

VOLUME 2 • APRIL 2020

THE GIFT OF JOY

WEEKLY COMMUNITY CARE PACKAGE



INTRODUCTION

A MESSAGE TO EVERYONE

I'm sure for most of you that adapting to the new online and isolated world is strange. It is hard to adjust to this uncomfortable lifestyle where you feel helpless and cannot do the things you normally would. What I've learned is that the experiences we face right now are journeys of their own that aren't moving forward. They are cycles, but they won't last forever. Even though life will have its ups and downs, it will eventually move on.

Sometimes, I don't think we need to be positive or strong, because it is okay to feel saddened or hurt. But one thing to remember is that sometimes changes like these can force us to rethink our lives and what matters to us.

Right now, we should be ready to cope with change. We are in this together, and this may be the time where you reconnect with yourself and what truly matters to you.

- ANDREW OH, EDITOR IN CHIEF

TAKE A PEEK!

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PICTURE PERFECT!

We asked our readers to take a snapshot of what they have been doing since quarantine began. Here are some of the pictures we received from our community!



QUARANTINE BE LIKE....



COMIC BY BELLA DUARTE

FOOD FOR THE HEART

Last week in our very first issue, we discussed who our hidden heroes were during this time of crisis. We received drawings of nurses, doctors, and stories about friends and family.

With our second issue, we wanted to focus more on what we can feel thankful for that is around us. It can be the early morning walk you do everyday. It could be the view from your window to the outside world as you work. It could be the mountains you see when you wake up. That is why we asked our community to express and explore these ideas, and we received beautiful submissions that represented it all.

We hope that through our work, you can feel and experience joy. We hope our community can share and help you battle the isolation you are feeling.

We understand isolation, financial instability, and other struggles are very real and affecting millions of families. The Gift of Joy is available for any and all support, and you can always find more information about us at:

thegiftofjoy.wixsite.com/communitycarepackage

But just like last week, enjoy the stories the youth of Santa Clarita is able to tell. Their artwork, writing, poems, and comics are all down below, ready to make a change. Our goal is to put a smile on your face and offer resources during these dire times.

WEEKLY WISDOM

**"There is
enough sun
for everyone"**

- TRACEE ELLIS ROSS

ART GALLERY



Voom



Connecting with Gratitude

BY JOYCE KIM

I have made a drawing about me going on "voom" with the people and things that I am grateful for. Although I can not see my friends and extended family, I like to still have conversations with them and stay connected.

Even if we can not laugh, hug, and appreciate each other within 6 feet, we can still show each other how thankful we are of them.



Home (Not) Sick

BY CAITLIN KRISTINA COLEMAN

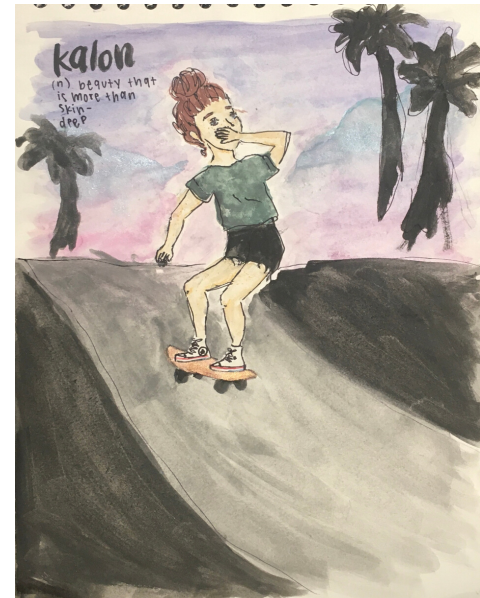
Quarantine is providing us all a time to finally be home. During school, most people would constantly count the days to the next break. Everybody dreaded going to school each day. Now, we are actually home every single day. Sure, there's no hanging out with friends, but there is hanging out with yourself. Just vibing.



