

# *The Current*

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## **Why Washing Your Hands for 30 Seconds is so Important By Erin Muldoon**

Washing your hands for thirty seconds has always been an essential task for preventing the spread of dangerous microbes, and is taught to children from a very young age. However, with the coronavirus spreading across the country, it is now more important than ever that we wash our hands with care. This is because washing our hands has become a key way to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

People should wash their hands before they eat, after they eat, and before and after they go out of the house. While it may seem like constantly washing one's hands may not be a highly effective means of preventing the spread of coronavirus, in reality, it is one of the most crucial methods to win the fight against COVID-19. The virus can spread through person to contact and surface to person contact. Consistently washing one's hands can ensure that such means of transmission are limited. As a result, by washing your hands, you are eliminating the chances of spreading COVID-19 when in contact with other people.

Of course, there are many other things you can do in addition to washing your hands that can limit the transmission of COVID-19. Keeping hand sanitizer on you at all times and using it frequently is another way to prevent the increased spread of the virus. Staying six feet away from others — also know as Social Distancing — is another preventative action people can, and should, take to limit transmission. Additionally, even coughing in your arm rather than in your hand or the air can go a long way to ensuring that you are not spreading the virus. If everyone follows these rules and takes immediate steps toward preventing the spread of the virus, society will hopefully soon be able to return to normalcy. However, it all starts with washing your hands because that is the easiest, and many say the most influential, step everyone can take to stop COVID-19 from spreading further. Make sure to use warm water and soap.

## **New Block Schedule By Esme Bolander**

With the spread of coronavirus and the closure of schools, education for all grade levels is transitioning to online learning. As a result, many students have needed to adjust to this new process. It has had varying levels of success. One of the main issues with online learning is that some students are unable to learn and process as well online, and as a result, their workload may feel overwhelming. In an attempt to rectify this, MHS Principal **Patrick Miller** sent out an email revealing a new block schedule that was implemented among MHS students and teachers on March 23.

In this new schedule, the English department, History Department, Freshman Seminar, and a wide range of electives are assigned to teach on Monday and Wednesday. The Math Department, Science Department, World Language Department, VAPA Department, as well as the Engineering and ASB electives, are instructed to give work on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On Fridays, all teachers are encouraged to assign 15-30 minute tasks or have short online

meetings. However, within the same email Mr. Miller writes, “On days that teachers are not assigning work, they will still be available to check in with students, respond to email, provide feedback on assignments, have virtual office hours, lesson plan, and/or host LIVE sessions if they would like to do so.” As such, despite work being divided into a distance learning “block” schedule, students are still able to receive instruction and assistance at all times during the week.

Furthermore, this new schedule only works if teachers adhere to it. Students have reported to The Current that they had assignments on the wrong days. Additionally, upon asking their opinion of the new block schedule, some students were not even aware that this block schedule had been implemented. However, since it is only the first week of this new schedule, most are still adjusting. Senior **Janet Ann Purtell** said, “It breaks up [the work] and manages the workload, I just wish teachers would stick to it.” She also commented, “It would be nice if teachers could have a whole week of lesson plans on Monday. I know that would be hard, but it would be so helpful [for students].” Senior **Whitney Clarfield** echoed Purtell's sentiments and added, “I wish that they broke it up by periods 1,3,5 and 2,4,6,” which would follow the same block schedule as MHS' regular schedule. There has been some confusion with the new schedule, but as we progress with our school year, students and teachers alike are confident that everyone can adjust.

## **Masque Was a Blast** **By Ava Newman**

Masque was three nights (March 5th, 6th, and 7th) of original performances by Malibu High School singers, dancers, comedians, and even puppeteers. The talent show took place just before the COVID-19 outbreak and unintentionally served as one of the last times Malibu High students could put on a show together for the 2019-2020 school year.

