

WEST MIDWOOD NEWS

Special Viral Edition



Volume 1

Number 8

June 24, 2020



Welcome to Summertime, West Midwood!



In This Issue:

Welcome to Summertime	1
Chronicles of Quarantine	2
Putting the Pieces Together	3
Jigsaw Puzzles	3
Puzzle	3
West Midwood Cooks (and Bakes)	4
Neighborhood News	6
Then and Now—Backyard Edition	6
Artist's Notebook	7
Then and Now	7
Music is in the Air	8
Who You Gonna Call?	9
Look Down, Not Up	10
West Midwood Online	10
WMCA Board	10



Chronicles of Quarantine

by a West Midwood Resident

Sitting on my Glenwood porch behind trees and brush.
Reading loaned Steinbecks with a sense of today.

Listening to song birds with melodies that muse, and others
chirping happily, or fighting, or flirting to nest. And then a hush.

I see evening strollers sauntering along hand-in-hand and
other strollers filled with bundles of joy

I hear languages of all kinds in the silent still of the evening.
Girls talking about boys and groups of boys discussing girls.
You can hear yards away, young men examining ants, plants
and ladybugs.

Then at 7 pm, Marilyn's marauders descend on Argyle, with
drums banging, horns a-toot, pans a-clanging and hoots to
boot. Saying thank you! Ironically a little girl passes on her
scooter dressed in a nurse's uniform.

I see cars pass by--some slow, some fast, some quiet, some
noisy.

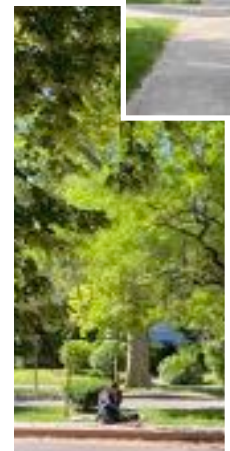
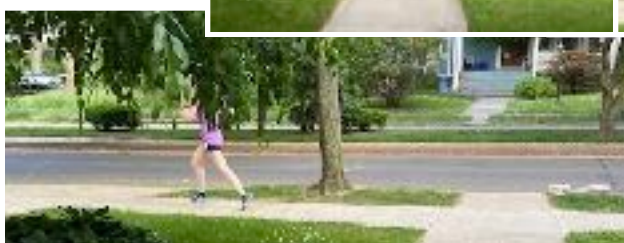
I hear ambulance sirens, police sirens, and Mr. Softy's daily
ditty as a siren enticing youngsters.

And the malls, oh, the malls. Havens of pleasure. I see a man
and dog at rest, man in tree, solo retreats, solo singers,
picnickers enjoying a respite from angst in this pandemic, and
a woman praying.

I see new neighbors, piecing together their garden like
building a Lego set, erecting their arbor with a sense of ardor
with vines winding their way in the trellis.

I see people passing, prating on phones fixed to their faces.

And then the evening comes and all is Quiet.



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Putting the Pieces Together During the Pandemic



What do yeast, flour, hand sanitizer and jigsaw puzzles have in common? They have all been hard to get during this pandemic, and a jump in demand outstripped the supply. Looking for ways to keep busy and safe, people have turned to bread baking, gardening, and jigsaw puzzles to keep themselves off the streets and out of trouble while we wait out this awful pandemic. But who invented the jigsaw puzzle, why is it called that, and is it a silly way to pass time or is it actually good for you? Inquiring minds wanted to know, so I fell down the internet rabbit-hole looking for answers.

It turns out, the first one was created around 1760 by an English engraver named John Spilsbury, who pasted a world map on a hardwood board and then cut around the borders of all the countries, to make what he called a “Dissected Map” that he sold as a tool for teaching geography. Remember those wooden US maps where you put all the states in their places? Thank John Spilsbury..

