

# The Walt Street Journal

*Spring Edition 2020*



CAMP  
**WALT WHITMAN**  
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# A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTORS

Dear Whitmanites,

We are writing this letter as we sit atop camp's front lawn. Everyone who has been to camp before can imagine our view. The lawn is freshly cut, the sun is reflecting over the perfectly still lake, and Mt. Moosilauke beckons in the background. It smells like camp too with the familiar scent of pine all around us. It is comforting to be here as this is our favorite place on earth. But, as much as we love it here, it just doesn't feel right without CWW's joyous community surrounding us. There are no children laughing as they somersault down the front lawn. No screeches of joy as a camper catches his first newt. There's no one excitedly running up to us to tell us about the game they just won, the hike they just completed, or the exhilaration they felt after reaching the top of the climbing wall.

It's quiet. Way too quiet. But with the silence comes the opportunity to reflect. We think about the words of Jancy Dorfman, Jed's mom and former director of CWW who used to say, "You can't stop the bad things in life from happening, but you can miss the good things if you're only focused on the bad." While we are saddened that we couldn't open camp this summer, especially because of how desperately we wanted to provide our campers with a sense of connection and community after all they have been through this year, we are choosing to focus on the good. While 2020 has been a difficult year so far, there are some positive lessons we are taking from these past several months now that we have time to reflect:

1. We recognize just how fortunate we are to have this incredible CWW family. The amount of support we have received from families, staff, and alumni has overwhelmed us. Despite not having a CWW summer this year, we believe the CWW community has never been stronger. We are extremely grateful that we have the opportunity to be the stewards of everything CWW stands for.

2. As the stay-at-home orders continued month after month, we were forced to simplify our lives. As time went on, we moved from being upset

about what we couldn't do, to appreciating all that we could do during this unique time. Nights out with friends were replaced by nights in playing board games, card games, and doing jigsaw puzzles with kids. Mornings spent rushing to get to the office were replaced by morning discussions as a family about what was happening in the world. With more time on our hands, we learned to refocus on what was important to us.



The Dorfman Family

3. Over the past several weeks, as our nation has been torn apart following the death of George Floyd, we have spent more time listening and learning and less time talking. We have been learning about racism not from the history books we read in school, but directly from the mouths of friends, camp staff, and others who experience racism every day. We know there is much work to be done in our nation to promote equality for all, and we have always used our leadership role at camp during the summer as our platform to help bring about a better and more just world. Our core value of respect for every individual is an essential component of the CWW experience. We stand with our friends around the globe to speak out against racism and promote understanding and we will redouble our efforts to create a world that is smarter, stronger, and kinder.

While we can't all be together this summer as a CWW community, please know that the spirit of Walt Whitman is still with you.

*"Keep your face towards the sunshine - and shadows will fall behind you."* – Walt Whitman

Sending love to our CWW community,

Carolyn & Jed

# Letter Writing to Stay Connected with Family & Friends

One of the most positive, unanticipated outcomes of the Covid-19 pandemic is the way that it has made us connect with each other, even if our gatherings are virtual. So many of us have made Zoom meetings and phone conversations with friends and family a regular part of our days. But there is one more form of communication particularly well suited for children right now: good old-fashioned letter writing.



If you have relatives in a different part of the country or overseas, or kids who shy away from video calls with grandma, a letter is an easy way for them to express their affection from afar. It's also good practice for the summer. The more your child adds letter writing to their routine, the easier it will be for them to pick up a pen and paper at when you will benefit from all their practice during the quarantine. Here are a few ways to make it easy to add letter writing to your child's weekly routine.

## Find fun stationery or make your own

Even adults find it hard to start writing from scratch on a plain piece of paper. So make it easy for novice pen pals with notepads why'll have fun with. You can take all of the hard work out of it with a Mad Lib-style letter, where they only need to fill in a few blanks. Even if you know they can muster a few thoughts of their own, an illustrated letter writing set or personalized stationery will make letter writing more enjoyable. You could even turn their correspondence into an art project, and watercolor postcards before mailing them.

## Build it into your routine

You've become a professional teacher's assistant by now, so you're already well versed in the number of breaks your child needs to get through the school day. Since screens likely fill up the majority of their free time, you could add in one block of time for them to write to someone each day, or at least one day of the week, to help cut down on their screen time.

## Provide a prompt

Letter writing is one the hidden benefits of camp, provided your child actually writes home! Help get them into the spirit by suggesting topics to write about. It could be what they have learned that week, or what they are looking forward to doing when the coronavirus pandemic is over. Encourage them to add a question for their recipient to answer, to keep the conversation going.