It was directed by Junior **Kylie McNulty** and co-directed by Junior **Mia Foster**. One-hundred percent of the funds made from ticket sales went to funding the Malibu High's Prom, and if COVID-19 conflicts clear up in time to allow one to take place. Its advisors were **Mr. John Kibler**, **Mr. Mark Larsen**, and **Ms. Rachel Stowell**. Ms. Stowell stated, “I think Masque was a real success this year. I'm hoping that we really made a lot of money so we can throw a great prom!” Directors Kylie McNulty and Mia Foster stated that if Prom cannot take place, the proceeds made from Masque will be redirected to the “Senior Fund” for the Class of 2021. This money will then be used to help plan Senior activities that celebrate the graduates next school year.

Hosting Masque were emcees Senior **Ocean Masom** alongside Juniors **Sam Palmer** and **Kelson Owens**. They kept audiences laughing all three nights. Palmer stated that “Masque was a beautiful event, and all those who attended were surrounded by family and friends! While circumstances are not ideal currently, Malibu High's Masque was an amazing, memory-filled time spent with the community just prior to social distancing.”

Also premiering at Masque were the Junior and Senior acts, short films made by the 11th and 12th-grade classes. Starting off the show, the Junior Act was about an apocalypse caused by the release of AP United States History grades and was filled with many inside jokes among the juniors. Directors Kylie McNulty and **Bailey Matthews** said, “the actors really just got to act as themselves — most of the film was practically improv with some creative direction from us. Chris Crosby Brodka never once looked at the script. We had a lighthearted approach and kept all the weird stuff.” To close out the night, the Senior Act, titled “Revenge of the Eagle Scout,” which features students acting as teachers, played. One of the directors of the film, **Luke Lindstrom**, said, “After so much toil, when everyone was applauding our film, it was truly gratifying. I hope it lives in Senior Act history forever.”

Each night, awards were given for Best Group, Best Solo, Most Entertaining, and Best Overall. Senior **Theo Detweiler**, the saxophone player of the Best Overall group on Friday, Christmas Is Cancelled, said, “We wanted to do something that was both really fun and included band and wind

instruments. Trombone Shorty's 'Hurricane Season' was perfect." Among these winning groups was also the winner of Most Entertaining on Thursday, FROG. Much controversy was sparked around FROG, as they caused a mini mosh pit in the audience. FROG's bass player, Senior **Marcus Berns** said, "With FROG, we wanted to deliver a performance at Masque that would blow the roof off because no one has delivered something quite like FROG before."

Masque turned out to be one of Malibu High's last great get-togethers of the year due to the cancellation of school not long after. It was a huge success, and will definitely be remembered as one of the best school events of the year.

### **Thursday Winners**

*Best Group:*

Violet Saturn

(Lauren and Spencer Reed)

*Best Solo:*

Katrina Kianpoor

*Most Entertaining:*

FROG

(Weston Hartuv, Kayne Hunter, Evan Kassoy, Lucas Unruh, and Marcus Berns.)

*Best Overall:*

Apollo

(Kira Smit, Lucas Unruh, Sam Marshall, and Vincent Nagelin)

### **Friday Winners**

*Best Group:*

Deaf Goldfish

(Fionny, Amanda Kornuc, Trinity Drummond, Frankie Cloete, Ava Ray, and Briana Plank)

*Best Solo:*

Layne Jacobson

*Most Entertaining:*

Kylie McNulty

*Best Overall:*

Christmas Is Cancelled

(Josh Speer, Theo Detweiler, Aaron Bond, Spencer Reed, Luke Lindstrom, and Layla Narramore)

### **Saturday Winners**

*Best Group:*

Traffic Medley

(Layne Jacobson, Marcus Berns, and Luke Lindstrom)

*Best Solo:*

Charlie Evans

*Most Entertaining:*

Rage

(Kayne Hunter, Evan Kassoy, Marcus Berns)

*Best Overall:*

Heart Of Gold

(Sinan Taylan and Noah Redclay)

## **An Update on AP Exams**

### **By Charles Beck**

Almost every corner of society has been impacted by the Coronavirus, from the economy to medicine. As we all know, education is one area that has also been affected by Coronavirus and the recent stay at home orders. Even though education is one of the government's most important functions, keeping schools open while a deadly pandemic is spreading throughout the country is like creating a Petri dish for the virus to spread. As a result, most schools have moved to remote learning environments through services like Zoom. While safer, online distance learning presents problems, especially involving the validity of tests. How do schools administer tests remotely while ensuring that students are academically honest?

