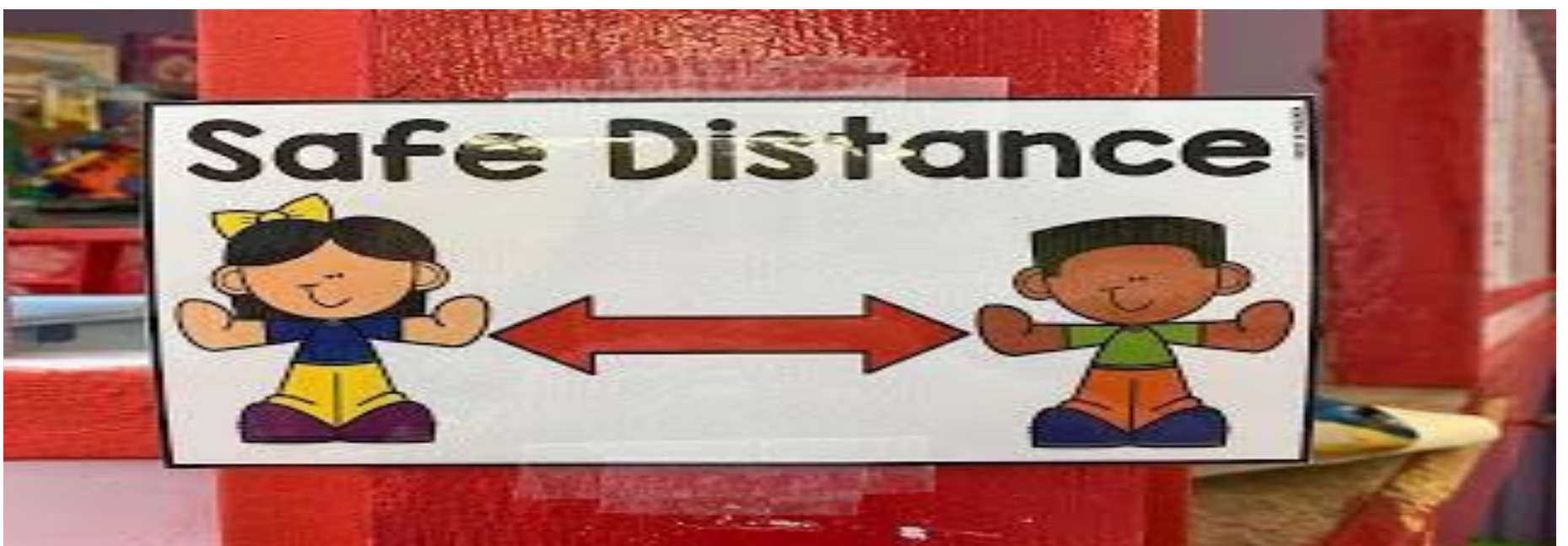


SPECIAL EARTH DAY EDITION

How Childcare Programs Ensure Safety and Learning During a Pandemic

BY MADISON MAVROGIANNIS
STAFF WRITER



Many aspects of everyday life have changed significantly throughout this pandemic.

Specifically, schools have undergone radical transitions to ensure safety for students and faculty. However, children at young ages need interaction to help develop social skills and essential hands-on learning. So how do preschools (or daycares) ensure safety while also ensuring that young children are learning to share, take turns, participate in group work, etc...?

To receive the answers to that question, I've conducted an interview with a director of a preschool in Rockland County, New York. This preschool offers many programs including the NYS Universal Pre-K program for children of age 4, and a toddler program (1-3 years old.) With their help, I've gathered enough information to provide an overall description of transitions in preschools due to COVID-19.

Combining Safety With Learning

The most crucial factor in dealing with children during the pandemic is keeping everybody safe. In order to ensure safety, this preschool has placed many regulations for playing, learning, and eating. When imagining a preschool classroom, many would think of lots of colorful toys! These toys are now heavily sanitized to prevent bacteria transferring from child to child. For example, prior to the pandemic, this preschool has maintained a "yucky bucket." This "yucky bucket" gets filled with all the toys that have obviously gotten germs on them (like being in a child's mouth.) The bucket stays on a high shelf to stay out of circulation with children. Then, at the end of the day, a staff member will take all the toys in the yucky bucket and disinfect each one. Staff members have also taken precautions by not allowing play-dough and markers/crayons to be shared. Furthermore, any toys that have been played with throughout the day are placed in the middle of the classroom after dismissal. This way, their professional cleaning crew can steam sanitize them as an extra measure to ensure safety.

Toys may be somewhat simple to regulate during this pandemic, but how do teachers enforce social distancing measures? One way to distance students in a preschool is by limiting the overall class size in each room. This specific preschool has altered the hours of before care and after care to lessen the time spent with kids mixed together in one room.

For example, children used to stay in their own rooms until 3:45pm (where they'd mix different aged children for after care.) Now, children are required to stay in their own classrooms until 5:00pm, then are brought to the aftercare program in a specific classroom.

"We do our best to encourage it, but early childhood education really needs to revolve around children socializing and interacting with each other"- Director of a Preschool in Rockland County, New York

Another form of ensuring safety while learning is by washing hands often. Children have always been required to wash their hands and are encouraged to do so in many fun ways! Between songs, dances, and rhymes, children learn to wash their hands very well. When children first arrive to school, they're asked to wash their hands. As well as before/after snack time, after using the bathroom/diapering, after outside play, and if they're visibly dirty.

Snack time has been affected greatly by state mandated protocols. No communal food is allowed, so children are required to bring in their own lunch/snack. Prior to this pandemic, many preschools had provided snacks for children to share. It can be very confusing to a toddler to see one classmate eat a cookie while they're eating strawberries.

Many studies have found that family-style dining in young children can be beneficial for teaching healthy eating habits. Eating as a class can show children that everyone is engaging in healthy eating while also allowing that child to build more trust and respect for their classmates and teachers. Although students in this preschool may not entirely understand the purpose of these protocols, they've done extremely well in following them!