From Home

BY CAITLYNN TOLENTINO

I have always had a deep gratitude for the world and what it graciously offers us and so I found writing this piece to be fairly personal. It's something that I hope will allow for others to appreciate as something that's always been readily available to us, especially during this vulnerable time. I highly encourage everyone to step outside and focus on breathing for a bit, even if it's for a few minutes. I personally find it to be calming and relieving especially during the morning and/or night.



Kalon

BY EMILY HANCE

The only way I can get my mind off of COVID-19 is by going outside and just breathing. Skateboarding around my neighborhood is a way I can get away from it all.

Kalon is a word that means: beauty that is more than skin-deep



COMMUNITY STORIES

Here at the Gift of Joy, we wanted to hear from you not just through your artwork. Therefore, we bring to you community stories, a new page on our newsletter every week with thoughts and ideas from all of our readers!

"Everyday, I arise to see the same comforting opalescent white walls of the humble sanction that I call my room. Following this, I would slide the window adjacent to my bed to allow for some quick air and then hurriedly prepare for the school day. That was then. Now that I as well as countless students across the nation have transitioned to an online school format, staying inside for the entire day has become the new norm. Personally, I have been staying in the same yet familiar room everyday. I did not believe it was possible to grow more accustomed to these white walls than I already thought I had. As always, I continued to slide open the glass window in the mornings to allow for some air, however at one point during this time this changed for me. I began to linger a moment longer, each time seemingly longer than the last, basking in the soft chilled air of the morning. Gazing past the fluttering leaves of the maverick tree next to me were the transparent clouds of the dawn sky. Stepping out onto the balcony, I gripped the edge of the balcony with ginger as I slowly inhaled the crisp, fresh air allowing it to flow throughout my chest. After a month of being confined inside, I realized I had taken the much-needed breeze for granted. Heading out to school everyday meant that I would be taking in outside air frequently and it seems that I had simply forgotten the gratitude I had for it as I stayed in more every day. From tranquil dawn to quiet dusk, I have since then taken up the habit of pausing my life to step out onto the balcony for some select minutes to simply breathe. This invigorating and therapeutic feeling of crisp, pure air that graces me is a gift from the world that I give thanks to during this time."

- DAWN TO DUSK, WRITTEN BY EVELYN JOO

"I work at a grocery store in SCV and at the moment it can be very stressful and hard to really have the motivation for a happy spirit in the middle of a pandemic. With everything going on a lot of people have been really on edge and most of the time they take it out on the workers & others around them. This is really hard to deal with at times because their energy bounces onto us and then we reflect that same energy. But some days I try to be as happy as possible so that I can have a better day midst all the chaos. It's my senior year and with that said it has been hard to handle the struggles of not getting to finish off the year with fun activities & friends while also managing to work a job 4-5 days a week and keep my grades up. Distance learning for me is complicated as my time management is all over the place and I work a lot better in a classroom setting. I know things will get better sometime soon, but until then I have high hopes that I will be able to adapt to this new lifestyle."

- HOPE THROUGH OUR WORK, WRITTEN BY ALEXA SPITZER



COMMUNITY STORIES (CONTINUED)

"Staying sane during quarantine is difficult, especially since I'm used to being social and in the community daily. Most people have been staying safe and not going out in public during this time, and I've seen many people get creative by choosing socially-distant activities to pass time. I've tried a ton of things: cooking, painting, redecorating, binge watching, trying new workouts, and etc, but my favorite activity lately has been going outside. As simple as it sounds, going outdoors and taking my dogs on walks has been the highlight of my days in quarantine. People don't often get the chance to step away from their busy lives, and being socially distant has forced human beings to seek out new sources of joy. I have found great happiness admiring the world around me and getting some fresh air. About a week ago, my mom and I had the chance to go hiking just ten minutes away from our house, which I don't typically have the time to do. It was really refreshing since we are in the peak of spring, and beautiful, growing plants are everywhere to be seen. On the days where I have had a lot of online school work, I've taken my dogs on brief walks around the neighborhood so I could still get in a bit of sunlight. Quarantine has encouraged my family and I to pursue new hobbies, and exploring the world around me has been really fulfilling. Getting outside is a fantastic way to make memories during quarantine, and this situation has motivated me to have a lot more gratitude for the natural world."

