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# Viola's Voice

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*A Look Inside A College Student's Life During A Pandemic*

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## Hearing About COVID-19

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I knew nothing about COVID-19 until March 10th when my speech professor at UWGB mentioned that Ohio State University was transitioning to online learning. My professor claimed that we would finish our semester in person, and not much would change. However, the following day that same professor mentioned that UWGB was considering extending our spring break. The following day UWGB sent out an e-mail that our spring break would be extended, and they would reevaluate the situation each week. On March 24th Governor Evers issued a stay at home order. This is when it became clear to me that this was not going to pass in a few weeks. However, I never expected that COVID-19 would still be affecting our lives in November.



## My Quarantine Circle

My initial reaction to transitioning to online learning was excitement. I was already living at home as I was attending a community college near my hometown, so I did not think much would change. I looked forward to working more hours at the YMCA and having the house to myself during the day. However, my excitement didn't last long because my brother and my sister soon found out that they would also be learning online. In addition, my mother who is a high school teacher would also be teaching online from home. This caused a lot of tension as we were all trying to join zoom meetings at the same time, and our schedules often clashed. During the months of March to early June the only people I was in contact with was my immediate family and my close friend Katrina who I only saw outside.



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# Sports Cancelled

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Athletes deal with the disappointment

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## YMCA State Gymnastics Meet is Cancelled

The Wisconsin YMCA 2020 Gymnastics State meet scheduled for April 4-5 was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a former gymnast of thirteen years and current coach this was one of the most frustrating affects of the pandemic. I coached levels 1, 3, and 4 during the 2020 season and was looking forward to coaching my gymnasts one last time before I left for college. I also sympathized with the seniors on the team who did not get to compete in their final state meet.



## Track Season Cancelled

COVID-19 did not spare any sport. The 2020 track season was cancelled exactly one week after it began. Both my brother and my sister were upset by this fact. However, my brother was extremely upset by the cancellation of the track season as running is his favorite sport. He is a long distance runner and runs an average of fifty miles a week. After he accepted the cancellation of the season he began to train and look forward to cross country season.



## Softball Cancelled

Middle and high school softball is cancelled for the 2020 season. This affected my younger sister who plays softball in the spring.



## Dance Recital Postponed

Studio 170's spring dance recital was postponed until August. The recital was originally supposed to take place in the high school auditorium, but it was held outside at Badger Park for safety reasons. In addition, the amount of guests was limited and masks were required. This also affected my sister who is very passionate about dance, and was super bummed that all of our family could not come to the recital.

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# How I Stayed Active

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Walks, Bike Rides, Runs, & More

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## Rolling through the Pandemic

Quarantine boredom caused us to dust off our rollerblades. My sister and I rollerbladed much more frequently than we had in the previous years due to all the extra time we had on our hands. We would race up and down the blocks in our neighborhood.



## Return of the Trampoline

The summer following my senior year I hardly ever touched our trampoline due to the amount of hours I was working. So we decided to take the trampoline down for good. However, during the pandemic I regretted this decision and asked my mom if we could put it back up. It took a while to remember how to put it up, but once it was up my sister and I used it frequently.

## Biking Across the State Border

COVID-19 caused gyms to close, and for a person who is used to working out six days a week it was quite the change. However, my sister, my best friend, and I found ways to stay active during this crazy time. One of our favorite ways was to go on long bike rides. We rode almost 20 miles or more every day. One day we decided that we wanted to bike 50 miles. We live on the border of Wisconsin and the U.P., so we decided to bike to Michigan and back. The route was super pretty, and we had a lot of fun. The only downfall was that there were no bathrooms open due to the pandemic, so we had to wait until we biked the 25 miles home.



## Counting Steps



My best friend, Katrina, is a runner on the NMU cross country and track team. Her track season ended early like all of the other sport's seasons, but she continued to train. I used to do cross country in high school, so I would run with her on her easy runs and bike on her longer and faster workouts. In addition to running, we would go on long walks almost every day. One day we walked eight miles without even realizing it! We would compete to see who could get the most steps each day. After my walks with my friend I would go home and ask my mom to go on a walk with me in order to get more steps. I would have 30,000 or more steps almost every day.

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# Home Improvement Projects

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## COVID-19 Pandemic Allows Time for Extra Projects

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### Resurfacing the Driveway



My mom has been wanting to resurface the driveway for a few summers now, but normally she is kept busy with her summer job at NWTC teaching chemistry. This summer she taught all online, which saved her driving time and allowed her to complete this project.