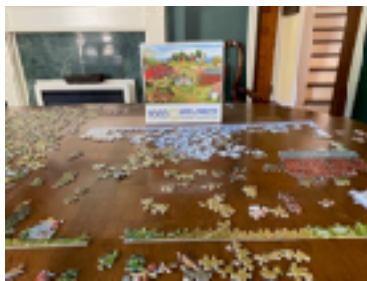
For a long time, the wooden puzzles were cut by hand, and then by using a jig saw (hence the name). Making them became a bit of a cottage industry, as the saw itself was cheap, and women who were adept with sewing machines turned out to be good at puzzle cutting, too. They were very popular during the Depression, when they began to be made of cardboard, cut with a die that created the interlocking pieces that are now so familiar. The new process was cheap, and the puzzles provided hours of inexpensive entertainment. People could complete them, then scramble the pieces and pass them around to others.

Here’s a link to an interesting video about the history of jigsaw puzzles and our current obsession with them: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/piecing-together-the-history-of-jigsaw-puzzles/>

Jigsaw Puzzles

by Eileen Brennan

Do you do jigsaw puzzles? Are you doing one now? I am. I have got to wondering: in this time of the pandemic how many of us are staying healthy by exercising their visual intelligence and hand dexterity. If you are, just for fun of it, here is a survey to take. Send your answers to editor.WestMidwoodNews@gmail.com:



1. Name of jigsaw:
2. Number of pieces
3. Scene captured
4. Time spent working on puzzle
 - a. Short time each day (@ half hour)
 - b. Hour a day
 - c. Sporadically
5. Number of days already invested: _____
6. Strategy employed
 - a. Step #1 _____
 - b. Step #2 _____
 - c. Step #3 _____
7. Completing puzzle
 - a. Alone
 - b. With helper-bees
8. What situation(s) drives you to feel like quitting?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
9. What part of house does the puzzle occupy?
 - a. Dining room table
 - b. Card table
 - c. Moveable ‘felt’ wrapper-base.
 - d. Other _____

PUZZLE

We repeatedly hear adages, aphorisms, catchphrases, clichés, idioms, proverbs, sayings, and slogans bellowed by elected officials, advertisements, and protestors. They may actually be quoting individuals who came long before them and originated the phrases they are mouthing. Do you know who first said each entry in the first list below and when? To help you, a second list containing the originators of the items in the first list follows. How many items can you match with their originators? To add to the challenge, and to discourage using process of elimination, there are some items in the second list that do not correspond to any item in the first list.

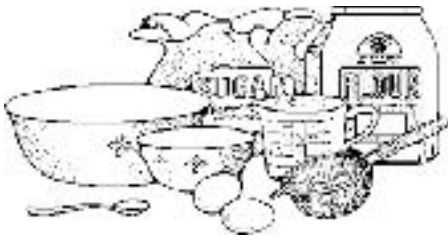
Rating: 4=good; 7=excellent; 10=genius

List of Slogans

1. A chicken in every pot.
2. America first.
3. Arbeit macht frei. (Work will set you free.)
4. Give me liberty or give me death.
5. I can’t breathe.
6. Let’s make America great again.
7. Read my lips: no new taxes.
8. This too shall pass.
9. When the looting starts, the shooting starts.
10. Where’s the beef?

List of Originators

- a. B.C.E, ancient Persian poet
- b. 1775, Patrick Henry
- c. 1861, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- d. 1915, Woodrow Wilson
- e. 1928, Herbert Hoover
- f. 1933, gates of Nazi concentration camps
- g. 1967, Walter E. Headley, Miami, Fla.
- h. 1972, Alka-Seltzer ad
- i. 1980, Ronald Reagan
- j. 1984, spoken by actress Clara Peller
- k. 1988, Peggy Noonan



West Midwood Cooks (and Bakes!) *by Allidah Muller*

Magic Crispy Chicken

This recipe comes from Claire Saffitz via Bon Appetit circa Summer 2019. As she says, “It gives you the satisfaction of fried chicken without the fuss.” The recipe calls for butterflying boneless, skinless chicken breasts, but I bet you could also do this with even smaller pieces for a more chicken tenders-type experience. 4 servings

- 1 large egg yolk
- 3 Tbsp plus ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp plus ¼ cup Dijon mustard
- 1½ tsp Diamond Crystal or ¾ tsp Morton kosher salt, plus more to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1½ lb. boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 2 large)
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cups panko (Japanese breadcrumbs)
- 1 Tbsp honey
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 3 Tbsp finely chopped chives