- GETTING OUTSIDE, WRITTEN BY GRACE WALDRON





THIS WEEK'S SCOOP

A COOKING RECIPE FOR YOU!

The COVID-19 pandemic has given us many things to think about, but it has also given us all more time. Students across GV and the Santa Clarita Valley have been spending their time doing new things, including cooking! Elizabeth Calvo, our website coordinator, wanted to show a recipe of her own:

How to make a PERFECT Banana Oat Muffin:

Ingredients:

- 1/2 teaspoon of salt
- 1 egg
- 3/4 cup of milk
- 1/3 cup of vegetable extract
- 1 cup of mashed bananas
- 1 & 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 cup of rolled oats
- 1/2 cup of white sugar
- 2 teaspoons of baking powder
- 1 teaspoon of baking soda

Directions:

- 1) Combine flour, oats, sugar, baking powder, soda, and salt. Mix thoroughly.
- 2) In a large bowl, beat the egg lightly. Stir in the milk, oil, and vanilla. Add the mashed banana, and combine thoroughly. Stir the flour mixture into the banana mixture until just combined. Line a 12-cup muffin tin with paper bake cups, and divide the batter among them.
- 3) Bake at 400 degrees F (205 degrees C) for 18 to 20 minutes in your oven
- 4) Enjoy!

FROM HOME

A SONG BY CAITLYNN TOLENTINO

To me, writing is an important aspect of life and is a comforting form of self-expression. I see songwriting as creating a piece of poetry and marrying it to a melody, which is exactly what I found myself doing. Originally, I didn't think I could write something that portrays this week's theme of limitless gratitude towards life and the things around us, but I just wrote what came to mind when I thought about our current situation. Although this isn't necessarily a Grammy award winning song, it's a piece of me that I wanted to share with everyone during this difficult time. We're facing a conflict that gives us no choice but to miss moments that were meant to be made into stories for the future and serve as our greatest memories, but we're facing it together through positive things such as the Gift of Joy Community Care Package.

**WE'VE FELT THE WORLD AROUND US
CRUMBLE AND FALL BENEATH OUR FEET
THE FEELING WE GET WHEN WE'RE
TOGETHER IS THE ONE THAT CAN'T BE BEAT**

**WHEN LIFE GAVE US LEMONS AND WE
COULDN'T MAKE LEMONADE
ALL WE HAD LEFT WAS TIME TO COUNT
DOWN OUR DAYS**

**SO FOR NOW, UNTIL I CAN RING YOU UP
AND CALL YOU HOME
I'LL STAY SAFE AND SOUND, WISHING YOU
HERE WERE WITH ME IN MY OWN**

To listen to her song, check out our website at thegiftofjoy.wixsite.com/communitycarepackage



OUR FUTURE?



FUNDRAISING FOR CAUSES

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

All around Los Angeles and across the United States, doctors, nurses, social workers, and more are risking their lives everyday to save the lives of others. Resources are limited and time is of the essence, so we here at the Gift of Joy are willing to contribute to their causes.

Our hope is that our community care package can encourage you to join our causes. We began to develop a system of fundraising and donations to raise money. We will use these funds to purchase masks for hospitals and support families in need. A community effort is needed to make sure our helpers in the world are supported. As we continue to develop a system, please be aware of what we hope to do, and we would truly appreciate your help and support.

As always, thank you for reading and tuning into our 2nd edition of The Gift of Joy. We will see you next week with more exciting features that will bring a smile to your face.

- ANDREW OH, EDITOR IN CHIEF

DON'T FORGET TO BE AWESOME!





ATTENTION!

**SUBMIT YOUR WORK
TO BE FEATURED!**

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Email us at:
thegiftofjoy.ccp@gmail.com

More information on our website:
thegiftofjoy.wixsite.com/communitycarepackage