

Spring is Here! Stay-At-Home Issue #5





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REMEMBER SCHOOL:

One Year Anniversary Since We Abandoned the School Building

By Kannara Ruiz

Remember when we were all together in class during the first weeks of March 2020, and we all heard that there was this virus in China? Then there was talk that it would spread to other nations around the world and we started cleaning desks and using hand sanitizer in every class. Then, we were going to have two weeks to slow the spread of the virus and we all thought that it would be pretty nice to have a couple weeks off. That was a full year ago.

As the seniors last year found out that we were going to not hold a prom or even a formal graduation ceremony, and sports got cancelled, and classes were rushed to an online format, we all just tried to keep up and figure it all out as we went. Now, one year later we are all online specialists. Many of us are the tech support for our younger siblings, and we

are still doing what we need to do to take care of our own business.

The past year has changed everything that we know about the world and in this article, I would like to take a moment to talk about a few of them. Has anyone wore the school uniform in a year? Those khakis and that shirt are something that most of us hated to wear, and now we got a year off from wearing them. That is one way to look at the good in a bad situation, right?

Now a year later it seems normal to wear whatever for class because no one sees us, right? We will have to get used to talking more in person when we go back to school though.

You may have to get used to working from home for your future career though. While many companies shuttered at about the same time as we did, many companies found that they actually saved money during the pandemic because they did not have to operate massive offices. Do not think that this will not affect many businesses that can have their employees working from a distance in the future. Looking at a screen may be in your future if you are working in any of these companies.

Many students have said that since we have all been locked down for a year, that not going to school everyday has made every day seem like just more of the same. Has anyone else thought that it was Monday, but it was actually like, Wednesday? Where did the week go? It might be funny to us, but some researchers are actually studying the affects of the pandemic lockdown on our perception of time. It seems like we are not alone.

If you think about it, this makes sense though. Without certain dates for projects to be due, going out with friends, dates, other school activities and meetings for clubs, and just the normal procedure of getting up for school every day, our sense of time and even what day of the week it is, can get distorted.

One thing that we should all remember about this pandemic is the shortages. Living in America we all are used to seeing whatever we need on the shelves whenever we need them. Remember back in March 2020, when they said we need to disinfect all surfaces and then all the hand sanitizer was gone? That shortage lasted for months, and I still do not see Lysol around.

There was the mask thing too. Before we all needed to wear masks everywhere, they were hard to find. That was a little scary, but now they are everywhere. If you forget a mask a store will give one to you. They would rather give you a mask than lose out on the sale.

Any discussion about the year 2020 would not be complete without mentioning, you guessed it, toilet paper. What was that about? Now a year later, we can all take a moment to remember the fact that everyone went crazy stocking up on toilet paper. This will be one of those weird but true facts we will be able to tell our

The pandemic lock down has not been bad for everyone. Tik-Tok exploded as everyone used this app to connect with others when we could not see each other personally. In 2020 the app got another 181 million users. That is huge. It is not very difficult to see why. Taking a minute to see someone dealing with a lockdown in their own way, TikTok has taken a difficult situation and made it a little more bearable.

One thing is certain. When we all get back together at school, we will all have a lot to talk about.

Motivation for School

By Evelin Cabrera

While the 2019-2020 school year was one of the craziest ones ever, starting like a normal year and then ending online, this year has been one of the most surprising and toughest school years ever. It all started out as a two-week vacation everyone was happy to have, and now we have not been in a classroom for almost a full year.

The thing is, not everyone finds these circumstances easy, and not everyone finds them too hard. One thing we can agree on is that it is hard to find motivation to do schoolwork with everything that is going on. Even though the idea of doing school from bed and not having to wake up super early seems fascinating; at the same time it makes us students really unmotivated for school. This is especially hard for the seniors.

I am a student that tries to do her best because I will not allow myself to fail, but sometimes it is hard to focus on school. There are plenty of things going on for everybody that school just seems like an option. To even add on not every teacher is understanding so it makes school even harder sometimes. Before COVID there was pretty much a routine every day that everyone was used to. Everyone would get up early Monday through Friday

One thing we can agree on is that it is hard to find motivation to do school work with everything that is going on

and go to school for eight hours, sometimes more for extra-curricular activities.

