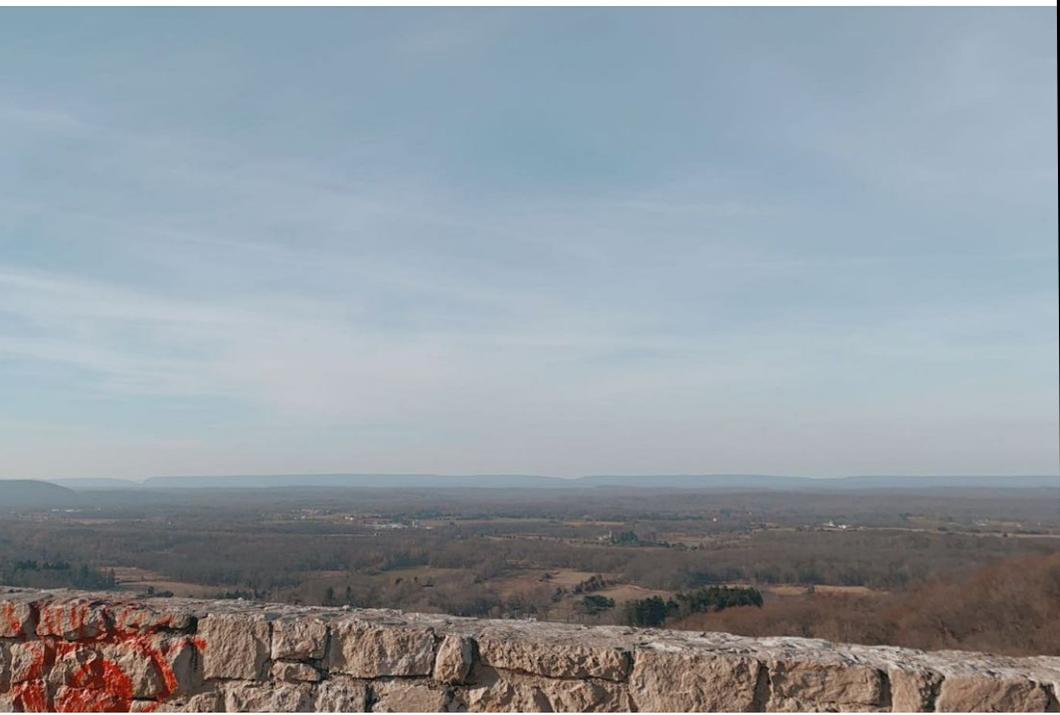




# THE VOYAGER

FEBRUARY 2021



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A NOTE FROM  
THE  
NEWSPAPER  
STAFF  
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BACK TO SCHOOL!

THIS ISSUE IS LOADED  
WITH NEW STORIES,  
RANGING FROM  
SOCIAL MEDIA TO  
THE CORONAVIRUS!  
PLEASE READ THE  
ENTIRE ISSUE TO  
FIND OUT!

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*On the front cover: The view from Allamuchy Mountain  
State Park in Andover, NJ.  
Taken by Angela Duszkievicz*

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT BY MEEKA VARDI**

Ever wonder why those pretzels are just so delicious? Or why you cannot stop grabbing chip after chip from that half-filled crinkled bag? There is far more truth behind those cabinet doors, a truth left unnoticed by the common person, a truth better left ignored for some. The truth is rather unsettling, to say the least. Some foods may seem addictive - no, not “seem”. Some foods are addictive.

Though each bit of junk food has its own set of (a very long list of) ingredients, there are a few commonalities amongst them: high fructose corn syrup. High fructose corn syrup, or HFCS, is a sweetener made from cornstarch, some of whose glucose has been converted to fructose, that is used in commercially produced foods and soft drinks as a cheaper alternative to sucrose. Dr. Francesco Leri, a neuroscience professor at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada, showed that lab rats self-dosing on HFCS behaved like other rats dosing on cocaine. This study showed that the brain functions were similar to that of the rats on certain drugs. Not only is it extremely addictive, but it also can have a detrimental impact on your health. With HFCS being the main reason for the United States’ high obesity rate, it is evident that this is impacting millions and millions of people - proving its addictive qualities.

Nia Rennix, a clinical nutritionist who specializes in weight loss and blood sugar regulation, stated: “Salt is extremely addictive, just as much as sugar. The more you consume salt, the more you crave it, and manufacturers realize this...They continue to add salt to foods because they want you to continue to purchase [their products]”. Humans require salt to survive. We as a species were created to enjoy salt, as it is crucial for survival. As salt grew more scarce, humans began to crave it, to ensure the species’ survival.