One of the biggest concerns about online testing has come from the upcoming Advanced Placement Exams. Although many believe that the effects of the Coronavirus on education will have ended by April 20, others believe that students may have to stay home from school for longer. As a result, by the time early May rolls around, which is the period during which AP testing usually is conducted, it still may not be safe for students to be in school. As a result, AP testing — which generally takes place in a full room with tons of students — may not be able to take place in its usual setting. As a result, the College Board has taken steps to move AP Testing to an online setting. Under these conditions, students will take a short 45-minute free-response only test. Additionally, the material on all AP Tests will only include material covered through early March, as the move to remote environments may have prevented classes from covering all necessary test materials.

The College Board is providing support to students across the country. As a way to accommodate both those who already prepared to take the exam soon and those unable to prepare, the College Board is creating two different testing dates. To help better prepare students, the College Board is providing free resources, such as hosting online classes and review sessions. More information, including "the full exam schedule, specific free-response question types that will be on each AP Exam, and additional testing information," will be released on April 3.

However, this solution comes with many concerns. First, with remote testing, how will the College Board successfully prevent students from cheating on exams, like having unauthorized study aids with them on test day? Additionally, how is a 45-minute remote free-response test only part of the necessary course material going to show the same level of mastery of a subject as a 3-hour fully proctored AP Exam? As a result, many students are concerned about whether or not colleges will even accept AP scores from this year, given that there are significant questions concerning whether or not scores will accurately display a student's mastery of a subject. Remember, one of the primary purposes of Advanced Placement tests is that they give students a means to avoid taking specific fundamental courses by displaying a satisfactory AP score.

Depending on how colleges view this year's AP Exam scores, the situation could be disastrous for juniors and sophomores, since these scores are an important way of showing universities that they are qualified during the college admissions process. Since AP scores this year may not be as impressive as in prior years, it could negatively impact students. However, there is also a strong belief that students' applications across the country may be equally affected, making this whole issue irrelevant. When weighing all of these factors, it may be tempting to ask whether AP testing should even occur this year. Many believe that taking the exam, despite everything going on in the world, may instead be beneficial to students and their college admission process — showing dedication and resilience.

# **The Positives of Online Learning**

**By Claire Buran**

During this crazy time of being quarantined in our homes, we are not able to go to school. While in the past education would have stopped, now students and teachers have technological resources allowing them to continue school from the comfort of their homes. Google Classroom allows teachers to post all of our work and lessons online. Zoom allows an entire class to talk in real-time through live, online video classes with their teachers. Although the reasons behind needing these online resources are awful, there are many positives to online, distanced learning.

One benefit of online learning is that students and teachers can get more sleep, as there is no longer a reason to stress about waking up too early in the morning or being late to school. During school, the majority of students go to bed extremely late, then have to get up at 6 a.m. to get ready for school. Teenagers rarely get a full eight hours of sleep every night. However, with new online learning, students can improve their sleeping habits. Sophia Shafai, an MHS student, said, "I am able to sleep in, instead of getting only five hours of sleep every night during normal school."

Another positive about distance learning is the capability for students to work at their own pace and focus more closely on concepts they do not understand. Especially with the new block schedule — where each class can only give students work on certain days — the workload is less overwhelming. Malibu High student Ellie Senfferner said, "It's super nice because sometimes I'm not in the mood to do math, and I'll be in a better mood to do it a few hours later."

Students can do their work when and where they want, which can positively affect their productivity levels. As a student experiencing this myself, I enjoy sitting in my bed in my pajamas, doing my Spanish homework. You can finish your homework, then have the rest of the day to do whatever you normally do not have time to do.