Another way that social distancing is incorporated here is by reducing the amount of children at a specific table. Tables that usually sat around six or more children are now reduced to around four due to the need to lessen contact. Therefore, children are separated from each other but are still able to interact when engaging in crafts or other activities. Tables are even required to be sanitized multiple times throughout the day, regardless of visible uncleanness. Additionally, bright colored spots are placed on the floor to indicate where children should sit to maintain a safe distance from one another.

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OPINION

RCC's Sustainability: Lack of Transparency in SUNY Environmental Efforts

BY JADA JOHNSON
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Lack of environmental sustainability is often attributed to the individual and it has become more of a trend to point out people's use of plastic bottles, straws, and utensils. While it is important to take personal responsibility for our individual impact on the environment, it is important to look at corporations, government buildings, and college campuses that are increasingly pledging to achieve carbon neutrality, meaning that the carbon emitted by them will be balanced out by systems that absorb more carbon than they emit. This sounds great and would be revolutionary in changing our environment that is plagued by rapid climate change for the better.

However, many corporations use this as a trendy green label to make more money without making much of an effort to help our environment. Lack of transparency and using green buzz words when it comes to sustainability limits environmental improvement because no one questions it. So, where does RCC fit into all of this? What are their sustainability efforts and are they truly transparent about them?

RCC has made efforts to increase its use of renewable energy by partnering up with Ecosystem, a company that specializes in "complex energy ecosystems" according to their website. RCC previously had three oversized nonfunctioning boilers from 1971 and was relying on a temporary boiler. Since Ecosystem installed their "efficient, reliable, and more easily maintained" boilers, RCC has saved \$558,000 annually.

Whether or not this boiler replacement was meant to save money or help the campus become more sustainable is arguable but either way, the replacement was an upgrade for the campus. However, Ecosystem's claims of reducing RCC's environmental footprint aren't supported on the website by any comparison of RCC's pollution before the new boiler and after. When searching for more information on this boiler project on the RCC website, I was met repeatedly with invalid pages.

To look more into RCC's involvement in reducing higher education carbon

footprints, I looked at SUNY's "Sustainability" page and while it was somewhat helpful, it was also quite outdated. It referenced news from 2015 as its most recent news and shared that "By 2020, SUNY has a goal to reduce system-wide non-renewable energy consumption by 30%" with no information on whether or not they achieved that goal.

Looking past its outdated flaws, the SUNY "Sustainability" page provided links to environmental associations SUNY campuses are involved with. The American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) signatory list link brought me to a Danish website for finding hotels in New York that had no mention of SUNY at all, let alone RCC.

However, the next link was more promising since it brought me to a real environmental association website. The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) website provided me with a member list that included many SUNY campuses, with RCC nowhere to be found. AASHE also has the STARS reporting tool which gives participating institutions ratings on their progress over three years. As you may guess, again RCC was nowhere to be found.

As a student who takes pride in RCC, it was disappointing to find an unacceptable lack of sustainability efforts and lack of transparency. To me, RCC is a progressive school that pushes its students to learn and grasp everything they can from their education, but their lack of accountability starkly contrasts that. Students and other community members should be able to easily find reports of RCC's sustainability progression and its goals. RCC should be transparent in its flaws and its commitment to changing its approach to sustainability. RCC should be more actively involved in environmental improvements besides just recycling bins. While small eco-friendly efforts are helpful, RCC must acknowledge that its sustainability is not solely reliant on its students' habits and practices, it is largely reliant on RCC's transparency, accountability, and goals.

Reduce... Reuse... Recycle...

BY MEGAN KEAVENEY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In 1970, just as more and more people were becoming aware and concerned for our earth's environment, the Container Corporation of America decided to host a design contest where kids in high school or college would have the opportunity to create a symbol that would come to define a generation.

Gary Anderson entered the contest, submitting his now famous, "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle," symbol. The symbol is a Mobius loop constructed of three arrows in the shape of triangles. Although it is a circle with just arrows the meaning behind it is well built. Each arrow represents one part of the recycling process. Each arrow leads to the next to show that it's a continuous cycle.

The first arrow represents Reduce, which is the first step that is taken when you recycle. This is the start of the steps that need to be taken for the cycle to work. This step includes the process of sorting and collecting materials. For instance, every time you go to the store and recycle or put your bins out for collection, you are doing your part. You are acting and helping the environment when you may not even know it.

After you recycle the manufacturers are the next in line to take care of your recyclables. After you put them out and they take them they are then taken to a place to be reused. They put your recycling in machines and have them reproduce another new product. These new products are then sold for those to buy. Although this does compete for the cycle is always rotating. After you sell your new material that material is eventually recycled again and the whole process is restarted.



Today this symbol is used worldwide and still holds onto its meaning. It helps remind people to recycle so that they can take care of their environment. You can find the symbol just about anywhere you can recycle. It's there so that when you do go throw something away or you walk past it you are reminded of it. Even in schools or public places majority have two different spots to throw away the garbage. One slot is for the recycling and the other is for the regular garbage. This is to help the environment in sorting the recyclables and not putting them all in the garbage.

Your act of kindness is just the first step to taking care of the planet. Simply putting the recycling bins at the top of your driveway or even going to the store to do it yourself are you taking part in the process. The next step is for the manufacturing companies to go about what they will do with it. Your small simple action goes a long way toward bettering the planet. Next time you are around a garbage can and there are two different bins, think before just tossing it in the trash. Your one act of kindness can make a difference.

Climate Migration Becoming Significant 21st Century Problem

BY GRACE PARAHUS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Climate migration is a possibility that is now having to be discussed by many families and acted on, in order to keep their possessions and to stay safe. They must now determine whether or not to relocate until it is too late or wait for storms such as Hurricane Sandy and Harvey to come through and ruin everything they own and have worked for. While climate change is causing the planet to become warmer, weather effects have become more intense, and many areas that have been ideal for living for centuries have become unsuitable.