There was a routine to it, and we were certainly used to it. It was something we have been used to doing for so many years already. After COVID hit, now we have to wake up and look at a computer all day while trying to keep up with school work, trying to keep up with personal problems and trying to maintain

Life is not easy, it never was, but school was a distraction somehow, we would spend it with our friends and just make plenty of memories. After COVID hit we did not have that anymore and it's a constant battle between life school and ourselves. For most people it would not matter because they have more years to make up, however for seniors this could cost them graduating. As a senior myself, this was supposed to be a great year but trying to stay on top of school it's like a dreadful feeling.

We don't know when the pandemic will end and life will go back to normal for students. However, after this year, I don't think there is going to be a normal school year for a long time. Despite the lack of motivation, that transition from online to back to school will actually be hard on most of us. Most students I have spoken to think that the transition back to a normal school day will be as difficult as the transition to distance learning.

It seems weird that students will have a tough time going back to school, but that is the case right now. As of the writing of this article, there are no plans to start in-person learning, and many are not adjusted to the distance learning model. The earliest that we will be going back is April, but who knows what will happen then?

Sadly, this is the new normal, but things will have to change throughout the school. It is not

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Time to Get Your Vaccine!

By Justin Pimentel

Ever since the cases of Covid started becoming a problem and we all went into hiding, we (and the whole world) have been waiting for a vaccine that can allow us to get back to normal. The covid vaccine has been long awaited ever since the Coronavirus became a worldwide issue. The development of this vaccine, by multiple companies has happened faster than any time in history. Usually, a vaccine takes at least five years to complete, if it can be made at all. This one was done in less than a year, which is a modern medical miracle.

Now the trick will be trying to get these vaccines made as quickly as possible so that people can get it. There have been a lot of questions about who should get the vaccine first. Since older people are the most affected by this disease, they are getting the vaccines before younger people. There has been discussion too that minority communities should get the vaccine before white people because they too have been hit harder by the pandemic.

Many companies including Merck, Pfizer, and now John-



son & Johnson are making the vaccines they developed as fast as they can. Soon everyone who wants it will be able to get it. The distribution and development of the vaccine has been taking some time to be running at full speed, but it seems to be there now. At the time of the writing of this article, companies are even manufacturing vaccine from other companies, all in an effort to get as many vaccines out as quickly as possible to the people who need them.

Even though there have been over 500,000 deaths and many infected by this virus, there seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel. There is an end in

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In Memoriam - Mr. Steven Cerdan



PHOTO BY MRS. ROMERO

There is a great loss to our school community, as we have lost Mr. Cerdan. He served many roles in Passaic Schools, including as a Parent Liaison at schools number 7 and 19. As a paraprofessional, he worked for the welfare of the students of PHS.

Those who knew Mr. Cerdan were able to see his commitment to the students and families of Passaic. He was a constant advocate for the students, and he was a great man to work with.

Some of those who knew him best shared a few memories of this tireless advocate for students and an all-around great friend.

"Mr. Steve always had a story to tell and boy could he tell it. Coupled with his humor and serving heart, he was a joy to be around and delightful to work with. He was an 'unsung' hero that did not get half of the recognition that he deserved...."

– Mrs. Roach

"Thinking about his laugh and facial expression brings a smile to my face. Working with him was a joy. Wow, did he have a heart for the students and make things happen! He had an even bigger heart for the children he fostered. God bless his soul."

- Mrs. Torres

"...I did see Steve in action one day. As I provided a day of administrative coverage at the school where the secretary was also absent, in a short time frame he displayed many ways he served other with care and action with solutions during a little hectic star of a school day with unexpected challenges. He simultaneously answered phones, helped ensure that a class had a sub, explained the day's plan to me and some of the operations. He did this while welcoming and helping parents and helping young students get to where they needed to be...."

– Mr. Acevedo

"I remember when Steve would say: 'This is not Mr. Cerdan talking to Mrs. Torres-Gomez...this is Steve talking to Jeannette...."

- Mrs. Torres-Gomez

"Steve was a very caring person who loved his kids. He was a gentle person who advocated for our students. I will always remember our conversations about how we can help our students."