We also all know that school can be the cause of a lot of stress and anxiety. Student Frankie Manera says that online school is "less stressful since we don't have to always worry about being judged by other people with what we wear or what we say in class because of how judgmental teenagers are in high school." The temporary online school setup has seemingly alleviated some of this anxiety about being judged.

While there are some positives, there are still some negatives. Junior Kira Smit stated that the amount of work "feels more pointless because we probably won't be going back to school this year at all. It feels as though a lot of the work we are getting is just busy work and that we aren't actually learning anything at all." The lack of social interaction is also something that is upsetting many students. When asked about this topic, Junior Hamish Buran commented, "I really miss interacting with my friends." School gives us time to be around and talk to others in person. Since we are not able to go to school, most students have not seen anyone besides their families for over two weeks.

So far this system of online school seems to be working and hopefully will continue to do so, because this week, we learned that we will not be returning to campus this school year.

# The Worst Month of Harvey Weinstein's Life

By Taylor Tomlinson

Harvey Weinstein, a former television producer, was sentenced to 23 years in prison. The 68 year old was convicted of third degree rape and a criminal sexual act, but was found not guilty of some of the more severe charges, which included one count of first degree rape and two counts of predatory sexual assault. Back in 2017, numerous articles were published by *The New York Times* detailing Weinstein's misconduct, in which actresses Rose McGowan and Ashley Judd were two of many women that came forward. Since then, numerous people employed in Hollywood have come forward with sexual harassment and assault allegations.

On October 5, 2017, two journalists named Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey reported multiple accounts of detailed assault allegations accusing Weinstein. Encouraged by the articles, many other women came forward and shared their own experiences with the disgraced producer. By the end of 2017, this grew into a movement known as the #MeToo movement, in which thousands of women shared their own stories of abuse and assault. However, many were aware of Weinstein's allegedly shady past long before *The New York Times* article was published. What became known as "casting couch" behavior was code for Weinstein offering lucrative film roles to young actresses and models in exchange for sexual favors.

During his trial, Weinstein suffered from several medical issues. After his conviction, the former Hollywood giant went to the hospital for a heart issue. On one of his court dates, the 68 year old showed up with a walker. Weinstein's lawyers attempted to get a reduced sentence due to his old age and deteriorating health, citing that a long time in prison would be a death sentence. The judge shockingly ignored these claims, and sentenced Weinstein to a near maximum sentence.

Weinstein's luck has apparently gotten worse, as it appears that the disgraced producer has contracted the high contagious coronavirus. As the nation goes under lockdown because of this deadly virus, the prisons have not been spared of the contagion. According to CNBC, Craig Rothfield, primary consultant to Weinstein, "While his team is now fully aware of his current medical condition ... we are going to continue protecting his privacy and maintain his privacy." Weinstein was then moved from Rikers Island jail complex to Wende Correctional Facility to be treated.

## Habits: What they are and how to start one

By Ezra Miller

Due to the coronavirus outbreak and subsequent social distancing, most people have quite a bit of free time that could be used to start a new routine that will stick with long after the outbreak has ceased. A lot of the time, people are too busy with daily life to focus on personal improvement. Here are some tips concerning habitual behavior that should help erase annoying tendencies.

### **Good ways to create a habit.**

Typically, a habit results from positive stimulus that is wrought from specific behavior. For example, an individual who consumes Oreos frequently begins this pattern after consuming a couple and becomes drawn to their delicious chocolate and frosting combination. However, some types of habitual behavior are more difficult to initiate. If you wish to make a habit of eating healthier or exercising more, it will require significant effort on your part, since the benefits are not as immediate. If such behavior is not already part of your daily routine, implementing it can be challenging. It is suggested that you create a reminder on your phone as the frequency with which we use these devices will ensure that you receive constant reminders to keep up your routine. After the initial week of implementing your habit, it will become much easier to maintain, as it is now a part of your routine.

