

Letters to the Library

Describe yourself in a sentence or two, for example your age and occupation (or, if you do not have one, what you like to do). What is your household like?

I am a fifteen-year-old student who attends Sheehan High School in Wallingford, and I enjoy drawing, writing poetry, and discussing politics in the classroom! Currently, I live comfortably with my sister and my parents, who both work from home.

What is your day to day routine like now? What has changed? What has not changed?

Normally, I would wake up at 5:00 a.m. on a normal school day, but now I sleep in until 6:30 a.m. Instead of getting ready to go to school, I take this extra time to review all my assignments and complete any work for the day, if posted early. Our school schedule starts at 9:00 in the morning instead of 7:40. I complete all my assignments on time, just as I normally would for school. Due dates are a lot more flexible, so to some degree, I enjoy taking notes and writing papers on my own time. Usually, I would have some sort of extracurricular after school; however, most of my activities are not communicating as often as they would have before.

What precautions have you taken against the virus? How have you prepared? Were there any difficulties (shortages, high prices etc.)?

My family always stresses the importance of staying sane and taking as little risk as possible. My father and mother make sure to wear a mask and properly handle gloves. We all wash our hands after we touch groceries, even when we sanitize them. Fortunately, for the most part, there haven't been any problems with groceries, except for once when we placed an order a week early, but on the day of the delivery, they canceled it.

What have been the biggest challenges for you during this time?

Coping with not being able to have face-to-face interactions is difficult. Especially now, I miss the physical presence of my peers and wish for more than just Google Meets and FaceTime calls. Since I'm only a freshman, I also think a lot about all the events that I want to accomplish in high school, but because of the pandemic, I cannot achieve certain goals until school opens up again.

How have you stayed busy?

I have been writing lots of poetry to sort out my feelings towards this pandemic and trying to understand certain feelings that I would otherwise not think of under the distraction and stress of school. I also have been working out more and staying conscious of my eating habits. :)

Have there been any positives to this situation?

I think that this pandemic has certainly been an opportunity for students, such as myself, to further explore their passions and challenge their resilience. With more time on our hands, and through a positive mindset, we can develop our personal growth and self-reflect on the goals we want to achieve post-quarantine. On a normal day, we would spend most of our hours at school, but by surrounding ourselves with our family, we now have more time to learn about and grow our relationships. If anything, our gratitude has also revealed a close-knit community that stays hopeful even when things may seem uncertain. Personally, this extra time encouraged me to improve my physical health and workout when normally, I would not have enough time to because of a hectic school schedule! :)

What local Wallingford places/businesses do you miss most?

A place that I greatly miss would be The Parks and Rec. Department of the town because many familiar people would pop in and out, plus it held many important activities for students.

How have you stayed social while social distancing?

My friends and I FaceTime each other when we have trouble with certain classwork or even just to say hello and check up on each other. For class, we hold Google Meets for discussions and extra help on our assignments.

What is the first thing you are doing when things go back to normal?

The first thing I will be doing when things go back to normal is giving a huge hug to all my teachers, friends, and classmates who endured past their grievances and supported me along this journey in quarantine! :)

How did you celebrate the Holidays? Did you see family in person, digitally, or not at all?

Unfortunately, I did not celebrate any Holidays.

How will you be celebrating Wallingford's 350th Jubilee? If you were here for the 325th Jubilee, do you have any memories you would like to share?

I did not attend the Jubilee; however, when things clear up after the pandemic, I would love to celebrate with my friends and family for the next one!

What do you miss most about the Wallingford Public Library? What is the first thing you will be doing when you can come back into the building?

I loved the Capstone Center, where sometimes we would go for club meetings. It was always a comfortable, quiet space where we would always stay productive. I also really enjoyed the study spaces adjacent to the bookshelves. I loved sitting down at a table and hashing out my papers or simply studying, and it would certainly be the first thing I do when I come back to the library again.