## Show them a sample letter

If your child has never been to camp, they have likely received very few letters aside from birthday invitations, so supply some samples. You could also ask a relative or penpal to mail a letter first to reply to.

## Give them all the materials they need

At camp, one of the most useful tools kids can pack is a storage clipboard for stashing stamps, pens, envelopes, and paper. If they don't already own one or don't know how to mail a letter themselves, show your child how to address and stamp an envelope and let them enjoy this part of the process too. Go a step further by giving them an address book, and ask them to collect addresses from all their friends and relatives, so you don't have to do it for them before camp this summer!



### **Send a letter to Jed & Carolyn!**

Jed and Carolyn will be at camp all summer and would love to receive a letter from you! They will personally respond to every letter received at CWW this summer and can't wait to hear from you!

**Mail to: Jed and Carolyn Dorfman, 1000 Cape Moonshine Road, Piermont, NH, 03779**



# STEM Sarah Shares Her Favorite At-Home Science Experiments!

*Sarah Gaffan is a Junior majoring in Biomedical Science at Western Michigan University. As a biomedical sciences major, she is very experienced in the STEM fields, especially biology. She is an undergraduate research assistant in a biology lab that focuses on stem cells and regeneration research. STEM Sarah, as she is affectionately known at camp, created extremely popular activities at CWW last summer and we picked her brain about some fun at-home science projects to do with your friends and family!*

Hey Whitmanites, while most of us are stuck at home, here are some fun experiments that you can do with items commonly found around the house!

The first one is a classic, and if you've never tried it before; now's the time! The Bouncing Egg (figure 1), turn an ordinary hard egg into one that feels like a bouncy ball! You will need an egg (or a few) and some vinegar (white vinegar works well; you'll need enough to fully submerge your egg – around 1 cup). Submerge each egg into vinegar and let it sit for about 48-72 hours, then remove the egg and have fun! The science: The shell of the egg is made of calcium carbonate, and the acid in the vinegar reacts with the shell producing carbon dioxide (the little bubbles you'll see) in the process.

Have any toy cars, books, dominos, plastic containers, cardboard, or...



figure 1



figure 2

anything really! I challenge you to make a Rube Goldberg Machine (figure 2)! These machines are complex contraptions created by simple chain reactions (what a rhyme!) This one might need a bit of prep work before you begin, but any good scientist knows how to research. Here are some tips: start with the end of your machine, what task do you want it to achieve? Then, brainstorm your plan, gather your materials and build step by step, I'm excited to see what you all create! Okay scientists, just 2 more experiments I have to share, but fear not, science is all around us, all the time.

This last one, named Doodle Life (figure 3), is tons of fun. All you need is a plate, water, and dry erase markers. First, draw a small picture