– Mrs. Presto

"You never heard the following sentence in the history of time: Hey, is Cerdan here? If Steve was in a room, you knew it. He was a presence and a force of nature. You knew he was in the room because you heard him and if you didn't hear him, you felt his energy. He was a giant personality who was passionate about our kids. You never had to ask what he was feeling because honesty was his default setting. And he swung his truth like it was a blunt instrument. It's what I appreciated about him most. And if you needed to be checked, he was there for the checking and did it enthusiastically. ..."

– Mr. Martinez

"I remember meeting Steve for the first time during a mediation dispute. During the early 2000's PHS had a peer mediation program. I was so impressed by the skills he demonstrated. He skillfully diffused a very tense situation. I learned so much from this young man. I came to respect him as a valued colleague."

– Mr. Bian

HISTORY DEPARTMENT GROWS BY ONE





PHOTOS COURTESY OF MR. VALLILA

Mr. Vallila, history teacher, just welcomed the newest addition to his household. Michael Edward Vallila was born on February 17, coming in at seven pounds, six ounces. He has not quite finished reading Edward Gibbons, "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," but his dad is helping him with some of the big words.

Top Superbowl Commercials

By Wendy Medina

Every year one of the best parts of the Superbowl is watching the commercials. When companies spend five and a half million dollars for 30 seconds of air time, they will put their best ads forward and hopefully make us laugh. Like everything else, the pandemic has changed the line-up of commercials this year. For some reason Pepsi and Coke did not advertise at the Superbowl. Neither did Budweiser, and they have been a staple for years and years.

If you are old enough to remember it or if you have an extensive queue in your video lineup, you may be familiar with the old movie Wayne's World. Even though it has been decades Mike Myers and Dana Carvey have been broadcasting from the basement of Wayne's mom's house. Now they are using their show to promote Uber Eats, which is something that many have become familiar with during the lock downs. The result of this commercial is some laughs, and maybe eating local.

Another ad that made us laugh was for Tide, which was used to wash a sweatshirt with the face of Jason Alexander, from the show Seinfeld. So, another show from a long time ago was used as the basis of a laugh, to sell something. The best part of this commercial is the facial expressions of Jason on the sweatshirt, but I guess that is the point.

Keeping the cultural icons of the past in mind, Dolly Parton's "9-5" song was used as the basis



YOUTUBE.COM
M&M's 2021 Superbowl ad featured
Dan Levy.



YOUTUBE.COM

"The Jason Alexander Hoodie" was Tide's Superbowl 2021ad.

of a commercial for Squarespace, a website creation company. This time though it was working from 5 to 9. Catchy, and a great song.

The best commercial for many was the daydream sequence by a worker for Amazon who was designing the next Alexa box. She daydreams about Alexa being put into a box that looks just like Michael B. Jordan, much to the dismay of her husband. This is a funny, and a little naughty, commercial, but it makes us laugh.

As long as we are on the subject of bad partners, the Cheetos commercial featured Shaggy singing his "It Wasn't Me" from 2000. Ashton Kutcher accuses his wife, Mila Kunis, of eating all the Cheetos, catching her orange handed in every case. When she says "...it wasn't me", the result is hilarious.

Using candy to say you are sorry is a great way to do it, but by doing things onpurpose just so you can make up with some M&M's is just wrong. That is exactly what happened in this year's M&M's ad, when "kicking your seat accidentally on purpose" or "mansplaining" were reasons to give some delicious candy. When Dan Levy promises not to eat any more of the friends of the M&Ms with the red one banging on the glass of his car, well, he probably will eat just a few more. Morbid, but funny.

There were many more commercials, but these were the favorites this year. In a year that was just crazy with all kinds of crises, it was nice to see some normalcy in our commercials for the big game.

Stuck at Home? Get a New Game

By Manuela Lopez

We're still stuck in the middle of a Pandemic. So, we might as well sit back, relax and grab a controller because there are tons of new titles and ports coming out! Let us talk about a few of them that will be releasing in February and March.

Super Mario 3D World was a Wii U game that was released back in 2013. Now thanks to the Super Mario 35th anniversary, the game is getting more than just a port. Super Mario 3D World: Bowser's Fury will expand the 3D world, including new maps, enemies, powers, and more! Since there's a plethora of new content it is safe to say that this game is definitely worth a revisit. Check it out when it releases on Nintendo Switch on February 12th. Sometimes the classics are still the best.