In 2017, six significant hurricanes occurred in the Atlantic Ocean. Wildfires spread throughout the American West. Mudslides. Record temperatures. Extreme weather effects causing \$306 billion in damage, while killing more than 300 people. Those incidents alone will displace thousands to millions of people, leaving them with nothing, struggling to put food on the table for their families, unable to pay their rent or reclaim memories and property that have been lost forever. These tragedies not only destroy possessions, but also mental health. In fact, mental-health workers have reported seeing spikes in depression, PTSD and suicides in the months that follow a natural disaster. These events often leave people feeling dazed, confused, or unable to digest traumatic information.

While many governments and politicians promise to rebuild after a storm, they won't be able to say those things for much longer. There will soon be a point in time where there's just too much damage to fix and not enough money. As a result, people will migrate to safer places.

There are several projects and activists working to limit the damage that has already been done, but too many contend that climate change is not of critical concern. As a community, we need to unite and work as a team to tackle climate change, but it is especially challenging when many people think it won't affect them. Until it's too late.



PHOTO: ZLATICA HOKE/VOA



Overpopulation's Environmental Effects

BY CAITLIN CRILLEY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Overpopulation is a severe issue that our world is faced with. From the start of time on Earth to the start of the 20th century, the population of the planet grew from zero to 1.6 billion. Due to many different factors, the population increased to 6.1 billion in just 100 years, which is an almost fourfold increase in the number of humans over a relatively short period.

Humans are currently causing the greatest mass extinction of species since the dinosaurs' demise, at rates 1000 to 10,000 times faster than average. Scientists are currently skeptical that if nothing changes within the next few decades at least half of all plants and animals will be extinct due to many different factors such as climate change, pollution, and overpopulation.

An increase in population will create a need for more homes/shops, leading to more trees being cut down so more homes can be built, less biodiversity, and ultimately unless we take action to help minimize further population growth heading into the remainder of this century, many scientists believe the additional stress on the planet will lead to ecological disruption and collapse so severe it threatens the viability of life on Earth as we know it.

Even with birth rates decreasing globally, scientists are warning of a food shortage within the next fifty years. There is currently enough food to go around, but the problem lies in transporting it around the world to the people who need it, which is why world hunger remains an important issue. With many developing countries being spread out and having relatively higher birth rates, overpopulation in combination with a food crisis caused by climate change could pose a major threat. Of the twenty countries with the highest birth rates, nineteen are in Africa. This population boom will likely require new infrastructure. This change will consume a lot of natural resources and increase the global carbon footprint.

The infant mortality rate has decreased globally, with 4.1 million infant deaths in 2017 compared to 8.8 million in 1990, according to the World Health Organization. Lifespans are increasing around the world today; those of us who are alive today will likely live much longer than most of our ancestors. All because of advancements in medicine, technology, and general hygiene, life expectancy has doubled from the 1900s. Falling mortality rates are certainly nothing to complain about either, but overall longevity does contribute to the mathematics of increasing population numbers.



STUDENTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

BY MADISON MAVROGIANNIS
STAFF WRITER

Students contribute to a lot of excess waste and energy without even realizing it. Between commuting back and forth to university, and using tons of paper, it's clear that school-related activities could be altered to become more environmentally friendly, or sustainable! So what could we, as students, really do to help our planet?

1. **Carpool**

If you drive to school every day, it could be more environmentally beneficial to ask a friend if they want to carpool with you. This means that you could switch off driving each other to and from school to use less gas/energy. Not only does this lower greenhouse gas emissions, but it potentially helps to save money as well. Plus, if everyone decided to carpool, there would be less traffic and more available parking spots! Obviously due to COVID-19, it's much more difficult to make some transitions of transportation, but if it's possible then you should give it a try!

2. **Borrow books**

If you know someone who's already taken the same course as you, reach out to them! Someone may still have their old textbooks and could be willing to lend them to you. Not only will this save paper, but it's free and local (meaning there's no shipping required!) Similarly, feel free to reach out to friends who may need a textbook that you have!

3. **Download textbooks**

Many students spend lots of money on materials needed for specific courses. Within these materials are textbooks containing hundreds of pieces of paper. If the option is available, e-books are a great choice. Not only is this saving lots of paper, but it's almost always less costly than the paper version. Additionally, e-books are easier to update so you'll most likely receive the most up to date version of a textbook! According to theecoguide.org, "We have become accustomed to printed books, but with the introduction of e-reader technology, it could be possible that strides toward a more environmentally friendly lifestyle can be made." To that end, switching from printed textbooks to electronic textbooks can help promote a more environmentally friendly lifestyle.

4. **Buy used books/Recycle your books!**

Similarly, to the last point, buying used textbooks is also an efficient way to use less paper. If you're someone who annotates every single page, just buy used! Most used textbooks are not going to have obnoxious writing or marks that significantly reduce the quality of a book. Used books are less costly than original copies so you're saving money while saving the planet! Additionally, selling your old/used textbooks on websites like textbooks.com is a great way to recycle! Textbooks.com not only allows you to sell your textbooks, but you can purchase used textbooks as well. So, just buy used!

5. **Switch from paper notes to electronic**

It may not be possible to ditch your notebook, but if it is, then you could save a lot more paper! Some students take notes on electronic devices like iPads, phones, Chromebooks, or other laptops. According to frevvo.com, "...you get about 2,800 sheets of paper per person every year in a single school. For a district with 10,000 students, teachers & staff, that's 28,000,000 sheets of paper." That number alone seems crazy, but some teachers/students may use even more! All of these sheets of paper could easily be documented and scanned onto a flash drive. Not only does this save enormous amounts of money, but it'll also save enormous amounts of trees. Although it may not be as satisfying as writing on a clean sheet of paper, electronic notetaking is definitely worth doing to create less waste.