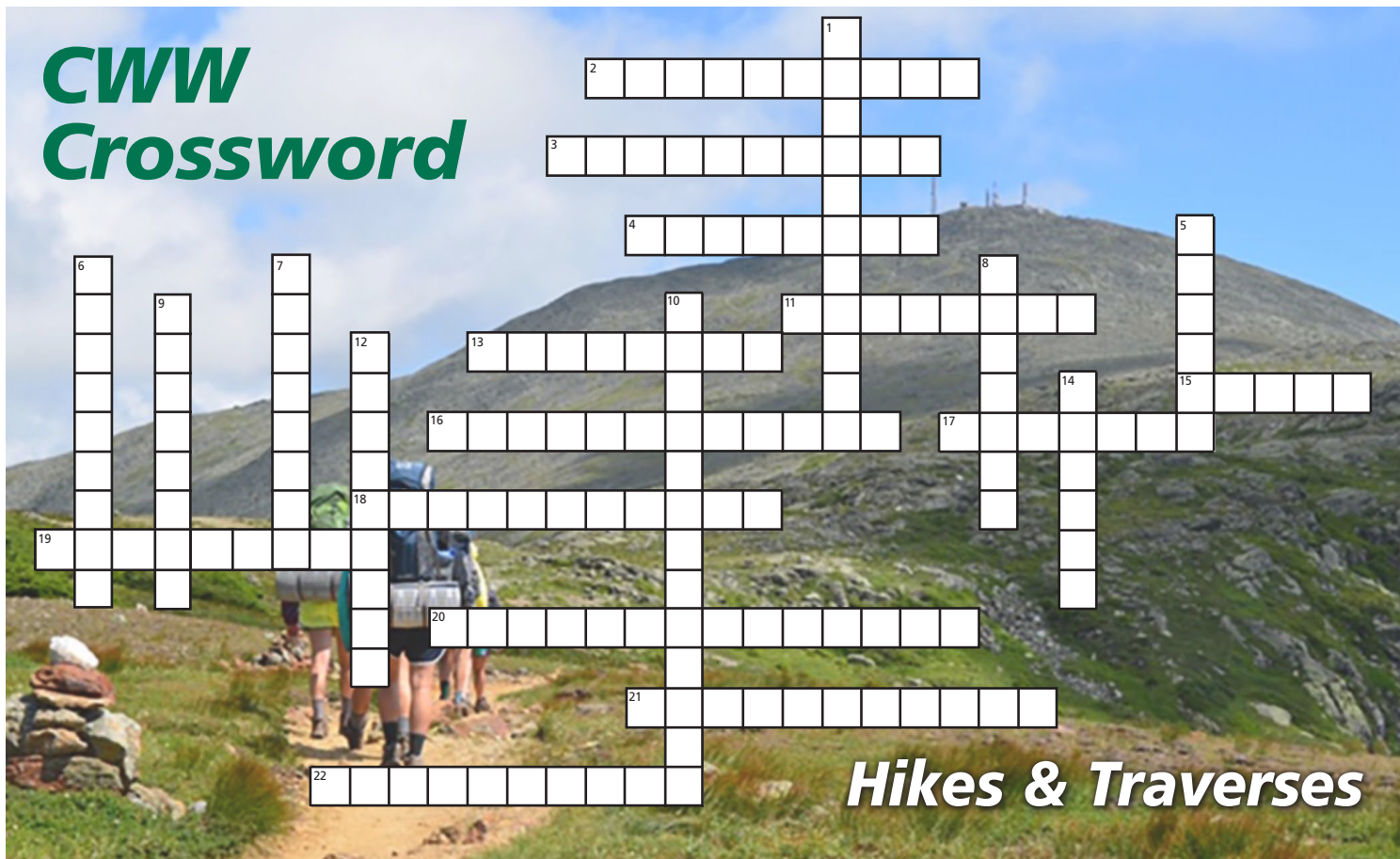
figure 3

using a dry erase marker on a smooth plate (or a shallow bowl), then carefully pour water over the drawing, it should appear to be floating or moving as if your drawing came to life! This one makes for some great videos too. The science: The ink in dry erase markers is less dense than water so when the water pours over the drawing the buoyancy force overcomes the adhesive force of the marker.

***Happy experimenting! I miss you all very much, and I can't wait to hear about all your science adventures!***

***- Sarah Gaffan (STEM)***

# CWW Crossword



## Hikes & Traverses

### ACROSS

- 2 An intercamp foe and a mountain who's name includes the name a favorite New Hampshire animal.
- 3 CWW's very own mountain!
- 4 A State, a District and a former U.S. President.
- 11 You may find some fruity snacks while hiking the trails up this mountain.
- 13 The shortest hike for a lovely view of Crawford Notch
- 15 A close friend of Alexander Hamilton
- 16 The scene of a horrific flood in 1826 where seven members of the Willey family were lost. (2 words)
- 17 A river, a designated wilderness area, and an intercamp foe
- 18 Large rocks + circle (2 words)
- 19 Lasagna loving cat
- 20 The most northerly of the Presidential Mountains
- 21 Sweet + bread
- 22 Climb up ladders and through caves to reach the summit

### DOWN

- 1 A mountain haunted by the ghost of a native princess. Also the second most photographed mountain in NH.
- 5 A stunning southern pressie, also beginning with 'P'!
- 6 An infamous, spooky family, a president and the 2nd tallest mountain in the North East.
- 7 3 peaks in one day! an upper middle favorite (2 words)
- 8 A looooong day hike recently renamed after Geoff! (2 words)
- 9 Not for the faint of heart – a day-long marathon.
- 10 The hardest traverse of them all, only for 2nd year senior campers. (2 words)
- 12 "Danger noodle", named after an animal that makes a noissssse
- 14 Another name for a buttoned sweater





# COOKIES BY GRACE:

## Spreading Sweet Comfort During a Crisis

*Grace Roy has always been industrious and enjoys having projects to work on. Not only as a creative outlet, but also because the idea of accomplishing tasks and working hard at something and seeing the end result is fulfilling for her.*

*We sat down with Grace Roy (CIT 19') to discuss the history of her small business and how she decided to give back during the challenging time we are all facing.*



**How did Cookies by Grace begin?** Cookies by Grace started a little before Christmas my sophomore year (December 2018) when I was baking with one of my friends. We were baking Christmas cookies and they turned out pretty cute, so my dad posted a picture on facebook. People instantly started asking if they could buy some, before I even decided to sell them. In the week before Christmas, I was baking about 10 dozen cookies a night and driving myself insane, but in a good way. After the holiday rush, that's when custom orders began to come in and I've been doing them ever since.