### **How to stop a bad habit.**

Everyone tends to wish they could quit poor habits. Examples include overeating, procrastination, and poor eating habits. The key is to recognize when you are exercising an unhealthy habit. After recognizing its presence, one should then make consistent and dedicated efforts to end these habits. As described previously, it is essential to constantly remember that this habit exists, so that when you come across it, you can recognize it and alter accordingly. If you can consistently incorporate such reminders, you can successfully phase out your undesirable habit.

### **Healthy habits to start during quarantine.**

Some healthy habits you can begin while in quarantine include creating art, finding new music, and decorating your room. The feeling of trying something new — is both rewarding and enjoyable. For example, for the last couple of months, I had a watercolor painting set stewing in my cabinet. Due to this extra leisure time, I decided to take it out and use it. I have enjoyed painting with this set, and have made considerable progress. Safer at home, is the perfect time to develop a new skill and to try new things.

## **An Ode to Senior Year By Ocean Masom**

So here we go y'all. We are at the brink of our school years ending, and our future beginning. The only thing between us and finishing this year together is COVID-19. These past couple of years have truly put our class to the test. First, we had the fire, then the mudslides. So naturally, the last stage, at the end of our journey, is pestilence.

This global pandemic is a massive tribulation for the senior class. Just when high school was about to get fun and rewarding, after nearly four long years of hard work, its stripped from us. Not only will we not experience senior prom, senior ditch day, or graduation, we do not even get to go visit the colleges we have worked so hard to get into. While there has been some discussion about a parent-made prom and graduation, this has yet to be confirmed. All I can say is... I am devastated. It is the ultimate act of transgression that we do not get to be rebellious in our final hour. Instead of what was meant to be our farewell act of defiance, we are made to be more complacent than we have ever been in our whole life. A final act cut short before it is time; shall we never get the satisfaction of its end? To be honest, I do not have the answers; this is not an article or an ode — it is an official grievance I am making. I feel the world has jipped us out of something we rightfully earned, so I say "Cry 'Havoc!,' and let slip the dogs of war."

Never again are we to witness the slow and painfully loud deconstruction of our once proud school. Never again will we sit in the bungalows atop the asphalt. Never again will we cross the street to attend classes at the abandoned elementary school. I suppose if not for the overwhelmingly painful amount of boredom and chaotic state of affairs that are occurring, this scenario would not seem so bad. Although this is far from an ideal outcome, we must accept, and respect, the gravity of the situation.

A positive take away is that we are experiencing a time like no other — history in the making. Although our time in high school has not always been pleasant, one cannot say it has not been interesting -- for good or ill. My reflection across my experience at Malibu High School is that despite adversity, we have a great crew of teachers, who, for the most part, enjoy their jobs. The same can not be said for other high schools. So instead of looking at what could have been, let us focus on the positive of attending Malibu High School for over 600 days. I hope that the experience was as formative for me as it was for you. I will see you all in the Emerald City. Peace out!

# What is Really Happening with the Coronavirus in Simple Terms

## By Nova Mostafavi

Throughout the lives of Americans across the United States, it is quite obvious to see that many people have never witnessed an event outside of their personal life so drastic that would alter the lives of others. When compared to places across the world in Asia and Africa, it can be self-evident that Americans are the most “cushioned” when it comes to the knowledge of war or famine at the homefront, especially when it is related to disease. The vast majority of events that occur in the world to Americans are seen as events over *there*, as we are safe guarded by our geographic isolation and mighty military, allowing us to never worry about such a tragic event occurring on American soil.

How does this all refer to the coronavirus pandemic happening outside my house? It's simple; in fact, it is so simple that your ancestors have realized this for thousands of years. It is your ability to adapt to different situations. For the past three months since the beginning of January, if one would say to a group of people that they are going to stock up on food and masks because of fears of the virus, many would deem the person crazy, criticizing the person's ability to adapt, when in fact, they are criticizing a person's natural instincts. This is what has occurred for the past three months, and is the reason why the coronavirus has become such a threat in the United States. We as a nation were too late to adapt to the new circumstances. There are many reasons for this, and possibly many people who can be blamed for this pandemic and how vast it spread, but it must be noted that in terms of being an American, your inability to adapt to this new situation because of your lack of drastic experiences as written in the paragraph above will drastically make the coronavirus worse.

