



AP Photo by Patrick Semansky

Several members of the White House Coronavirus Task Force. From right to left: Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, President Donald Trump, Vice President Mike Pence and Deborah Brix, United States Global AIDS Coordinator and Response coordinator for White House Coronavirus Task Force.

Politics through a pandemic

By Eleanor Flannery
Sports Editor

While most Americans remain at home in self-isolation in the midst of a global pandemic, it can be easy to lose sight of what else is happening in the nation. News outlets highlight the latest updates of COVID-19, but it is vital in this election year to stay updated in the political world as we move closer towards November.

As of now, many states have postponed their presidential primaries; 15 states and one

territory being Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, West Virginia, Wyoming and Puerto Rico. These areas have all either “pushed back their presidential primaries or switched to voting by mail with extended deadlines,” according to the New York Times. Alaska is one of the states that will be voting completely via mail, with the state’s primary scheduled for April 10.

The Democrats will have to decide, ultimately,

between candidate hopefuls Senator Bernie Sanders and former Vice President Joe Biden. As it stands in the current polls, most recently gathered by RealClearPolitics, the average for the 2020 Democratic Presidential Nomination shows Biden leading over Sanders, 56 percent to 35.5, and delegate count 1,217 to 914. It’s looking like Biden will most likely become the Democratic nominee to battle President Trump later this fall.

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Pandemic puts new pressure on the White House

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The Trump administration, meanwhile, has been holding daily briefings about the government's response to COVID-19 in efforts to keep Americans updated during the pandemic. On Sunday, Trump proposed those affected by coronavirus try hydroxychloroquine, the anti-malaria drug, to combat the illness even though no thorough studies prove this method to be fully effective. "What do you have to lose? ... I've seen things that I like," Trump said in regard to the drug. "What do I know? I'm not a doctor. I'm not a doctor, but I have common sense."

It is unclear as to why Trump is so adamant about taking the experimental drug. According to NPR, "Lab studies have shown that the drug blocked the coronavirus from entering cells. But full-scale clinical studies have not yet shown that the drug is an effective COVID-19 treatment."

NIAID director Dr. Anthony S. Fauci recommends that the public continue to practice social distancing, wearing masks and following recommended procedures to protect against the

virus. He does not share the President's feelings on hydroxychloroquine. He said, during a press conference, "The evidence that you're talking about ... is anecdotal evidence."

Fauci also warned Americans this past Sunday on CBS, "Just buckle down, continue to mitigate, continue to do the physical separation because we've got to get through this week that's coming up because it is going to be a bad week."

Trump stated on Sunday, "We're starting to see light at the end of the tunnel." Though Fauci, infectious-diseases expert, said earlier in the day, "I will not say we have it under control. ... We are struggling to get it under control."

The United States surgeon general said, during an interview on Fox News Sunday, "This is going to be the hardest and the saddest week of most Americans' lives, quite frankly ... this is going to be our Pearl Harbor moment, our 9/11 moment, only it's not going to be localized. It's going to be happening all over the country. And I want America to understand that."

Through the chaos, Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York has been leading his citizens through the pandemic with unprecedented leadership. Cuomo holds daily briefings to inform New Yorkers of the latest updates and precautions he is performing to combat the COVID-19.

His briefings are televised nationally on cable

news networks, as his words seem to comfort many other Americans. Many viewers tune in to his broadcasts via social media. "I find myself watching your daily briefings because you bring calmness to me," one user said. "I don't live in New York, but my kids do, so I'm pretending you're my governor," another wrote.

Ventilators are desperately needed throughout the country, and Cuomo is trying to provide them to the people of New York by obtaining some from upstate hospitals and healthcare facilities when they are not in use.

"I'm not going to be in a position where people are dying and we have several hundred ventilators in our own state, somewhere else," Cuomo said on Friday during his briefing. "I apologize for the hardship to those institutions—ultimately there is no hardship, if you don't get the ventilator back, I give you my personal word I will pay you for the ventilator—but I'm not going to let people die because we didn't redeploy these ventilators."

It's important to continue social distancing during these times; this week is projected by health officials to be one of the hardest in the United States yet. Make sure to stay updated with the CDC, NIAID and medical professionals' advice on COVID-19. Remain inside and try to avoid public areas unless it is essential to venture out.

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Courtesy of Gov. Cuomo's Office

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo giving a brief to the media on Friday, April 3, 2020.

Spring breakers test positive for coronavirus

By Eli Goodhew
Staff Writer

For most people, spring break is supposed to be the most enjoyable time during the first part of the year. With midterms dawning on everybody and weather changing, this is the perfect way for everybody to decompress and get away. Sadly, during this usually enjoyable time, we are going through an epidemic, one that a lot of people are not taking very seriously.

