassandra needs to go monologue for a bit, so she leaves the young women in the woods somewhere in New Jersey. That would suck super hard, even after the advent of smart cell phones (oh yeah, this movie takes place in 2003), so they dip on out of there and head to a diner. We get treated to this awful thing that movies like to do where girls hear a song and then just stand on a table and dance indiscriminately, off-tempo, and devoid of any discernible dance- movement. Then one of my two favorite moments happens: knowing the exact

time she needs to arrive at the diner to save her young wards, Cassandra flies through the front door in her stolen cab and bodies, dude. Ezekiel jettisons into the cake case and falls, temporarily stunned. Kids to cab to tire squeal, and we're off. She smashes an ambulance through a billboard and catches Sims midair in something that would have looked at home in a Fast and Furious movie. Anyway, the movie ends, and it was fine. I would watch it again if someone else wanted to, but never on my own.

How would I fix it? I think it's pretty simple, actually. One of the biggest issues with the film is with the antagonist, Ezekiel Sims. His motivation is easily boiled down to "I want to be powerful and stay powerful forever." We don't know any of his friends or any of his family. We don't see his business; we barely see his apartment—just one big wall of windows with a desk and a lady on a computer with eight screens. If we already don't know anything about him, then why let us even see him? This movie is basically just a horror flick, with a little bit of superhero stuff sprinkled on top. It's a final destination with a little bit of a nightmare on Elm Street. At the end, when Cassandra is tracing back how this all came to be and sees Ezekiel back there with her mom in the rainforest, could that be a better reveal? Who knows, I'm no screenwriter. But I am sure of one thing: I would watch Dakota Johnson slam a yellow 2003 Crown Vic into a masked villain any day of the week.

**According to Rotten Tomatoes:** **13%**  
**Audience Score:** **56%**





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### Word Search / Issue #4

CAWCMEBBIKCHOXM  
ZUHTSZGSTORMRMU  
MLADDKGEGUITARF  
NNDPVMRFSUHGWNW  
XSURUVPWDHYQXLY  
KMXXGIYVGUJXSEVN  
AOSKAMMLDTAUDBM  
CUNRAMYFAKMLTVF  
LSOPXXBYTIGPHZ  
UEWQRCMLARZUTDO  
BYMACOOKIEPVYEN  
GGAODJOYPNOYRSL  
KPNRAONYBBGQRSI  
PPUQMNZSKBCKYUN  
DTHLEIOEFQUFCE

### Word Bank

1. SNOWMAN  
2. COOKIE  
3. GAMBLING  
4. GUITAR  
5. CLUB
6. STORM  
7. DATA  
8. MOON  
9. ONLINE  
10. MOUSE

### Scavenger Hunt / Issue #4

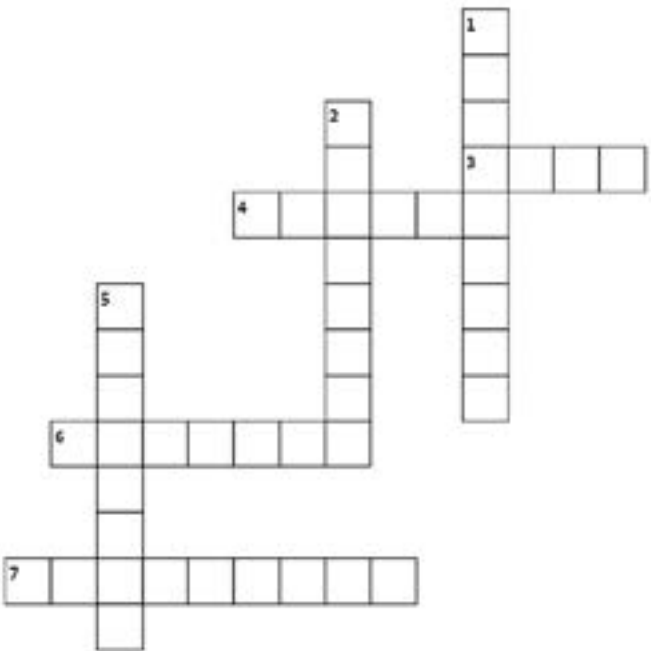
Find the hidden MASK in this issue of *The Current* and e-mail the answer to [thecurrentspring2024@gmail.com](mailto:thecurrentspring2024@gmail.com). Find the hidden items in all 6 issues of the 2024 Spring Semester for a chance to win a \$25 Amazon giftcard!



### Sudoku / Issue #4

5	3			7			
6			1	9	5		
	9	8					6
8				6			3
4			8		3		1
7				2			6
	6					2	8
			4	1	9		5
				8			7
							9

### Crossword / Issue #4



#### Across

3. A large area of land with grass and trees.  
4. Indoor area for parking or storing motor vehicles.  
6. To be right for.  
7. Marked path for pedestrians crossing a street.

#### Down

1. To act or work with another or others.  
2. Formal activity conducted on a important occasion.  
5. A loosening of the chemical bonds that make something solid.



Wyoming, February, 1876. "The Hills."



A few days ago...



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