1. Place a rack in the middle of oven; preheat to 450°F. Whisk egg yolk, 3 Tbsp mayonnaise, 1 Tbsp mustard, 1½ Diamond Crystal or ¾ Morton kosher salt, and several cranks of black pepper in a large bowl until smooth. Pat chicken dry with paper towels. With your knife parallel to the cutting board, slice breast into ½” thick cutlets (if you end up with smaller breasts, you may not need to slice them). Place in a bowl and turn with tongs to evenly coat. Set aside.
2. Heat oil in medium skillet over medium heat. Add a pinch of panko. If tiny bubbles appear instantly, you’re good to go. Add remaining panko and cook, stirring, until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Let panko cool in pan about 5 minutes.
3. Set chicken next to panko and place a wire rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet nearby. Using tongs, place a piece of chicken in panko, pressing firmly to adhere. Lightly shake off excess and place chicken on rack. Discard any remaining panko.
4. Bake chicken until cooked through (165°F) and breadcrumbs are deep golden brown, 10-15 minutes. Let cool slightly.

5. Stir honey, cayenne, and remaining ¼ cup mayonnaise and ¼ cup mustard in a small bowl; season with black pepper. Add chives to sauce.
6. Serve chicken with sauce alongside for dipping.

Just Keeps Getting Better Lentil Salad

This recipe also hails from Bon Appetit 2019 (September). We have been making this a lot while working from home, because it checks a lot of boxes (greens, flavor, lasts a few days in the fridge, keeps you full) and is pretty easy to make. I didn’t have any cumin seeds the first time I made it, so used fennel instead and am happy with the results. If you don’t like spicy stuff, you could go really light on the crushed red pepper flakes or leave them out altogether. 4 servings

- 1 large bunch Tuscan kale (about 10 oz.)
- Kosher salt
- ½ cup raw almonds
- 3 scallions
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1 lemon
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1½ cups black beluga or French green lentils
- 1 Tbsp. cumin seeds
- ½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- 5 oz. feta
- 1 cup Castelvetrano olives

1. Strip leaves off stems from 1 large bunch Tuscan kale; discard stems or compost! Stack leaves, then roll into fat cigars. Slice crosswise into ¼” strips to long, thin ribbons. Unfurl ribbons and run your knife through them just once or twice more to shorten any very long strips. Transfer to a large bowl, season with salt, and massage until kale is silkier, softer, and darker in color, 1-2 minutes.
2. Bring a large pot of heavily salted water to a boil over high heat. While you're waiting, prep the spiced oil. Coarsely chop ½ cup raw almonds; set aside. Trim 3 scallions and separate white and green parts (save the green parts for later in the recipe); thinly slice white parts and transfer to a small skillet. Smash and peel 4 garlic cloves. Add those to same skillet, too. Using a vegetable peeler or paring knife, remove three 3” strips

of lemon peel (avoiding white pith); reserve rest of the lemon for your salad dressing. Add peels to skillet. Pour ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil into skillet and stir so that all of the elements are coated in oil.

3. Add 1½ cups black beluga or French green lentils to now-boiling water, reduce heat to medium, and simmer, uncovered, until lentils are tender but still al dente, 20–25 minutes (they'll turn mushy if overcooked). We love to cook lentils like pasta—that is, in an abundant amount of salted water—so that we can monitor their doneness as they cook and make sure they don't get too soft.

4. While lentils cook, heat skillet with scallion mixture over medium. Cook, stirring occasionally, until garlic starts to brown and lemon peel starts to curl, about 3 minutes. Add almonds and cook, stirring frequently, until almonds are browned, about 3 more minutes. Remove from heat and stir in 1 Tbsp. cumin seeds and ½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes—the residual heat from the oil will bloom those spices and bring out their flavors.

5. Strain mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into a small bowl, shaking to help oil drain; reserve oil (that's the base of your salad dressing). Spread almond mixture (don't forget those cumin seeds!) on a paper towel-lined plate or baking sheet. Season with salt and let cool (the nuts will get crunchier as they sit).