Over 40 spring breakers who ignored the policy on social distancing have contracted this nasty virus. A good portion of people from Texas came home with the virus instead of a tan. Texas house speaker, Dennis Bonnen, claims that people need to get over themselves and understand that this is a severe issue. “Stop being an ass,” he says. “Grow up.” We need to understand the importance of social distancing and how it does indeed affect the spread of the disease.

Although it can be hard to distance yourself from your friends or even close relatives that are at a higher risk, it really is for the greater good, and we all have to band together. Ignorant people that keep putting themselves in situations like that should expect nothing less than to become ill when ignoring the rules put in place.

Most public beaches have shut down due to people ignoring these signs and warnings of avoiding public places. This intense decision should not be taken lightly. This is affecting the entire world. This is changing our everyday lives. So why isn't everybody doing their part?

That's the million-dollar question that we should all be asking ourselves. We should also take this time to truly digest what's going on. Even to think about the positives about how well the environment is doing.

The climate is changing. More trees are being planted. Cleaner water and better air quality are rising. Trying to find the sunshine in these dark times is vital.

Don't let corona ruin Easter!

By Aia Andonovska
Arts & Life Editor

Women's Day published an article that is a wonderful adaptation to traditional Easter fun for your kids, siblings and friends. Just because the general public is being restricted right now on where they can go doesn't mean you can't continue to have fun at home by celebrating the upcoming Christian holiday. Thanks to the wonderful invention of technology, you can host a virtual Easter egg hunt for your loved ones!

Social distancing is affecting us all, but in particular it's tough to be away from your family, especially when it's holiday season. During this time of the year, spring flowers bloom, the Easter bunny delivers baskets and gatherings occur all over the world. This year, there is a giant gap in the calendar that the

coronavirus has caused. Many people will be altering their Easter plans for this year to keep their families and others healthy and safe.

Women's Day recommends setting a time and date in your schedule that works for everyone. You might send out an electronic invite that people can receive on their phones, or create a festive e-vite to get people excited. The next step is to fill up your eggs with goodies and hide them! It is also advisable to work out the technological kinks the day before so you can have no stress and only fun. A test call would be a good idea. FaceTime or Zoom are good platforms to look into using with your family.

Although it will be different this year, it can be a great opportunity to try something new and have fun with your family. It will get your kids involved and give them something to do, and you as well! Happy virtual egg hunting!

Reader feedback:

'Thanks for checking in on us'

Editor's note: As a way of keeping in touch while many of us are away from campus, The Clarion invites all of our readers to let us know how you are doing via an online feedback form. Here is the latest submission via that form.

I'm under a stay-at-home order home in Maryland but all of my professors and BC staff have been checking in either with an entire class or individual students. I just wanted to take a moment to highlight this and say thanks to everyone who has taken the extra time to check in and make sure students are mentally and physically okay in these uncertain times.

My professors have all touched based via email and video call with everyone. There have been staff members such as Melissa Henson, Marie Jones and Melodie Farnham who have reached out to myself and other students via email. This is above and beyond their job description and much appreciated.

I also wanted to thank our essential personnel of dining services, maintenance and housekeeping that are keeping the campus clean and running. Thank you to everyone because we are all placed in a situation which we did not sign up for in the first place.

We will get through this together as a community—even when our community is spread out across various states.

—Grace Kelley

Send us your status updates, photos, or questions for the staff to answer using our online form at <http://bit.ly/clarion-feedback-2020>



Photo courtesy of Grace Kelley

“If you look closely, you can see my two cats modeling social distancing. Minerva is the young dark colored cat. Leo is the older tan colored cat.”

'Star Trek: Picard' review

By Sam Hipp
Staff Writer



The streaming service CBS All-Access is furthering their continuation of the Star Trek legacy with the recent release of the first season of their new series, "Star Trek: Picard." Reprising his role as Captain Jean-Luc Picard from "Star Trek: The Next Generation" (1987-1994), Patrick Stewart is at the helm of this ten-part series.

Returning alongside Patrick Stewart are Trek alumni Jonathan Frakes, Marina Sirtis and Brent Spiner, who played Commander Riker, Counselor Troi and Lt. Commander Data, respectively. Also returning is Jeri Ryan, who played the character Seven-of-Nine in the spinoff series "Star Trek: Voyager."

The plot of this series takes place decades after the events of "The Next Generation" in a bleaker, darker future where synthetic lifeforms (also referred to as androids) are banned and everyone curses like middle schoolers who found curse words for the first time. The first

episode showed clear signs that this series is very out of character for a Star Trek series.