Many would debate with this and argue that the mortality and infectious rate of the coronavirus has nothing to do with being “cushioned,” or say “inexperienced when it comes to ‘harder’ situations.” However, how can one continue to believe this argument when the counter-argument can be made using the examples of non-Western countries around the world, such as South Korea and China, who have embedded drastic containment measures to reduce the rate of infections, all successful because the citizens they have had experiences with SARS and because they were *obedient*? It is known throughout the world that most western countries are not obedient, but yet revolutionary in nature, leading to our successful democratic establishments (not history class). Nevertheless, this feeling of freedom and liberty is amazing, but it will come at a cost during times of public health crisis, such as this coronavirus pandemic, when citizens refuse to obey governors or police orders to not leave your house or not and go to overcrowded hiking trails.

It may be hard for you to accept this new reality of obeying the orders by the government. However, the problem is not with them, but with *you* and your failure to adapt to the new life that has taken place in less than a month for millions of Americans. Your ability to adapt to this new way of life for the time being, whether two more months or a year, is crucial to your survival in this new world. Yes, that statement may have sounded quite primitive to highly educated readers, but the truth remains that this coronavirus is not a matter to take lightly. Rather, it is a matter between you sitting here reading this article or you at a hospital or home with severe pneumonia, possibly leading to death. Things will get worse before it gets better, and if you can accept this, you will be in good shape for what is to come. The rate of infection around the world, especially in our homeland the United States, is not stopping anytime soon, including the number of deaths, which are rising exponentially.

The coronavirus pandemic will come to an end, either with you alive or dead. It is that simple, and your ability to adapt to this new way of life, such as not going outside when you're not supposed to, or preparing your food supply before there is a national emergency in the U.S. to avoid interacting with possibly infected persons, is a step into reaching your inner instincts in staying alive. This notion hasn't been fully used since primitive times.

This is not a post-apocalyptic situation, the only thing that is being asked of you is to just stay home and sit on your couch. If you can *just* do this, the curve will be lower, and you can resume your life for which you were accustomed to several weeks ago.



# **The Story of a Malibu Legend: PILO**

**By Layne Jacobson**

There is someone most Malibu residents know. Someone who has been here for over 40 years, working for Spruzzo's and various other deliveries making sure we all get our food on time. His name is Pilo. Pilo has worked at Spruzzo's and within Malibu, longer than most people have lived here. He started with Spruzzo's about 20 years ago and has been working ever since.

Pilo has a specialty that is not on any menu. It is compassion. When I asked Pilo about his job, he mentioned how much he enjoys the simplicity of driving. In his best English, he describes how "everyone makes the job better." While most delivery drivers hope for a good tip and a short drive, Pilo says that the joy "of knowing everyone" is why he continues to work in Malibu. He loves how friendly everyone around him is and cares a lot for Malibu.

Pilo emigrated from Mexico into the United States at a young age and began working for his license once gaining citizenship. "Work," he said, "[was] hard to find but I never let go." His first job began at Pizza Hut about 25 years before Spruzzo's.

When I started driving for Spruzzo's, Pilo trained me. Once, while Pilo was showing me the ropes of delivery, he saw a plastic cup in the ground in the Spruzzo's parking lot. He stopped to give me the pizza carry bag and picked up the cup and threw it out. He told me, "I like it clean. I need to keep it clean for everyone, it's good for the earth." Pilo has been known to wander around the Spruzzo complex talking on his phone and cleaning up trash he finds. Even on his busiest days, Pilo still manages to reduce his carbon footprint, and will stop what he's doing to pick up the coffee cup cap that someone decided belonged on the floor rather than in the trash can 30 feet away.