6. Crumble 5 oz. feta into bowl with kale. Smash 1 cup Castelvetrano olives with the back of your knife; remove pits. (Or buy pitted olives!) Tear olives into large pieces and add to bowl. Thinly slice reserved scallion greens and add most to bowl (save some for serving). Add juice of reserved lemon and ½ tsp. salt.

7. Drain lentils well, shaking to get rid of excess moisture, and add to bowl with kale; season with salt. Add infused oil and half of nuts and toss to combine.

8. Divide salad among bowls. Garnish with remaining nuts and scallion greens. (Or just mix it all together if you know you're going to have leftovers.) Eat around the lemon peels and garlic slices, which are edible but intense.

Harriet Rhine's Quick and Easy Muffins

- 2 cups flour
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 cup sour cream (or plain yogurt)
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/4 oil
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon

1. Sift dry ingredients together.
2. Add the rest and mix thoroughly
3. distribute to a dozen muffins in muffin tin.
4. Bake @350 degrees for about 20 minutes

Harriet Rhine's Orange Sweet Potato Bread

- 1 tsp yeast
- 1 Tbs sugar
- 3 Tbsp. lukewarm water
- 1/2 cup finely grated orange sweet potato
- 2 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 Tbsp oil
- 1 beaten egg for wash before baking



1. Mix sugar and 3 Tbsp water in a cup. Add the yeast and allow to activate.
2. Cover with a warm cloth for 10 minutes at room temperature.
3. Mix the grated sweet potato with the dry ingredients in a bowl. Add the yeast mix, oil, and enough water to achieve the

dough consistency to be able to knead it for about 10 minutes.

4. Divide it into 2 parts.
5. Shape each loaf and place in greased bread tins. (I made one loaf into 6 muffins.)
6. Make 2 uneven balls for each muffin, pressing the smaller ball on top.
7. Allow dough to rise in a warm spot for a few hours until doubled in size. (If you're lucky)
8. Brush on egg wash.
9. Bake @400 degrees for 15-20 minutes

Welcome to the Neighborhood!

Eric Sumberg and **Mollie Isaacson** moved to Waldorf Court in May, along with Eve (age 3) and Nadav (11 months). Mollie is Deputy Director of the Newark Asylum Office for the US Citizenship and Immigration Service and Eric is a Director at PJT Camberview, a firm that advises companies on building investor relationships. Mollie grew up in Fiske Terrace and they've lived together in Brooklyn since 2013, most recently in Kensington. They have family nearby and love the dead end for running around with the kids and their new neighbors. With everyone home, it's been a great opportunity to meet their very friendly neighbors and experience the neighborhood, day and night.



Mask Tree!

On Westminster, the mask fairies are hard at work, and if you need a mask, you are invited to take a hand-made mask (carefully sealed in a zip-lock bag). What a kind and generous idea!

Then and Now—Back Yard Edition

A lot can happen in only a few months here in West Midwood. Remember the praying mantis egg case? It hatched! And remember the glorious blossoms on the Rosen's apple tree? There are baby apples growing there now. Hey, it's the little things in life that keep us going, right?