6. **Share notes (without plagiarizing)**

We all know that we can't copy each other's work, but we can definitely share ideas and notes from class discussions! Having one person take notes for a group of people and sharing those notes with the group is a great way to increase teamwork and reduce paper use. Similarly, electronic notetaking is so beneficial in sharing because you can easily share google documents or iPhone notes with other google or apple users. Therefore, sharing class discussion notes could be a valid way to reduce paper, but don't forget to transfer these notes into your own ideas so plagiarism is avoided!

7. **Use a reusable cup**

It's easily observed that before class, tons of students go out and buy coffee. According to plaineproducts.com, "It is estimated that 2.5 billion single-use coffee cups are discarded globally every year. This equates to a staggering 5000 every minute." It's difficult to even imagine 5000 coffee cups piled together. However, it's a scary truth that so much waste is piling up on lands and evidently ending up in oceans. Therefore, ditching the one-use plastic cups for a reusable cup is a great decision.

8. **Discuss alternatives with teachers**

Since students can switch from notebooks to electronic devices, teachers can do the same! Instead of requiring students to take tests on 30 sheets of paper, create a virtual exam. Instead of printing out notes, share documents with students. Instead of requiring students to purchase a large textbook, research alternatives (maybe there's a website with the exact textbook needed for a course!) There could even be other ways to educate students on specific topics without using textbook sources. Like, using websites from organizations like the CDC to learn about diseases like COVID-19, since there's no textbook that really covers that information yet. Whether it's virtual exams, shared documents, or online textbooks, teachers can do a lot to help practice sustainability! Although some tests are required to be on paper, many can be turned into electronic/virtual exams! Students should feel encouraged to reach out to their professors and discuss alternatives for wasteful paper notes or tests.

These 8 tips are really helpful to reduce waste and energy within the lives of students and teachers. There's no better time for a change than during a global pandemic! We've already witnessed some of the most significant changes in our lives, and we should be realizing that there's been a global issue long before COVID-19: climate change! Climate change has been brought into discussions year after year since the 19th century. Climate activists have not given up, and they encourage everyone to make more sustainable decisions. With that said, students have many alternatives for wasteful methods of learning. We should feel obligated to make these transitions and do our part to protect our planet.

Fast Fashion: An Earth Day Story

BY EMMA RYAN
CONTRIBUTING ARTIST



The Importance of Earth Day

BY ALEXIS VAN DUNK
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Every year on April 22 Earth day is celebrated. It is a way for people to spread awareness on all the issues that the earth is facing. These issues include, climate change, global warming, air and water pollution, deforestation, ect.

Since 1970, when the first earth day took place, the day has become more important as the years go on. In 1990, Earth day went completely global causing it to become an international holiday that is celebrated by all.

Before Earth day began people never realized the major effects that many of the earth's problems caused people. One major problem is air pollution. Many did not think much about air pollution and what it can do to one's health. Air pollution is caused by many different factors and some are even poisonous to the human body. A lot of air pollution surrounds city areas but that does not mean it is not anywhere else.

The first earth day was celebrated by about 10% of the US population. Many took to the streets in order to protest against ignorance towards environmental problems. Many of the people who participated in these rallies were students in college.

On this day people are urged to cut down on waste, gas, electricity, water and many other things in order to try and clean the earth. Even though Earth day is only one day a year, it is a movement that many people take into consideration.

When it comes to what one can do for the environment on earth day it is very simple really. To planting a tree in your front yard to switching over to a green energy provider. Making an effort to create that positive change for the earth whether it be a big change or a small change will still have an effective change on the earth.

How Switching to Reusable Products Can Help the Environment

BY NICOLE CEFOLA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It's not new news to bring up how Earth is slowly falling apart, I surely don't have to bring up climate change and what is happening around us. Antarctica is slowly melting; summers are becoming hotter, et cetera et cetera. However, something simple that we learned about in elementary school: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, could wind up playing a huge role in slowing down climate change.

It is important to recognize that sustained growth in reuse efforts, as well as the sustained interest of the reuse industry, derives in large measure from the solid waste reduction hierarchy: Reduce, Reuse, then Recycle. It is best to reduce first, reuse as a second option, then resort to recycling.

Reusing is done to prevent solid waste from entering the landfill and to increase the material, educational and occupational wellbeing of humans by taking products people no longer want and to reusing them to something more purposeful. You will find people reusing clothes found at thrift stores, or people simply using glass pickle jars for leftovers. Reusing requires less energy, resources and labor and provides excellent environmentally preferred alternatives to other waste managed methods, as it reduces air, water and land pollution.

What Can We Do to Save the Earth?

BY GABRIELLA GARCIA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



Earth is the only known planet to have life on it. It provides an abundance of natural resources such as oxygen and water for us to survive. In the times before us, destruction was not done to the environment because they did not have the means or resources to cause any major harm. Yet, as time went on, we as people have forgotten how important Earth is to us. We have lost the respect for our environment and forgot how to maintain it for future generations to live safely and healthy. Hurting the Earth goes on beyond just the increase in pollution, the destruction of rainforests and even basic trees in our area for industries to build companies and buildings for entertainment and easy everyday life.

What can we do to make our home a better place to live?

- *Be mindful of your garbage and be aware of your recycling efforts.*
- *"Reduce, reuse, and recycle."*
- *People should share private cars in order to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.*
- *Riding a bicycle or walking instead of driving cars if you work locally.*
- *Volunteer for cleanups in your community.*
- *Communities can start to plant trees in surrounding areas. Plants are the most basic need of life. They give us food, oxygen, and medicine.*
- *It is necessary to maintain the balance of the environment, climate and weather.*
- *Buying and using reusable bags instead of plastic bags.*
- *Conserve Water*
- *Give Up Plastic*

The list of things we can do can go on, but it is our responsibility to maintain earth's natural qualities. We should not waste and pollute our planet for our own selfish needs.

The Origins of Earth Day

BY JOHN FASTOFF
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Every year since 1970, on April 22nd, people from across the globe come together to celebrate Earth Day. While many people enjoy celebrating this holiday and feel very passionate about it, they do not know the history behind how it originated.