So the next time Pilo knocks on your door with your delicious Italian meal, make sure to throw him a smile and a thank you to return the love and compassion Pilo has shown Malibu.

My goal is not to get more orders in for Spruzzo's, but rather to demonstrate, through Pilo, the simplicity of caring. As our school year nears its end, let's not forget to care for each other and the place we live in. Let's all strive to be a bit more like Pilo.

# **The Importance of Self Isolation**

**By SAMANTHA DeNICOLA**

The coronavirus has been spreading throughout the world, threatening the lives of millions of people. Country leaders are advising the public to stay inside and self-quarantine. Even though this is in the best interest of us all, some people have decided to ignore the alerts and recommendations.

To some, the pandemic is just an overrated flu, and has become known as "over hyped." I hope to inform people — who may not believe the seriousness of this issue — how important their actions are moving forward.

The first issue that has been contributing to the spread of the virus would be the fact that social habits are making it difficult for people to take the right steps. To most, it is awkward and feels as though our response is an overreaction. Our problem lies in the fact that most people tend to listen to the currently reported cases (logarithmical thinking) as opposed to the mathematical side of how the virus is spreading.

Social distancing and isolation have become a priority in most countries; however, the US was a little late to the game. As Jason Warner states, "Wuhan went on lockdown after roughly 400 cases were identified (and they had access to testing that America has systematically failed to do at the same pace). The US already has more than four times this number of known infected cases as Wuhan did when it was shut down. Furthermore, Americans are far more mobile and therefore spreading the virus more broadly when compared to Wuhan." This means that the coronavirus will spread with an increased severity across the country, endangering the lives of many.

Throughout the world, the risk of infection is increasing daily. This is due to the number of those infected, who do not always show symptoms, doubling every three days. The longer you postpones isolation, the more significant the risk of a loved one or family member becoming infected becomes.

Another important factor that Warner mentions is that most cases are only found when a person gets sick to the point where they need medical attention. It takes about five days to start showing any symptoms in general.

To put this all into perspective, Warner states, "For every known case there are approximately 50 unknown cases. This is because if I become sick, I infect several people today, and they infect a few people each tomorrow (as do I), and the total count of infected people doubles every three days until I get so sick I get hospitalized or get tested and become a 'known case.' But in the time it takes me to figure out I am sick, 50 others downline from me now have the virus. So every third day, the infection rate doubles. Harvard and Massachusetts General Hospital estimate that there are 50x more infections than known infections as reported."

If you were to do the math for the United States, "instead of 1,573 reported known cases today, there are likely 78,650 cases. This will double to 157,300 in three days. And this will double to 314,600 cases by the next three. So in less than one week, the number of total infected in the United States will quadruple," states Warner.

One other thing to keep in mind is the fact that many hospitals will reach their capacity. Meaning, they will run out of ventilators and space for the sick. Warner explains that, "15% of cases require significant medical attention, which means that 1.5 million people will require significant medical care if just 10 million people get infected... About 65% of all beds are already occupied in our hospitals. So if 1.5M people of the 10 million infected 30 days from now require acute care (15% of the 10M estimated total infections), 1.3M may not get the care that they need because we don't have enough ventilators in the United States." The numbers will only be this low if we all begin complete social isolation by April 11th.

So, next time you go out to hang with a friend, take a road trip, or do a public activity, remember that this is not a vacation; it is, in fact, a crisis. Even if it may not affect you, it affects millions of others. This virus is unpredictable, and doctors have not yet figured it out. The best thing we can do for not only the well being of ourselves but for others is to self-isolate.

## **Could the 2020 Election be Postponed?**

**By Luke Lindstrom**

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has forced closure of most major enterprises, including schools, sports, the DMV and other government institutions, as well as prompting many state and local authorities to issue "stay-at-home", or "shelter-in-place" orders, many people are concerned that this may lead to a postponement or cancellation of the 2020 U.S. presidential election. Although a certain percentage of people vote by use of mail-in ballots, the vast majority of Americans still vote by reporting to a polling place on election day, and the prospect of hundreds of millions of people all lining up to vote in the middle of a pandemic is problematic.