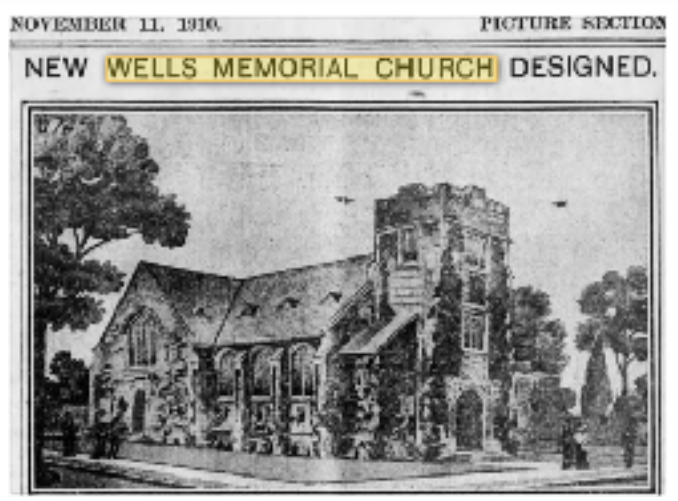


Florence Mangani — Birds

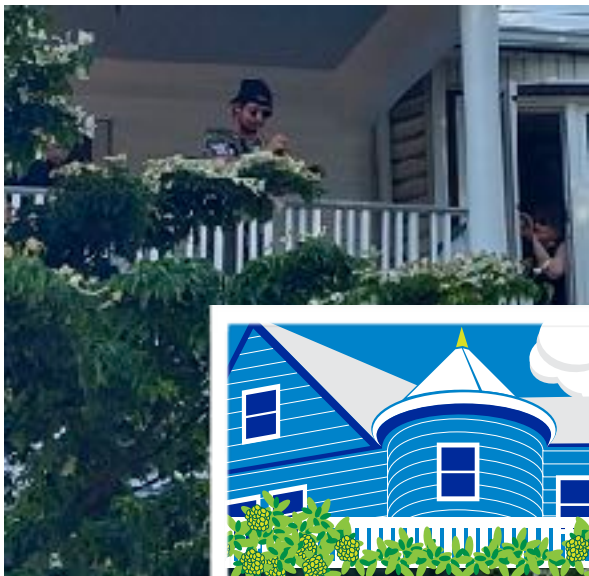


Then and Now by Joe Enright

The Wells Presbyterian Church at 700 Argyle Road (now the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) opened in 1913. Prior thereto, the congregation met on the first floor of the Corbin Court building and then erected a temporary wooden structure at Foster and Argyle until fund-raising and construction of the new Church was complete. When we first looked at our eventual home on Argyle Road in 1988, the Mormon Church had a board that announced three Sunday services: one at 8am in Chinese, one at 10am in English, one at Noon in Spanish.



It's Summertime, and Music is in the Air



Photos by
Eric Goldberg

A NEIGHBORHOOD PORCH MUSIC CELEBRATION!
MAKE MUSIC DITMAS
 SUNDAY, JUNE 21, 2020 | 3-5PM

- STROLL / STOP BY
- FACE MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIRED
- DONATE TO LOCAL BUSINESSES IN NEED

GOFUNDME.COM/MYCORTELYOU-SMALL-BUSINESS-CAMPAIGN/

MUSIC IS NON-STOP AT EACH LOCATION

- 295 East 17th St: Classical Music
- 272 Marlborough Rd: Eclectic Mix
- 328 Marlborough Rd: Jazz
- 559 Marlborough Road: Jazz
- 518 Westminster Rd: Rhythm & Blues and Jazz
- 220 Westminster Rd: Classic Rock
- 308 Stratford Rd: Folk from First Acoustics

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fde | **CoRMA**

Last Sunday afternoon, the first day of Summer, music was definitely in the air! Make Music Ditmas, an event sponsored by Flatbush Development Corporation, CORMA (Cortelyou Road Merchants Association) and MyCortelyou’s Small Business Campaign, featured non-stop musical performances on seven neighborhood porches throughout the neighborhood just north of West Midwood. The weather was beautiful, events were well attended, and the music was great. Everyone was masked and maintaining smart social distancing, and very glad to be out in the world again, enjoying our wonderful neighborhood.

Who You Gonna Call?

When you need help, it's important to call the right number. Here's a list of useful phone numbers with an explanation of when to call which number. It's not a bad idea to cut out this list and stick in on your refrigerator or by your phone.

911— The number to call for emergencies, such as fire, medical emergencies, accidents of any type, a crime in progress, violent behavior, or a person in trouble. Remember to stay on the line until the operator tells you it is okay to hang up. The operator will also ask you your location, so note the nearest house number and street address.

311—Call this number for non-emergencies such as noise complaints, animal control, air quality, blocked driveway, dangerous tree situation, or to find out where to get other information. For a complete list, see www.nyc.gov/311.