Little Nightmares is a horror puzzle Platformer from Tarsier Studios. It was released back in 2017 and has since had multiple platform ports. Now Little Nightmares will be getting a new sequel in the form of Little Nightmares 2, produced by Bandai Namco Entertainment. It will be released on platforms such as the Nintendo Switch, Play-Station 4 and 5, Xbox One, Xbox Series X/S and so many more. It's officially out now! So feel free to explore the terrifying world of Little Nightmares once again.

As it is traditional with every new Persona game, Atlus will partake in several different spin-off games. Persona 5 which released back in 2016 will be getting a new spin-off game in the form of Persona 5 Strikers. Persona 5 Strikers isn't an RPG, but instead is a hack and slash game that is more similar to the style of the Dynasty Warriors games. Look forward to slashing hordes of shadows as the Phantom Thieves releases on February 23rd on Windows, Nintendo Switch and the Playstation 4.

The Yakuza series from Sega will get it's eight main release in the series. Yakuza: Like a Dragon will be an RPG starring Ichiban Kasuga as the main character of the series once again. Even though it was released in Japan in January, the rest of the world will be getting it as of March 2nd on the Playstation 4/5 and Xbox One. So get ready to throw down!

Monster Hunter will also be joining the fight with its sixth game, Monster Hunter Rise. Of course, published by CAPCOM, it will be set to be an exclusive for the Nintendo Switch. This would be one of the several Monster Hunter related games that CAPCOM has been releasing or re-releasing. So if you're a Monster Hunter fan then there is a lot to look forward to. Monster Hunter Rise will be set for release on March 26th, a day

away from the release of Monster Hunter: World.

The SNK fighting game Samurai Shodown will be getting a port on the Xbox Series X. While everyone waits for the new King of Fighters 15 to have a release date, why not enjoy their other title for the time being? With more characters on the way, Samurai Shodown will keep fighting game fans excited. So people with an Xbox Series X look forward to your port of this samurai fighter on March 16.

There are many titles coming out in February and March of this year, 2021. It's bound to keep fans of all of these series and new titles entertained in this pandemic for just a while longer. Don't forget to keep updated with the respective series to get more information on the games you love and enjoy.



"Little Nightmares"

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"Super Mario 3D World: Bowser's Fury"



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"Samurai Shodown"

Happy St. Patrick's Day! But Who was Patrick and Why is He a Saint?

By The Resident Historian

It is the middle of March and that means that everything is turning green. Well, this year it is really cold and nothing is growing green yet, but it is still Saint Patrick's Day. But what is Saint Pat's day? Where does it come from and what is with all the green?

St. Patrick's Day is the observance of the death of the patron saint of Ireland. He died on March 17, 461, in Ireland. It has been celebrated in Ireland for over 1000 years. The traditional observation of this holiday in Ireland is to go to church in the morning and then spend the afternoon celebrating. The celebration would include the consumption of meat, drink and dancing, which would normally be prohibited because of Lent. You want to know what they ate? You guessed it Irish bacon (corned beef) and cabbage. Who would have thought it?

But who was Patrick and why is he a saint? Patrick was born in Roman Britain, but he was kid-

napped and brought to Ireland as a slave at the age of 16. When he escaped, he actually returned to Ireland to spread Christianity there.

The stories surrounding Patrick are part of the Irish culture



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Saint Patrick

to this day. Shamrocks, which have three leaves were, as the story goes, used by Patrick to tell the story of the Trinity. He used the three leaves to show rather than just tell about the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That explains all the shamrocks during Saint Patrick's Day. This also explains the green color be-

ing associated with the holiday.

Today all around the world there are Saint Patrick's Day Parades. However, they do not come from Ireland. How does that make sense? The earliest parade was held in St. Augustine, in Florida in 1601. The first parade in New York City was held in 1772. Therefore, the Saint Patrick's Day parade is actually an American invention. As more and more Irish immigrants came to America their cultural pride was exhibited during Saint Patrick Day parades held throughout the country in cities like Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, and of course New York City.