The idea for Earth Day first came about in the year of 1969, the brainchild of Gaylord Nelson. Nelson was a senator from Wisconsin who cared very much for the environment and was concerned about how much the environment had been struggling in the recent years. After a large oil spill occurred in California in 1969, that was when Nelson decided that he must take action. He got together with Pete McLosky and Denis Hayes in order to find a plan to take action. Pete McLosky was a Republican congressman and served as Nelson's co-chair throughout the process. Denis Hayes was an activist and they had him organize teach-ins for them. The plan that these three came up with was to do teach-ins nationwide at multiple college campuses. Senator Nelson announced their new idea to the national media. Their main focus was going to be water and air pollution. They decided that they wanted to do these teach-ins nationwide on the same day.

The day that they ended up choosing was April 22. They chose this day because it was a weekday, and it was right in between spring break and final examinations.

Nelson then gathered a national staff of 85 people in order to be able to promote his events even further across the country. Nelson, McLosky, and Hayes soon gained a lot of success from their efforts. Many organizations and faith groups began to form as a result of their success. After their success they decided to name April 22nd as Earth Day from that point forward. Earth Day immediately gained a great amount of attention in the media and across the country. The first ever Earth Day inspired about 20 million Americans to take to the streets and protest and rally how horribly the environment was being treated. These rallies and protests took place all over the country.

Earth Day has been a largely celebrated holiday for years now all over the world. Many people celebrate this day without knowing the history behind it or the meaning behind it. The history behind Earth Day is a story of three men coming together to inspire people nationwide to speak up and make an effort to make changes to save our environment.

If you are interested in writing, editing, photography or graphic design, or if you would like to contribute a story for our future issues please contact us at:

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GLOBAL WARMING

BY YUJUNG HAN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Because of global warming, the Earth is sick. When the Earth gets sick, people who live on it get sick too. Then the vicious cycle of global warming is repeated. We turn on the air conditioner because it is hot in the summer. People say it is too hot to live without turning on the air conditioner, but ironically, the use of air conditioners increases the frequency of hot weather temperature. The use of fossil fuels and greenhouse gas emissions are the main causes of global warming. The Greenhouse effect refers to a state in which the energy of the Earth is not flowing out as well as being in a greenhouse, and the gases that cause this greenhouse effect are called greenhouse gases. Carbon dioxide emissions are a major cause of emissions from thermal power plants, automobile emissions, and factory emissions, they alone account for 80% of the total emissions.

According to NASA's analysis, the average global temperature in 2020 had become 1.84 degrees warmer (1.02 degrees Celsius) than the average temperature in 1951-1980. This global warming trend continued in 2016, the warmest year on Earth's average surface. Schmidt also said that "The previous record warm year, 2016, received a significant boost from a strong El Nino. The lack of a similar assist from El Nino this year is evidence that the background climate continues to warm due to greenhouse gases." This is a big issue, it is up to us to figure out how to solve that problem.

The ongoing coronavirus epidemic has reduced air pollution. The first half of the year, Australia's wildfires burned 46 million acres, releasing smoke and other particles from more than 18 miles above the atmosphere, blocking sunlight and cooling the atmosphere slightly. The shutdown last year seemed to have reduced carbon dioxide emissions, but the overall concentration of carbon dioxide continues to increase. This shows that the problem is related to carbon dioxide emissions in each household. There are many damages due to global warming; glaciers melt, climate change, drought, disease, typhoons, sea levels rise, green damage, heat waves, wildfires, heavy rains, coral extinction in the oceans, health risks, and economic collapse. Global warming impacts us in more ways than one.

Nearly half of the world's population, about 3.5 billion people, live near a coast. As climate change exacerbates the effects of storms, floods and erosion, the lives and livelihoods of millions of people will be at even greater risk. Nature makes communities more resilient to the effects of climate change, coral reefs, dunes, and wetlands, and absorbs storm surges and dull winds, greatly reducing the risk to people and businesses. Healthy coral reefs can reduce the wave energy that will normally hit the coastline by 97% and protect more than 200 million people from storms worldwide. It is estimated that 95% of all commercially important fish species depend on coastal habitats at one stage of their life cycle. The reefs store carbon in their soil for thousands of years, filter and cleanse coastal water, reducing pollution caused from agricultural spills and sewage, and laying the foundation for a healthy tourist economy for many communities. Weather-related disasters cost the global economy \$250 billion each year. In a recent study of the insurance industry, we determined that wetlands saved \$625 million in coastal communities in 12 U.S. states to avoid economic losses during Hurricane Sandy. Identifying, protecting, and restoring areas that reduce flood risk can reduce the consequences of flooding (life, rescue, and crop losses) and reduce repeated economic losses.

Climate change is not a distant threat, it is happening right now. The past three years have been hottest ever in recorded history. Our collective efforts can prevent the catastrophic effects of climate change. Now is the time to act. In 2016, Brazil signed the Paris Agreement and promised to reduce emissions by 43 percent below 2005 levels by 2030, and they are planting trees with tremendous potential to store carbon dioxide. Here are some ways for individuals to help the Earth: no garbage movement, hybrid car or electric car purchase, walking or riding bikes instead of taking mass transits, eating local food, recycling, not cutting trees, reducing paper waste, reducing disposable goods, eating organic food, and cooking more than eating out. This is time to act, we have to help the Earth right now. It is not just for the Earth but for us.

THE DIRTY FACTS OF THE OCEAN

BY ROXANA MAZARIEGO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The ocean is one of the most unknown parts of the plants due to it being so big. Due to the ocean being so deep there are so many questions about undiscovered species and mysteries. The most important problem with the ocean is ocean pollution. It is a continuous problem that worsens every day. The ocean is a beautiful place that is being destroyed with garbage and not only is this affecting the animals that live in the ocean but us as well. There are many ways to stop this before it's too late.