If you're unsure, call 911. The operator will either take your information or redirect you to 311. Remember to get a complaint number and write it down.

Our Neighborhood Coordination Officers (NCOs):

P.O. Konstantin Rakmonov, **929-294-5260** Email is: konstantin.rakhmanov@nypd.org

P.O. David Yegros, **929-284-0625** Email is: david.yegros@nypd.org

The NCOs are usually on duty Tuesdays to Saturdays from noon to 6:30 p.m. (Sometimes they are unavailable because they have been pulled for training or special duty.) Former West Midwood president Linda Howell reports that she relies on the NCOs for quality-of-life issues, especially situations "where I do not have complete details, only secondhand reports of events. I feel comfortable giving them as much information as I can and asking them to check into the potential problem." Examples include gatherings at the dead ends, abandoned cars, chronic parking violations, and patterns of package theft from porches. You can also contact them if you feel a 911 or 311 call was not handled correctly. Note that while they will make every effort to assist, they may also be handling other more time-critical issues.

Community Board 14 (CB14), 718-859-6357

This office and its staff are a valuable resource that can be contacted for a myriad of situations. Call them to find out the status of a 311 complaint, why your recycling wasn't picked up, how you can get a tree planted in front of your home or a dead one removed, or what's going on with construction (or lack of it) at a specific location. They can also help you get in touch with the local representative for a specific city agency. This is by no means a complete list. If you're unsure of how to handle an issue, call them and ask. They are there to help.

Coronavirus Symptoms

Here are the CDC recommendations for what to do if you are experiencing symptoms of Covid-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

Call your doctor first, who will advise you as to what to do next. Most cases are mild, and can be treated at home. Do not go into your doctor's office without calling first, so that they can assure you get appropriate care without putting yourself or others at risk. If your symptoms are severe or you have difficulty breathing, call 911.

Look Down, Not Up

by Joe Enright

At the furthest northeastern extent of the vast West Midwood expanse, one can find—just inside the Foster Avenue fence of Melanie Oser & Alan Bennet where their Marlborough Court backyard looms over the southbound Q train cut—a curious historical remnant dating to 1906. It's a wrought-iron manhole cover with the centered, etched letters "BHRR." The Brooklyn Heights Rail Road Company once operated almost 50 streetcar lines in Kings County, which included the



Brighton] Line. Before it was depressed into its present trench in 1906-1907, the Brighton line from 1900 until the installation of a third rail in 1907, was a surface trolley line powered by overhead electrical wires that stretched from hundreds of poles lining both sides of

the tracks. The BHRR name derived from its first route in 1891: a cable car pulled along Montague Street from Court Street to a waterfront ferry to Wall Street which lasted until 1924. The BHRR was a publicly traded company until 1896 when Brooklyn Rapid Transit (BRT) took it over. Manhole covers with the imprint of BRT replaced the BHRR imprimatur in 1907 and one can still be found near the Brighton line, on the Avenue H street bed, a few feet from the station wall on the east side.

How are you doing, West Midwood? What are you doing, West Midwood?

Send us your drawings, pictures, doodles, ideas, stories or poems. We'll publish this every week or so, so that we can stay a bit more connected. Let us know about new babies, great recipes you've tried, good video games, bad jokes, naughty puppies, or goldfish that jumped out of their bowl—whatever is happening at your house while we are waiting out this pandemic.

What Is West Midwood Online?

Want to ask folks in the neighborhood whether they have any recommendations for a plumber or roofer or such? Or maybe what local eateries or merchants they like? Perhaps you'd like to be in the know about issues affecting our area? Then join the West Midwood Online email discussion group, aka the listserv.

Send an email to joe@enright.com with your street address, name, and the email address that you want to use to post and receive messages. He will add you to the group and send you the simple instructions. There are presently over 200 email subscribers representing about 125 households.

To join you must be a permanent resident of West Midwood and agree not to post messages of a religious, political, or spam nature. Insulting or crude language can also lead to revocation of the ability to post. Finally, new and existing members can also request a daily recap, containing all of the activity within the previous 24 hours, rather than receive messages as they occur.

WEST MIDWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2018 - 2020

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