

“It was a pleasure even to go away from you...; as such a departure is a sort of further introduction and meeting. Nothing makes the earth seem so spacious as to have friends at a distance; they make the latitudes and longitudes.” – Henry David Thoreau in a letter to Lidian Jackson Emerson.

When I think of Thoreau I think of Walden, and when I think of Walden I think that the story is not about the journey to the pond, or even the time at the pond, but about the return from the pond. The return to the “world,” and how best to utilize what is learned at the pond in how to engage with the world. It is my hope that when we come to the other side of this journey, we have learned that our friends at a distance, whether that distance is across the country, across the state, across town, or across the street, are our latitudes and longitudes.

Families

COVID-19 has turned our lives upside down, leaving many of us struggling to maintain any semblance of normal. If you need assistance, but have never used a system like United Way 2-1-1 before, there is a new online guide available to help you through the process available here. The 15-minute YouTube video that follows will explain how to search for information specifically for your needs, connect you with local organizations that can provide food and other assistance, and inform you on how to best maneuver unfamiliar systems. Even if you think you might know someone who could use this kind of assistance please take the time to watch the video at the following link: <https://uwc.211ct.org/professionals/training/>

Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, or Connecticut Children’s is a terrific resource for family information, please check out the following link to learn about children wearing a facemask, coping tools, distance learning tools, and lots more, just scroll down the page a little bit: <https://www.connecticutchildrens.org/coronavirus/>

Local Businesses

The State of Connecticut, CONNSTEP, and CBIA have partnered to distribute surgical masks to eligible small businesses. I am not confident that this will be a successful effort, but I do believe it is well intended, and could be beneficial to our businesses. Limited quantities of masks are available free to employers with 50 or fewer employees considered **essential businesses as designated by the state**. Eligible businesses can request a maximum of two masks per employee **through this website**. It appears as though requested masks will be distributed based on the city or town in which the business is located as early as next week. Designated municipalities will contact local employers with the date, time, and location to collect requested masks. Supplies are limited. Eligible employers are urged to **submit requests** as quickly as possible. Small businesses that have little contact with the public are urged to create their own face masks or face coverings based on **CDC guidelines**.

2020 Census

As of April 24, 46 percent of Connecticut residents, nearly half, have not responded to the 2020 Census. While Deep River’s numbers are better, we are only just over 50%. These numbers can have important ripple effects across the state and here in Deep River if they are not improved upon. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, local Census outreach has shifted from in-person to virtual and digital data collection.

The state is especially focused on reaching hard-to-count communities. Without an accurate survey of Connecticut residents, the 2020 Census could lead to significant reductions in federal funding in Connecticut through 2030, which would have a sharply negative impact on our state. To mitigate that

impact, Census leaders are working on new strategies to get the word out; for instance, online videos in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) highlight the importance of a complete count in Connecticut. The Census is open for self-response at 2020Census.gov or by calling 844-330-2020 to respond in English or 844-468-2020 to respond in Spanish.

We are hearing more positive news, but be patient. All the public health professionals that I speak with, every single one, continue to stress that we still have a considerable time before we are able to consider a return to normal. That said, good news is good news. Deep River is holding steady at nine confirmed cases and the number of COVID-19 related hospital admissions are decreasing statewide. Are we there yet? No. Can we relax? No. Are we doing well? Yes!!! Let's do better. Hang in. Wear your mask. Wash your hands. Be patient and give space to your neighbor at the store. Be patient and call your friends, both far and wide. Check in with your neighbors. Check in with your family. So much to do! Most of all, be well. Be safe. We are Deep River. 41-23'08" N
-72-26'08" W
Peace,
Angus