The majority of garbage that goes into the ocean comes from human activities and can lead to far more issues. There are currently more plastics than fish in the ocean. Eight million metric tons are dumped into the ocean each year, that's about 17.6 billion pounds or the equivalent of nearly 57,000 blue whales. In the Pacific Ocean there is an island of garbage twice the size of Texas. If that doesn't disgust you, I don't know what will. All this trash is not only taking away the beauty of oceans but

stimulating the explosive growth of algae and when the algae decompose oxygen in the water it is consumed that can result in mass die offs of fish and many other marine lives. Plastic is strong, flexible, and durable which means it never breaks down. A plastic water bottle can last for 450 years in the ocean and slowly fragment into smaller and smaller pieces.

Fish and other marine life can't tell the difference between food and plastic and they can't digest it which fills their stomachs and leads them to starve to death. Some people don't really worry about this issue because it doesn't directly affect them, but it does whether you eat fish or even just go to the beach for fun. Seawater plastic absorbs chemicals like PCBs and DDT which have been linked to endocrine disruption and even cancer. As you can see this issue is important and deserves attention so something can be done before it's too late.

You may be wondering how you can help this issue when there is so much plastic and the

ocean is so deep. For starters any time you see garbage just pick it up and throw it out and anytime you can reduce, reuse or recycle something please do so. Don't be afraid to educate your friends and family about this issue. You can also support groups that work to clean up the waterways or donate to companies that help clean up the oceans and protect the animals that live in the ocean. Do you really want to swim in the ocean and have garbage all around you or do you want all these beautiful animals to go extinct?

The beach is a beautiful place where we go to unwind and connect with nature. It's not the same with plastic being everywhere. Something needs to be done NOW because this problem is rapidly worsening, and oceans are now acidifying faster than it has in 300 years. It is estimated that if we continue like this with no action done, the surface waters of the ocean could be nearly 150 percent more acidic than they are now.

The Mid-century American Classic in Review

BY EMELINE TORRENS
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The prolific novelist and voyeur of Northeast customs, John O'Hara, proclaimed that there is simply no greater theme in literature than that of men and women, and we are duly reminded of such in the work of Richard Yates's *Revolutionary Road*. Indeed, numerous age of anxiety auteurs have culled from this robust reservoir -- the love, vitriol, resentment, and utmost loyalty fermented between man and woman -- yet we witness such in poignant form in Yates's National Book Award finalist. Tangentially, it's, too, worth noting that Yate's has seldom garnered the acclaim readers, like myself, think he is due; and at best, despite an eponymous motion picture featuring Leonardo Dicaprio, he remains chiefly a literary cult favorite -- and the poorer we are for it. While I'm quite a dilatory reader that tends to masticate on an author's word choice or sentence formation, I finished Yates with the swiftness of an Olympian. Now, perhaps such can be attributed to his trenchant prose and swift purchase of narrative; or in some small part, my withstanding intrigue and residency of Northeastern suburbia. Anyhow, lest not we forget, that Mr. Yates is something of a national treasure.

Our characters in question, the wedded Mr. Frank and Mrs. April Wheeler, are afflicted by a *mauvaise-foi* of sorts. We glean the first coordinates of such amidst Frank's East Village musings of intellectual grandeur and witness its denouement in the insular hills of Connecticut. Try as they might, the Wheelers result in a suburban hyper-loop; trapped by the conception of a child, and consequently, their own presumptions of how either partner might want to proceed. Frank becomes offended by what April has presumed — a preemptive rubber syringe in tow — and by the looks of it, coldly campaigns for keeping the child for sake of principle. Hence, at varying polarities, the Wheeler's become incapacitated by their own preconceived archetype of one another; and the shrill echoes of Pygmalion slowly surface thereon. April Wheeler, stridently states in the midst of the novel that she was simply, “having a second child to show the first wasn't a mistake.” At first blush, the average reader scoffs at such a calculated statement, yet within such we exhume the lengths one can venture in effort to appear, for lack of a better term, “socially acceptable.”

Expectedly, their shared dissonance foment further dissension and inaugurates the *sturm und drang* of matrimony. The initial growing pains are also witnessed in April's newfangled extracurriculars, such as joining the theatre group, and later, her tenuous plan for the family to assume expatriate life in Paris: where female secretaries are paid generously enough for brooding intellectual husbands to stay at home and begin their assent to literary grandeur -- which, naturally, reads rather

as mere wish than prospect. Curiously, one finds that the trajectory of the Wheeler's, their entitlement, wants and aspirations, to be poignantly reflective of what imminent American writer F. Scott Fitzgerald averred in his diary. Here he opines on the woes of premature success, “When the primary objects of love and money could be taken for granted and a shaky eminence had lost its fascination, I had fair years to waste, years that I can't honestly regret, in seeking the eternal Carnival by the Sea.” And it is in the motif of the carnival by the sea in which the Wheeler's are transfixed by; ceaselessly portraying and seeking what they feel are both entitled too and further, believe they should be.

We too witness the echoes of the Pygmalion effect amidst the Wheeler's friends, The Campbells. Chiefly, Shep Campbell's rejection of his ancestral noblesse-oblige and his consequent regret displays the schisms one suffers for sake of appearances. Status, too much or not enough, is an albatross every American invariably carries. Hence, Shep Campbell attempts to simulate his Yankee privilege of yore and in an effort to solidify such, acquires both an accent and property in Connecticut's Revolutionary Hill Estates. Furthermore, it is for this reason that he becomes enamored of April Wheeler: someone who's shared a comparable breeding of boarding schools and family money. Frank, too, at first sight deemed her a “first-rate” girl, and thus, an imprimatur for his ego and the *pièce de résistance* of his bachelorhood.