This series, like much of Star Trek's last 10 years of content, is more about flash and style over substance. Picard trades off the important moral, philosophical and social themes of previous Star Trek incarnations with gratuitous CGI effects and over the top action sequences that take up too much time out of each episode.

While watching William Shatner fighting a man in a rubber lizard-man costume in the original series wasn't the most thrilling action sequence, there was still a lesson in morality at the end of that episode.

Many of the returning characters, including Captain Picard himself, seemed very out of character. The tired, depressed old man who we see in "Picard" is a far cry from the intelligent, philosophical, diplomatic and courageous Starfleet captain we've seen in "The Next Generation."

Many of the other characters are shown to be brutal and some nearly cruel in a future where people are more attune to their morals, and I'm only talking about some of the good guys here. The villains are, of course, cartoonishly evil and one-dimensional.

The main theme of "Star Trek: Picard" is acceptance of differences and to not judge people for the actions and mistakes of others, as shown in this series when Picard helps a synthetic woman find her people and protect them from destruction by bland Romulan villains.

This theme has been conveyed many times throughout the history of Star Trek, and those older series do it better since there is a greater focus on those struggles and they weren't shoving loud action in your face every few minutes in a vain attempt to keep you interested, when it only did the opposite.

Overall, I must give this series one out of five stars. It earned the one star for its select few touching moments and speeches, but the rest of this series is riddled with plot holes, uninteresting characters and poor writing. This series boldly went where no man should have to go again.

This series is a hopeless, dark and depressing piece of science fiction, a thing we don't need these days. In the troubling times we live in now, we need the Star Trek series that gave humanity hope and taught us that we, together, could overcome great adversity, both in the universe and within ourselves.



Can plants talk?

By Mickayla Smith
Staff Writer

According to NPR, plant enthusiasts can tune into their plants to see how they're doing. Using bio-sonification, devices like Music of the Plants and PlantWave enable plants to talk.

PlantWave grew from Data Garden started by Joe Patitucci and Alex Tyson in 2011. In 2012, PlantWave was born when the Philadelphia Museum of Art invited the label to do a demonstration at the museum.

Data Garden worked with an engineer named Sam Cusumano, who made a device that translated micro-conductivity on the surface of plants into a graph that can be used to control hardware and software synthesizers. What came out of this collaboration was "Data Garden Quartet" which featured four harmonizing plants that played music.

The music produced by the plants can be used in many different ways for many different occasions. However, PlantWave's goal is to develop an awareness that plants are living organisms.

"I think some people are very aware that plants are sentient beings that are, arguably, making decisions for themselves and responding to their environment," product development manager of Data Garden Jon Shapiro said. "But for a lot of people that's not something they think about every day. It

does allow people, and it has allowed me, to look at other life forms and appreciate their aliveness in a different way."

Don't be confused by their liveliness. They don't respond to things as humans do. "Plants don't sound like flutes," Shapiro said. The consumer version of the invention includes sensors that issue small signals through the plant, measuring variations in electrical resistance between two points within it.

"The variation in the connection is largely related to how much water is between those two points, which changes a lot as the plant is moving water around while it's photosynthesizing," Shapiro said. "Then we graphed that change as a wave, and then we translated that wave into pitch, so then essentially we're getting a stream of all these pitch messages coming from the plant." These pitches are then sent to the device's software to be turned into piano notes or guitar chords.

Some plants aren't made to produce music because of their size or delicate nature. So, picking the right plants to use is essential. The sounds the plants produce is a way for them to communicate their needs, but not to humans.

This is kind of like when our stomachs rumble; that means we're hungry. Plants react to their environment and things moving around them. That is how they produce sounds.

Weekly Horoscopes

By Mickayla Smith
Staff Writer

Aries: Caution, don't lose your composure. Work on whatever you think needs fixing in your personal life.

Taurus: Don't feel pressured to do something that makes you uncomfortable.

Gemini: Remember physical distancing, not social distancing.

Cancer: You will find that people are giving you the recognition and admiration you need to build yourself up this week. Take this to heart.

Leo: Your finances are troubling you now. As time passes, so will this worry.

Virgo: Focus on your well-being this week. Your focus may be on someone else right now, but you need to draw the attention back to yourself for a while.

Libra: Are you fully prepared to start pursuing one of your dreams? If so, do it! If not, wait.

Scorpio: Communication is key this week. Maybe rehearse what you want to say before you start talking to someone.

Sagittarius: Seek emotional shelter right now. There is a lot on your plate and it's starting to get overwhelming. Take this time to work through your emotions.

Capricorn: You now have the time to move forward with something you have wanted to accomplish for a while.

Aquarius: You will be able to find closure this week with something personal you've been dealing with for a long time.