However, it is obvious as to why a possible rescheduling or cancellation of the election would grant cause for concern for some people. Such an act has led to many terminations of democracy throughout history: most notably Nazi Germany. After Adolf Hitler was lawfully appointed Chancellor of Germany in 1933, in accordance with the German Constitution, he used the Reichstag fire and the civil unrest that followed as an excuse to consolidate power to himself and the Nazi party, and call off all future

elections, transforming Germany into a single-party dictatorship. A more recent example of this phenomenon occurred when President Xi of China consolidated his power by taking a wide range of leadership positions and removing term limits for the presidency. However, it is unlikely for the United States to experience such a culmination of power into one individual, even if the election were to be postponed, due to the fact that our democratic institutions are far older and stronger than those in China or Germany.

On top of this lies the question of whether or not it is even possible for a President to postpone a US presidential election. The short answer is no, the President has no authority to cancel or postpone an election. According to the Constitution, Congress is the one with the power to set the “times, places, and manners” of federal elections. In this capacity, they set the date of the general election in the “Presidential Election Day act of 1845”, which states that, “the electors of President and Vice President shall be appointed in each state on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in the month of November of the year in which they are to be appointed.” That date is set in law and cannot be changed by the President or anyone other than Congress. However, even if Congress decided to change the date, they could only postpone the election by a maximum of two months, according to the 20th Amendment to the Constitution, which states, “The terms of the President and Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January.” Thus, the election could not ever be pushed past January 20th, because at noon on that date, whether anyone has been elected or not, President Trump’s term runs out, and he is out of office. Without a new election, this would make the office of President simply vacant. This has never happened in American history and as such, there isn’t exactly a protocol in place to deal with such an unprecedented circumstance. So, in effect, the only way in which the 2020 election date could be altered is by amending the Constitution, which would be an even more nightmarish process than simply having the election at the current date, regardless of the pandemic. As it stands, the best hope we have of a smooth election in 2020 is either for the pandemic to wind down by the time November rolls around, or for everyone to simply vote-by-mail rather than actually reporting to a polling place on election day.

## **The Second Patient Ever Cured of HIV**

### **By Bram Carter**

On March 10, the second person in history was officially cured of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) in the United Kingdom. Adam Castillejo, a 40-year-old who was diagnosed with HIV in 2003, has been taking medicine since 2012 to halt the disease. His treatment was similar to the first cured case of HIV in 2007, with a procedure called a “stem cell transplant.”

The first patient cured was diagnosed with leukemia after starting the usual treatment for HIV. Since he had leukemia, the patient had to undergo a “stem cell transplant” to survive. The patient’s doctor decided to look for a stem cell donor that also had a mutation that would make the person immune to HIV. The CCR5 gene is responsible for creating the protein that allows HIV to enter cells, so the doctor looked for a donor without this gene. The treatment worked, and the successful recovery of the first patient proved that it is possible to use stem cells to cure HIV.

Now, thirteen years later, Castillejo becomes the second person cured of HIV. Alongside having HIV, this patient had Hodgkin lymphoma and required a bone marrow transplant. After finding a donor that had the CCR5 mutation, the patient was treated. After thirty months without treatment, doctors confirmed that the patient had been cured. There are still copies of the virus present in the patient, but they are unable to replicate, so their danger factor has decreased significantly.

While this stem cell treatment seems like the way forward for HIV, doctors have warned that this treatment involves a high level of risk. The two patients had life-threatening illnesses — on top of having HIV — which placed them in situations where the transplant was urgently needed and thus worth the risk. Without this absolute necessity, the possibility of curing HIV would not be worth the risk of undergoing such a dangerous surgery. HIV is now treatable, and patients can live long lives with the virus by regularly receiving antiretroviral therapy, so for most patients, there is no point in trying to cure the illness with high-risk operations.