Tangentially, according to April's inflation or inadvertent deflation of Frank's ego, he either maintains a homeostasis or when not adequately pandered to, seeks lustful -- arguably Updikean -- transgressions; thus enters the hapless secretary and bed-warmer: Maureen Grube. Comparably, April seeks both vicariously her own identity and womanhood through marriage and the Birth of his children — yet such transpires mechanistically, with no true tenderness or love to be feasted upon. And the parasitic relationship between April and Frank's self worth is indeed prophetic: when April is in extremis, Frank veritably deflates, and seems, with her final act, to remain so.

Richard Yates composed a brilliant and effortless narrative of America's age of anxiety; the echoes of which can be found in contemporaneous and preceding works, from the mainstream: Gillian K. Flynn's *Gone Girl* to the Chekhovian stories of the aforesaid John O'Hara and John Cheever. It is a tale that embodies the inimitable mix of American exceptionalism, identity, and thus, the accursed human condition. Indubitably, it is an American classic that is found evermore pertinent to the masks of adequacy we assume today.

MOVIE REVIEW: GODZILLA VS. KONG

BY JON KOLL
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Godzilla Vs Kong sadly does not live up to its predecessor and just enhances the stupidity of the human element to these monster movies instead of focusing on the monsters fighting. While the Movie overall is enjoyable there are parts that are hard to get through.

The overall tone of the movie is strange, there seems to be no stakes and way too much comedy. There are random characters that effectively contribute nothing to the story other than being characters we recognize from the last movie. The character portrayed by Millie Bobby Brown does nothing in this movie; her plot just seems to be there for the audience to find out a big reveal in the middle of the movie.

The Movies score also appears to have taken a dip in quality as well. There are random Bits of 70s music, which is the vibe King Skull Island had, however for this movie the injection of that music makes little sense. Compared to the powerhouse of a score in *King of the Monsters* the score falls flat. Also, While *Godzilla's* theme is more sinister it just makes no sense to make a character that's been Portrayed as a good character to be evil for seemingly no reason in this movie. The audience sympathizes more with Kong in this movie.

The worst part of this movie is the human element. In any story there comes a point where you cannot suspend your disbelief further if the payoff isn't worthwhile. Take a marvel movie for instance, the story has some crazy things happening, but the plot is good and that, ultimately, is the payoff, an enjoyable movie experience. The problem with *Godzilla vs Kong* is that the payoff is the monster battles, but with only two real battles in the movie; it isn't very worth the ridiculous story. Now I understand a movie like this isn't there for the story, but neither was *Godzilla* king of the monsters and that film was much loved so there is an issue here.

Ultimately while there are some fun moments in *Godzilla vs Kong* the movie falls flat in the core values set up by prior movies. It gets a 6.5/10 from outlook, the monster fights are fun but with too little monster fights and too much human element the movie doesn't live up to it's predecessor.

The Newsroom...

April 15, 2021

I stepped into a newsroom for the first time in over a year yesterday. Besides the bulldog puppy that distracted the entire Kenyon Collegian staff, and the joy for the return of in-person newspaper production, I felt something missing within me. Something that has been missing for some time. Something missing since Rockland Community College shuttered its doors last March, firmly sealed yet.

I could say how I miss being editor-in-chief instead of a measly staff writer; I could say that I miss Outlook’s quaint offices, whether they had floor-to-ceiling chalkboards or flying ants, and I could say that I miss my mentor, my friends, my local commute and my local community. I could say that this pandemic robbed me of a new yet similar experience here at Kenyon, where one-door offices become houses and monthly papers become weekly. Perhaps these are all the things that I miss and have missed. However, I do not think that I felt the void of these things this past evening. I think I am feeling the void that is created when a task that was once unlikely, that was once a stubborn labor of service, becomes a routine delivery taken for granted. I do not think that my colleagues here at the Collegian take their work for granted, and in fact, the opposite is true. That is not my point here. I think the community takes the work of our writers and our staff for granted, in the sense that a paper will be in your inbox every Thursday morning bar a grand catastrophe. The service is expected, and it is dissected. There is no smile or dialogue anymore. And quite rapidly the next week approaches.

I miss knocking on the door of the Honors Office with a stack of fresh papers and watching smiles extend across faces. I miss covering every table in every annex with this month’s most important event within the community and I miss the mutual gratitude of delivering the unexpected. I miss the dialogue and, although this may sound unconvincing, I miss the uncertainty over finishing an issue. I miss crawling across the finish line and I miss sharing that suffering with the Rockland community.

I do not write any of this just to complain about my new school or my new position. I am happy and I am doing fine unlearning and relearning the process. I write to you, readers of Outlook, to ask of you only a few things: I ask you to keep supporting the people that put together this production. I ask you to keep reading, and I very much ask you to get involved if you have the inclination. I ask you to bask in the uncertainty and in the dialogue and in the service. I ask you to bask in the happiness of supporting your community through information. And, finally, I ask you to never take this work for granted.

— Spencer Hirsch, Former Editor-in-Chief, Outlook Student Press

2021 JEEP WRANGLER: A REVIEW

BY JON KOLL
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The 2021 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited sport stems from a long line of Sport Utility Vehicles, SUV for short, that dates all the way back to the Second World War. Its pedigree of being an off-road vehicle is legendary and it a reason you often see Wranglers caked in mud driving around town. However, as a car to drive around town, there is much to be desired out of the 2021 Jeep Wrangler.

The infotainment system while for the most part intuitive with Jeeps steering wheel controls has the issue of needing to get to certain important controls, such as hvac, that aren’t included in the dash anymore with physical buttons. Therefore, you need to take your eyes away from the road and onto the screen to change something as simple as where the airflow comes from. This takes away from convenience as well as poses a danger due to having to take your eyes off the road. The actual quality of the interior also leaves much to be desired. You do get a heated steering wheel and seats, and a nicer sound system with the unlimited sport trim however you still don’t get leather seats and the interior is incredibly noisy on the road. For the price of what these vehicles cost one would think they could get a bit of a nicer interior.