### Tik Tok Trend

One way my sister spent time during the pandemic was on Tik Tok. One trend on this addicting app was to paint geometric shapes on your walls. We decided to paint our boring white walls with purple geometric shapes. My sister who was twelve at the time did the majority of the work as I am not artistic at all. We are also not very patient so we completed the whole project in about two days. We were completely prepared for it to turn out horrible, and have to repaint the wall after. My mom was originally not thrilled with the idea, but she was just happy we found something to occupy our time. In the end it turned out great and we ended up rearranging our whole room.



### Refinishing an Old Bench

Ever since moving in to our new house eight years ago there has been an old bench sitting in the basement. During quarantine my mom decided to refinish it. First, she sanded the bench. Then she stained it. Last, she finished it with polyurethane. The bench is now sitting on our front porch.

### Gardening



My sister and my mom enjoy gardening every summer, but the pandemic allowed them more time to spend on their hobby. My mom decided to use this time to put all new mulch in her garden.




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# Rediscovered Hobbies

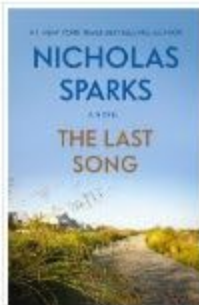
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Reading, Coloring, Playing with Chalk, & much more!

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## Traveling through Books

Traveling was put to a halt due to the pandemic, so in order to travel to new places I rediscovered my passion for reading. I have always enjoyed reading, but I normally do not have much time for it during the school year. After my classes went online my course work got considerably easier which allowed me the time to read. During quarantine I read 16 books, most of which were Nicholas Sparks. One of the favorite books that I read was "Kindred" by Octavia Butler.



## Adult Coloring

For Christmas a few years ago I received adult coloring books. I hadn't really used them much lately, but I brought them back out during quarantine.



## Motivation through Chalk

My sister and I found a bin of chalk in our garage, and we decided to chalk our driveway with cheerful pictures. In the picture above my sister chalked "God is good." When walking around town we would often see motivational messages on the sidewalk written in chalk.



## Brain Puzzles

My friend Katrina gave me a Kakuro puzzle book for my birthday. Kakuro is a brain puzzle similar to Sudoku, but a little more complicated. I enjoyed sitting outside and working on Kakuro puzzles throughout quarantine.

## Friendship Bracelets

Another hobby that my sister and I both rediscovered from our younger days was making friendship bracelets. We would sit together and watch Netflix while we would make bracelets.



## Board Games

One way my family would spend time together during the early part of quarantine was through playing board games. We would play a game together almost every day. Our favorite games to play together were Scrabble, Yahtzee, and Nines.

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# Working In a Pandemic

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## How the Pandemic Changed our Work Life

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### Working at a Restaurant During a Pandemic

My brother works at a restaurant, and they were closed for a few weeks, but they were soon able to open for take-out orders only. My brother made more money in tips during this time than he normally did, so we was not upset about not being fully open.

### Working as a Teacher During a Pandemic

My mom originally thought that she would only be teaching online for three weeks. However, as time went on she soon realized that that would not be the case. She was also frustrated that her students were not learning as much chemistry as they would have in person. She missed teaching her students face to face. She would often be holding Zoom meetings throughout the day, so my sibilings and I would have to be quiet when she was in class.

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### Working at the YMCA During a Pandemic

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I work at the YMCA coaching gymnastics and working the summer daycamp program, and like many others the stay at home order closed my work place. I did not work consistently from March until June. However, one of my mom's colleagues had twin babies, and was in need of a babysitter due to her day care being closed. My sister and I babysat her boys, so she was able to get her work done. In June the YMCA slowly reopened. One of the first areas to open was the Y-Kids program. We had to undergo a lot of changes in order to open safely. Instead of dividing into three large groups based on age, we created cohort groups. This meant that the same group of kids would be with the same staff everyday. We also increased our cleaning of supplies and equipment. We stayed outside the entire day except for extreme weather and the one hour a day the kids got to go swimming. Another change was a health questionnaire and temperature check upon drop off. One of the most notable changes was wearing masks. We wore our masks at all times unless we were more than six feet apart or eating. In order to encourage the kids to wear their masks I bought fun fabric and asked my mom to make me kids sized masks. I gave each kid in my group two masks, and they loved them! I also coach gymnastics at the YMCA, but this did not start back up right away. We started with outdoor practice and slowly moved inside. The gymnasts are also split into smaller cohort groups, and are required to wear masks. We sanitize their hands and feet upon entry and equipment between uses. COVID-19 has changed the way I was used to doing my job, however I am grateful that we were able to reopen safely.