It may seem impossible to cut out the seemingly “best” foods from your diet, but that is not entirely necessary. Food intake in moderation is always better, especially in this case, because cutting something out completely will inevitably lead to the recurrence of consumption of that food/those foods.

## **THE END? DIRECTED BY CORONAVIRUS BY SIDDHI PATEL**

There is so much going on in the world at all times, and taking a reprieve from it all is necessary to keep sane. Taking a break could include many things, like sleeping or going out with friends. One of the most common ‘breaks’ people take include entertaining themselves, whether that is books, music, or the biggest of all, MOVIES! Some may look at watching movies as a hobby or pastime, while others think it is a waste of time and is not educational. Besides the point, the movie industry is going through the roof with its sales, actors, directors, writers, ideas, and the movie itself. However, is it still through the roof? The reason this question is being asked is because of the well-known situation the entire world is dealing with, the coronavirus pandemic.

When we think about movies, our experience of watching them is one of the first things that pop into our heads. With this said, movie theatres are usually the place we go to enjoy a new blockbuster with family, friends, and tasty snacks. The issue with movie theaters is that they are indoor and seat a large number of people at once, which means they shut down because they were unsafe during these times. This affected the industry as well as consumers. Movie production companies would delay blockbuster after blockbuster for the sake of it being projected on the ‘big screen’. Consumers would get impatient for the new movies to be released and heading out to the theatres. They miss the place where they can relax, have fun, and spend time with others’.

This was stretched out for a long time and still is for many. Theatres tried to reopen as coronavirus cases in the United States began to slow down during the summer, but that didn't work out too well. People are hesitant to go and for the ones that would, the constant fear of being clean and social distanced is not ideal. Along with cases rising once again, many shut down.

Will this keep happening? Where will movies go now? This is when major online subscription, on-demand, and streaming services like Amazon, Prime Video and Hulu came in as a platform for these new movies. There were a few movies, as well as series, that were released during these times for people to enjoy. This is a great alternative to the theatres, but do they do as well? Many people watch films using these services, but does everyone? There is a large population of people that don't pay for subscriptions or are just people that don't enjoy watching it on a smaller screen as much. With these cons, the movies and the industry suffered a few punches in the gut. However, it seems like these services won't be going anywhere anytime soon, as they have a long way to go in the fight of movies and the deadly virus. Movie theaters have faced a dangerously high level of financial pain, will they come back? Or is it the end?

## ***SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE ON SPENDING BY KAVYA SHAH***

How many times have you found yourself searching through your favorite influencer's social media profile and purchased something advertised by those celebrities? Social networking platforms provide a range of mobile-based apps and websites established to facilitate users to generate and share content. These platforms have grown astronomically in prominence across the last decade, and have also had a significant impact on our spending habits. Social media is constantly bombarding us with the products, companies, brands, and product experiences of celebrities along with influencers.

Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and many more have enhanced and strengthened their ability to anticipate what users want to see. A recent study has shown that social networks can motivate impulsive buying behavior and also serve as a source of encouragement triggering purchases. Businesses have also demonstrated social media to be particularly effective at raising consumers' awareness towards brands and products.

The most straightforward manner in which social media usage can lead to overspending is through targeted advertising. Marketers target users based on particular parameters, then re-target them so individuals are constantly exposed to advertisements. For example, Facebook allows marketers to target sponsored content based on general demographics, as well as various detailed attributes.

The mere exposure effect is a commonly used physiological phenomenon in which the more you are exposed to something, the more you would enjoy it. Therefore, many social media ads are designed to expose repeating ads of a brand rather than immediately selling a product. Another well-known phenomenon in psychology is called social proof, a perfect way for merchants to market their merchandise. Within social networking, metrics such as likes, followers, and comments tend to increase an individual's perception of the trustworthiness of the business and the quality of the product or service, without ensuring or verifying the products.

In addition, social media generates a propensity among users to equate their lifestyles with those of others. Furthermore, images of products or aspirational lifestyles shared on social media by people that we value or admire can also influence us to spend unnecessarily or indulgently. This causes the need to purchase a particular product or service merely because their preferred influencer or icon has promoted it. Overall, social media has a powerful impact on how and what individuals spend their money on, therefore be cautious and don't overspend.