The driving of the jeep on normal roads is where this vehicle fails the most. The ride is incredibly noisy, and the interior starts to buzz at around 45 miles per hour. The engine also constantly sounds like something is wrong with it, this could be due to the engine mounts being stiff from the factory causing it to buzz quite a lot. It honestly doesn’t instill confidence in the quality of the vehicle in the driver. It is also floaty to drive around in, the steering doesn’t feel direct and tends to pull towards any potholes it hits at speed.

The biggest problem this vehicle has is that there are those who won’t off-road it. All the issues listed above become manageable if you decide to off-road it; because, that is where this car really shines. As a normal commuter car it lacks a lot, including cargo space which is why some may buy this vehicle. Compared to its rival the Toyota 4runner, which has a similar off-road pedigree, the cargo space of the wrangler is 16 cubic less than that of the 4runner. One thing this vehicle does have going for it are its looks. While it is boxy, it is an iconic look that the wrangler

has had since the 1940s. Ultimately this suv gets a 6/10 from outlook, while there are downsides it is still a nice looking vehicle, and its off-road capabilities are stellar.

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PANDEMIC CHILDCARE

continued from front page

Preventing/Handling Exposures

Being exposed to COVID-19 is not only a potential risk in a school environment, but people risk their health any time they go out into the public. With that said, preschools must be extremely cautious and have plans set in case an exposure occurs. If somebody in the class (whether it is a child or an adult) tests positive for COVID-19, then actions are taken accordingly. In this preschool, if a person who tested positive was in a classroom for more than 10 minutes in a given 24-hour period (while they were contagious), the classroom must be closed. All people who were with this child or adult at any time within a 48-hour period, prior to the start of their symptoms, are contacted and required to quarantine for approximately two weeks. This preschool has even gone above state regulations in ensuring safety for children and staff. For example, if one child needs to quarantine due to a classroom exposure, the sibling of that child (who attends the same school) must not return until the initially exposed child tests negative after five days.

Preventing exposures is extremely important and greatly emphasized within this preschool’s protocols. A widely known protocol for preventing exposures to COVID-19 is wearing a mask. Governor Cuomo’s regulations state that those attending the UPK program (for four-year-olds) are obligated to wear a mask even though other students don’t have to. Masks are not safe for children under the age of 2 years old because it can be seen as a choking hazard. Since this specific preschool offers a full day program, and a half day program, some children wear their masks longer than others. Those in the full day program, wear a mask for five hours (9am-2pm.) Those who are enrolled in the half day program wear a mask for about two and a half hours (1:15-3:45pm.) Although toddlers are not required to wear a mask by the state, some parents prefer their toddlers to wear one in school. Within this preschool, the director has observed that some younger children wear a mask by their parents’ request.

Upon arrival, parents are required to fill out a self-health check form for their child.

This health form asks a few questions about the child’s physical well-being. If they’re showing any symptoms of being sick, they should be kept home. If they’re not showing any symptoms, then the submitted health form will provide a visible check mark. This check mark is asked by staff members to be shown by parents when arriving to drop off their children. To further ensure safety, parents are no longer allowed to enter the building/classroom. This is extremely different than before the pandemic because parents have always been encouraged to participate. So, after the parent shows the check mark on their phone to a staff member from a distance, the child’s temperature is taken a second time to verify that fever reducing medicine was not given to them. The temperature is taken by a non-contact thermometer to prevent contact between children.

Responsibilities of Teachers

One of the most, if not the most, important factors within schools are the teachers!

Specifically in a pandemic, teachers play a huge role in ensuring safety for everyone. Not only are they constantly supervising children to make sure protocols are followed, but they also have a bunch of protocols to follow themselves! Teachers are required to wear masks, the proper way, at all times of the day. This way, they lessen the possibility of exposure. Teachers are entitled to “mask breaks” but these must be done 6ft away from any person and only for a few minutes.

In this specific preschool, teachers are mandated to complete a self-health check before coming to work each day. Similarly, to the student self-health check, teachers make sure they’re not experiencing any symptoms of being sick. Additionally, staff members are no longer allowed to eat lunch together. This is because of the risk of exposure and the possibility of having to close multiple classrooms if one of them ended up testing positive. Teachers are not required to get tested for COVID-19 unless they’re sick, symptomatic, or just on a case-by-case basis. Likewise, the vaccine is not required for teachers to receive but it is encouraged. This preschool has even allowed time off for teachers to receive the vaccine.



In the past years, this specific preschool has had great teachers that have been working there for their entire careers. However, in June of 2020, the school faced a great loss of 6 people that retired due to fear of exposure to COVID-19. After that, teachers became harder and harder to find, or stay. They’ve hired many people throughout the past year but most leave after a few weeks or days due to fear of exposure. This is incredibly difficult for the director because teachers are clearly an essential factor to running a successful school! However, less people want to work with children due to the possibility of being exposed and infecting their families.

Parents Perspective

Parents have become more hesitant to send their children into school as cases in Rockland County, New York increased. In knowing that their child will be in contact with other children without a mask, some parents decided to keep their kids home this year. The director of this preschool has observed a big decrease in children enrolled in their school. Specifically when exposures occur, parents get very nervous and pull their child out of the program. On the other hand, some parents decide to take a leave of absence when COVID-19 cases in Rockland County, New York increase. When the cases decreased, parents felt a little more comfortable with sending their children into school.

A very difficult part of being the director of a preschool during a pandemic is explaining protocols to parents. Parents need to understand that all the protocols are in place to protect their children, as well as the parents themselves. Its been observed that some parents become angry with the director if their child is asked to stay home for any reason.

“It is difficult to have someone be angry with you when it is out of your control.”- Director of a Preschool in Rockland County, New York

The previous information provides an overall description of how childcare programs ensure safety and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, how one preschool in Rockland County, New York has stepped up to meet safety requirements while ensuring learning as well. It’s definitely not an easy job to run a preschool while the state of the world is so abnormal. However, this director has done a great job in providing a safe environment for children, staff and families!

For more information on preschool/childcare protocols during this pandemic, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>