Pisces: Friendship is SO important now. Take this time to get back in touch with some old friends that have always brought light into your life.



Courtesy of Cosmopolitan



Courtesy of Chatelaine

Wheeler lifts EPA laws

By Carmen Boone
Copy Editor

How much more pollution can be dished out before the earth dies at the hands of climate change? According to President Trump, there is an infinite disposal space for fossil fuels and CO2.

Because of the escalating danger of the coronavirus in the United States, Trump and the fossil fuel industry have been able to work politics in their favor. In late March, Andrew Wheeler, the EPA Administrator, lifted all EPA laws put in place by the Obama Administration. Big fossil fuel companies claimed that COVID-19 was the cause of the crash in oil and gas prices, and therefore, was threatening the industry.

In response, fossil fuel companies have been given a free pass not to monitor their pollution with no penalty at all. The fossil fuel industry is where all the money is, which means they have the power to control many political decisions.

The politicians funded by the fossil fuel industry will work in their favor.

The coronavirus has been used as an excuse and a distraction so the Trump Administration can continue to pollute the environment and bring climate change progress to a dead stop. When will the ignorance end?

The increase in panic for the coronavirus and the stay at home orders, however justified they may be, are just another reason for fossil fuel companies and the Trump Administration to take advantage of the lack of attention climate change has recently experienced. We must open our eyes to the damage being done.

The environment we live in is already suffering greatly from CO2 emissions on a daily basis. Lifting protection laws will only worsen the damage, and without opposition pushing back against this, politically, we are on a short road to our demise.

If COVID-19 doesn't take us first, climate change will finish the job much sooner thanks to Wheeler and the Trump Administration.

The cost of a life

By Julie Carter
Opinion Editor

With more and more time spent at home, many Americans are turning to the news for incoming coverage of COVID-19. Media associations will oftentimes allow commentators to present their opinions on what should be done with every facet of life during this time from how we should grocery shop to when we should reopen the economy.

Many of these commentators have expressed a similar sentiment: perhaps it is time that senior citizens should collectively "sacrifice" themselves in order to keep the economy running. This sentiment is perhaps best summed up by Texas Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick who identifies as a senior citizen.

"Those of us who are 70-plus, we'll take care of ourselves, but don't sacrifice the country," Patrick said.

Patrick's comment immediately received backlash with the hashtag "Not Dying 4 Wall Street" trending on Twitter.

"My mother is not expendable. We will not put a dollar figure on human life. We can have a public health strategy that is consistent with an economic one. No one should be talking about social Darwinism for the sake of the stock market," New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo

tweeted after the controversy spread.

Patrick's comments carry so much ignorance that it is mind-boggling.

To start, human life, no matter the background it comes from, has value far greater than the cost of an economy.

Senior citizens aren't the only at-risk group for COVID-19. Even if every senior citizen agreed to sacrifice themselves in order to reopen the economy, you're risking so many more lives. The action of reopening the economy at present is effectively stating "the economy of a nation means more than that of its citizens."

If Patrick is really this worried about the economy being destroyed as the result of precautionary measures to protect people from COVID-19, it truly shows that he does not believe in the resilience of the American people.

Personally, I will stay inside for as long as I need to. I cannot wait for the day where I can finally step out of my house, hug my friends and family that I haven't seen in so long, go to my favorite restaurants, get to work and pick up from where we left off.

Living in the days of COVID-19 may be utterly terrifying, but we all must remember "this too shall pass." Protect who we can now. Pick up the pieces when it is over. Everything is going to be okay. It is just a matter of when.

BC athletics makes 'wellness checks' on current student-athletes

Due to the current situation with COVID-19, many student-athletes are feeling miserable. Seasons have been cancelled and lives have been changed since the pandemic started. Brevard College Athletics is trying to make sure all athletes are doing okay while in quarantine.

Coaches on every team have made and will be making contact with their athletes to make sure everything is alright, wherever they are. Brevard College Director of Athletics Myranda Nash commented on this situation, "Our coaches are making contact with all of our student-athletes throughout the coming weeks as we know this has been a difficult realization and adjustment for all our programs, especially those in season."

BC Athletics is making sure that athletes are not only adjusting to the cancellation of their seasons, but also the transition to online classes. "I want our coaches and administration staff to remain a resource and conduct well-being calls to assist in any needs- academically, personally or professionally that may arise," said Nash.

The future for Brevard College and BC Athletics is unknown at this time. Due to the unpredictable nature of the world right now, no one can be sure what will happen in the coming months.

Nash is hopeful that Brevard College and the athletics department can power through this difficult time. "My hope for our institution is that we can find intentional ways to deliver an experience even through a very difficult time globally," Nash said.

— Margaret Correll

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