This year, as well as last, the parade in New York was cancelled due to the Covid pandemic. However, a tradition that goes back over a thousand years cannot be ended when a parade is cancelled temporarily. So, take a moment to think about Saint Patrick and all the good he did for the world and for the people of Ireland. Happy Saint Patrick's Day!

OPINION

Art is Important

By Avi Rana

Being cooped up during this pandemic has made a lot of people question what is important. One place where people can relate to other humans out there is through art. Art is a form of humanity that can connect us in a way that



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Ancient Egyptian art

does not rely on being face-to-face, and art can touch other humans across time and space. It is a great way for all of us to stay connected during this difficult time.

There are many types of art, but dividing it between ancient art and modern art is a main difference. Modern art is more expressive and less formal than ancient art. It questions or rejects the traditional means, treatment, or mindset of creating art. Modern art reflects artists' expressions and perspectives.

On the other hand, ancient art was impersonal and conformed to a certain society or society as a whole. Maybe we look at this ancient art and just do not understand it, because it is part of a culture that is different than ours

Traditional art aimed to represent reality or realism through narrative. It tells a story. Sometimes in the modern age, we understand the story, and sometimes we need to get deeper into it. Whereas, modern art aims to throw aside the tradition of the past and experiment with new ways of seeing and with fresh ideas about the nature of materials and functions of art.

Learning through and about the arts enriches the experience of studying while at school as well as preparing students for life after school. Arts subjects encourage self-expression and creativity and can build confidence as well as a sense of individual identity.

We make art because there is something inside the creative person that needs to get out. The poet, musician, actor, and visual artist all have a desire to express what they feel and to create something of

There is something very important and very human about art, all forms of art, including painting, drawing and sculpture. We as humans get to interact, express our culture and our society through art. Art can make sympathy, make people think about our culture and our world. and can help to make new relationships between people. At a time when it seems more difficult than ever to create a conversation with

others, important

There is art all around us, when you see it, pause. Take a minute to think about it and maybe even enjoy it. Even art that shows the side of us that is not so pretty is worthy of a look, because it is part of the story

talking about art is more than ever.

of all of us.

Brady helps a new team win the Superbowl

By Bruno Recoba

Superbowl LV (that is 55 for those of you that are not up on the Roman numerals), was played at the Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, Florida, where the weather was much better than in New Jersey.

It seems the lock downs have made many people want to get to something "normal" that we can all do together, like watching a football game. 96.4 million people watched the Tampa Bay Buccaneers' beat the Kansaas City Chiefs (sorry Chiefs fans). The game was not even close, 31-9.

This was the most watched game since 2015 and it changed the trend of declining views of the Superbowl. In fact, this vear's game was up 65 percent from last year for streaming views.

Many people watched the game from all over the country but there was a high percentage of viewers in the Boston area,

which make sense, because that is where Tom Brady played for the New England Patriots for years. He won six Superbowl rings for himself there, and led the Patriots to six championships. This year makes his seventh, which is a record.

Tom Brady was selected as the MVP (most valuable player) and he thanked his teammates from the postgame podium. He said, "I'm so proud of all these guys out here, everything we dealt with all year."

Brady also said that fans should expect to see them next year too. With so many rings on his fingers, that is not just a boast, but really the statement from the G.O.A.T. Tom Brady.

The game itself was won on two fronts. Tom Brady was able to pass for two touchdowns in the first half, completing 21 of 29 passes, which was enough to win the game before the second half was played.

The other part of the game was the incredible defense of the Buccaneer's Todd Bowles de-



ALL-PRO REELS/WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Tom Brady

fensive coordinator was so good that the Chiefs' offense never got a shot to score. The game was controlled and dominated by the offense and defense of the Buccaneers.

With the football season over, the next games to watch are Basketball, so keep a watch for articles for our favorite teams

Vaccine

Continued from Page 1

sight, and now the goal is just how fast we can get there. Everyone wants to get back to normal, before we forget what that is. The pandemic and the restrictions that come with it have proven to be a challenging time for everyone through the past year. So, the demand for the vaccine is at an all-time high.

President Joe Biden has released much information regarding the new covid vaccines. One piece of information he had released is that the U.S. would increase its weekly supply of Covid vaccines by 5% providing at least 10 million doses for the next three weeks. This is good progress and the goal is to make sure that everyone can access a vaccine. The federal government says that the U.S. would increase shipments of the vaccine doses per week for up to 10 million.