## ***IS HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF?* BY MEEKA VARDI**

The United States faced many traumatic experiences as a country. These experiences are exactly what they intend to be, just experiences, nothing more. Nothing to be repeated - hopefully. This, however, is untrue in many cases. The politics of today seem to be overlapping precedent times.

The election of 1876 between Rutherford B. Hayes and Democrat Samuel Tilden of New York was one of the most hostile, controversial campaigns in American history. Not a far description of the presidential election of 2020 between President Donald J. Trump (Republican) and president-elect Joseph R. Biden (Democrat). History is beginning to repeat itself, and it only took 144 years. In both cases, Republicans held the White House and the Democrats were challenging them. The presidential election of 2020 had a voter turnout of about 66.3% - the highest percentage in 120 years according to The Washington Post. The election of 1876 had a voter turnout of 81.8% - an astonishing record for the United States (Star Tribune).

Both elections occurred during or around a financial crisis. For Tilden and Hayes, it was the Panic of 1873, and with Trump and Biden, the current pandemic. Both elections have strung up a great deal of work in literature, with numerous books being published for each of the two aforementioned presidential elections including the "Centennial Crisis: The Disputed Election of 1876" by the late Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist and "Captured" by senator Sheldon Whitehouse who takes a deep look at the corrupt ways of the United States government, as well as the corporate influence on the U.S.

The similarities between history and the present day are not limited to politics. Racism around the world is still prevalent, especially in the United States. Child labor has yet to vanish, as well as prison labor. Women still are

not being treated equally to men, and minorities continue to face unnecessary challenges brought to them by major groups.

It is true, the United States is far from perfect. However, it is not perfection we as a nation should be striving for because, unfortunately, this country is far from perfect. Very, very far. It is, but rather, progress, innovation, and improvements that this country's people should be working towards. We have yet to give our people the most basic human needs and are neglecting the foundation of this country in doing so. It is time to take a step back and focus on these basic "unalienable rights." The United States' foundation is built on these rights. We as individuals go through every day with the ability to choose between remaining in the past and letting it repeat, or moving forward and becoming better as a country. The choice is yours.

## ***ADDITIONAL PICTURES* BY ANGELA DUSZKIEWICZ**

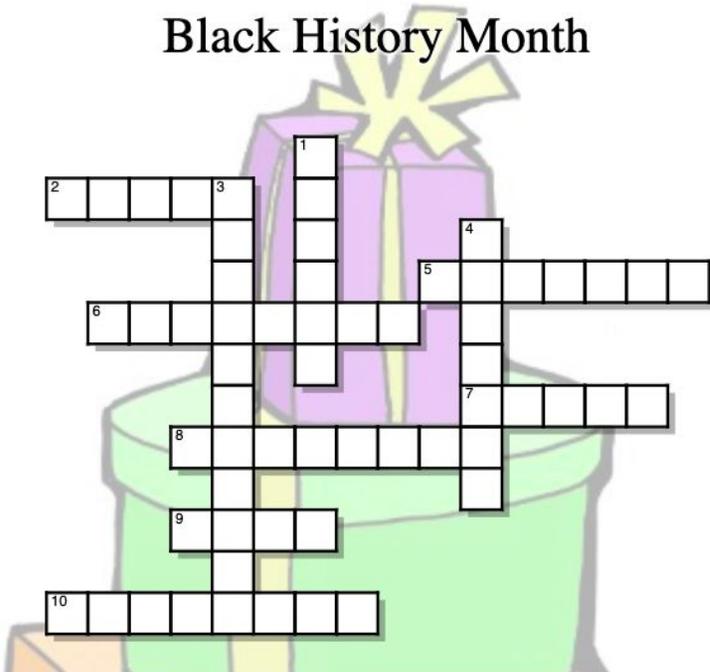


*Route 10 never fails to have nice sunsets.*

# CROSSWORD

## FEBRUARY

### Black History Month



#### ACROSS

- 2 Was Arrested For Not Moving Her Seat
- 5 Laws That Enforced Segregation In The South
- 6 Black History Month Is Observed In \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 First African-American President In U.S. History
- 8 First African-American Supreme Court Justice
- 9 "I Have A Dream" Speech
- 10 First African-American MLB Player In The Modern Era

#### DOWN

- 1 Led Slaves To Freedom Through Underground Railroad
- 3 Brown v. BOE Ruled That \_\_\_\_\_ Was Unconstitutional In Public Schools
- 4 He Issued The Emancipation Proclamation

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