The concept of starting a business definitely sounded like a pretty solid project, perhaps a little overwhelming at first, but it's successfully kept me busy over the past year or so. The idea of having a little cash flow was also very nice, especially because I had to make my own spending money for the CIT trip to Hawaii and the rest of the summer.

**What has been your favorite cookie design to date?**

I will always have a special place in my heart for the first batch I ever created of Christmas-themed cookies. It's where it all began! My next favorite is a design of an x-ray that I created for some local doctors.

**How did you come up with your current idea of making cookies and then matching with donations to essential workers?** The essential workers are doing so much, and I just wanted to try to give back a little. It was actually my dad that brought up the idea initially, and I really loved the concept. I decided to create some pandemic-themed designs including cookies that looked like hand-sanitizer, the COVID virus, face masks and rolls of toilet paper. For each batch of these

specific themed cookies purchased, I would make and donate a dozen to essential workers.

**How do these donations work?** The person placing the order can request the 'donation batch' be delivered to a certain location. Usually they choose a hospital or location where a spouse or friend works. If the person just wants to make a general donation, I bring them to somewhere local that's working hard, especially those businesses people may not initially think of, such as the veterinarian.

To date during the pandemic, I've made and donated about 50 dozen cookies to local hospitals, doctors offices, sheriff's office, banks, pharmacies, clinics, the grocery store, and the vet clinic!

**What is your best tip for people who want to make and decorate their own cookies?** My best cookie tip is when filling a bag with icing, put it in a cup to hold it upright and avoid spillage.

**How many cookies do you think you have made over the past year and a half that your business has been open?**

I don't have an exact number, but I've definitely filled a couple hundred orders and made at least a couple thousand cookies!

**Do you currently only offer local orders/delivery or do you also ship cookies?** I only offer locally because my cookies are soft and delicate, and served best fresh. If you, however, would like to make some either for yourself or to donate, I have tutorials on my YouTube channel!

**Can you share your recipe?** Yes! You can find my recipe on my website: [graceroy.com](http://graceroy.com) or youtube channel: Cookies by Grace Roy.



# ALUMNI FEATURE:

## *Dr. Michael "Bernie" Bernstein*

### Dr. Bernie on the Front Lines of COVID

We recently had a chance to talk camp with Dr. Michael "Bernie" Bernstein, a former CWW camper and staff member, current camp doctor, and proud camp parent. Bernie started at CWW as a camper in 1989. He and his bunkmates were always looking to make each summer better than the last and were passionate about being together. While some things have changed through the years, what has remained constant for Bernie about Walt Whitman is the unique spirit and the great people you meet. His later years as a camper were highlighted by all the awesome trips he got to do with his bunkmates including White Water Rafting, Maine/Canada trips, and particularly his traverse over Cannon Mountain led by none other than Rob Sherry. Bernie continued his journey as a staff member from 1995-97.

After attending medical school at Duke University, Bernie wanted to make sure he could combine his love of medicine with his love of camp. When



**Bernie as a camper at CWW.**

not directing the ICU in Stamford, CT, Bernie and his wife Alyssa have been coming up to Camp Walt Whitman for one week every summer since 2009, with their daughters Emma and Lucy, to work as our camp doctor. When we asked Bernie about the best parts of his unique view of camp, the first thing he brought up was how similar camp still is all these years later, while always continuing to evolve. They have loved seeing both of their daughters become campers and fall in love with camp. Bernie gets a thrill out of seeing the kids of alumni as it gives him a chance to see a piece of them in their children. But Bernie's favorite part of being on camp is getting to see what he terms the "in between times" that few get to see. Those are the jokes shared while walking to the next activity or the casual chats kids can have walking back to the cabin.



**Full PPE at the Stamford Hospital COVID Critical Care Unit – He's smiling under there!**



**Camp doctor mode.**

Over the past few months, Bernie has been on the front lines of the Coronavirus pandemic as he has led the Critical Care Unit for COVID-19 at Stamford Hospital which increased to 62 ICU beds. He has been an investigator for various medications with the goal of finding effective therapeutics. One of the things that has helped Bernie cope with the rigors of working at the hospital, as well as homeschooling Lucy and Emma with Alyssa, has been the calls and Zooms he has

had with his camp friends—a change to unwind and connect with the people he cares so much about. We are so proud of the work and sacrifice Bernie has made in battling this disease and feel lucky to have him not only as one of our camp doctors, but also as our friend. Thank you Bernie for all you are doing!