Eventually this would help ensure that everyone would in the United States can get vaccinated.

Shipments of the vaccine are said to head to pharmacies soon representing over 40,000 pharmacies worldwide. The phase one of the distribution plan is said to be to send 1 million doses to 6,500 stores including Walgreens, CVS, Walmart, and other stores that can be accessed by those who wish to get the vaccine. The faster the vaccines can be distributed, the faster that we can return to a more normal life without the restrictions that had changed everyone's way of living and working. CVS stores in New Jersey started providing vaccines to customers on February 11.

Do not wait to go get this lifesaving vaccine. The faster that we can get past this horrible disease the faster that we can get back to a normal life, at home, at school and at work. See you all soon when we finally get back to school.

Motivation

Continued from Page 1

the same as the years before where people were able to do their work in a classroom with no distractions. Now there are many more factors that play in school life, the pandemic, wi-fi issues, mental health issues, having to work extra hours and more.

Just about all the teachers have adjusted their teaching style and the work they give so that students can learn better. However, they can only do so much. It is up to the students to meet them halfway and get some work done. Please take advantage of the schooling that is offered so that we do not fall behind. Whatever we take as a vacation day now will only make our return to the school building even harder.

"Rio Juchitan" by Diego Rivera is a modern art painting from the mid 20th century.

Opinion: Trump and the First Amendment

Was the 45th President of the **United States** stripped of His First Amendment Rights?

By Amelia Reynoso

The sad events of January 6, when the Capitol building of the United States was stormed by rioters, has brought up some interesting questions about safety in our nation's capital. Also, it has brought up some questions about our First Amendment rights and the right of the President of the United States to speak on free speech platforms.

Donald Trump held a rally the same day as the riot took place. However, that rally turned into a march to the Capitol, which then turned into a riot in what is supposed to be one of the most secure buildings in the nation. People from all over the country were involved, most of the participants were not even from the Washington D.C. area. Resulting from this criminal act, the President was banned from all modern social media. These include Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, even Google. His personal accounts were all removed from these mainstream apps. The thought of a President of the United States being banned so that he cannot speak to the nation is unheard of.

The First Amendment guarantees the freedom of speech. It has been one of, if not the most, controversial amendments to the Constitution. So, if the 45th president is not able to express his point of view, is not allowed to speak, then what hope is there for the rest of us? Maybe there was a good reason, maybe his words are so dangerous that there ed States and even others, even was no otner way to contain nim. Let us look at why his freedom of speech was taken from him so that we can make an informed decision.

On January 6, the day of the riot and also the day that the Electoral College votes were counted in the Capitol, many felt that the President enabled his supporters to keep on going and the riot. Many felt that Donald Trump was encouraging his supporters to keep on damaging the Capitol even as the events took place. The social media owners said that he was violating their proper use rules. However, there are millions of people who violate these rules all the time and people report them and nothing is ever done about it. A natural question would be why is the President of the United States being held to a higher standard than any other citizen of the Unitterrorists from around the world?

Many people do not like Donald Trump, that is why he lost the election, but his rights were violated. There must be some other way to allow speech of the President, without completely silencing him. Even though his supporters did a very bad thing and they are being punished, they are individuals, and they should think for themselves. Trump never said go to the Capitol and riot. They violated our nation and threatening the lives of Capital Police and even members of Congress. For that they will pay. The FBI has been tracking these people down and arresting them.

However, Donald Trump did hold the rally on January 6. He did not say anything different than he was saying throughout his presidency, so what makes this day different?

Another issue that has come

to light recently is that the FBI nas discovered that the weapons and even bombs were placed before the speech even started. How could Trump have incited a riot if they were planning it before he spoke. The riot also began before Trump was even done with his rally speech. How could he start a riot if he was not even done speaking. Many people like Trump, many people do not, but the question of the First Amendment is important for all of us, and it is more important than any one president.

To all the families affected by this riot, our respects go out to you, especially the officer who lost his life in the riot. When getting to the bottom of this riot, let us not forget that our rights are more important. The First Amendment is more important than any president, no matter how much you like that president or dislike him.