

# KIDSPOST

### CHIP SAYS

On this day in 1801, Thomas Jefferson was elected president after the U.S. House of Representatives broke the tie in the electoral college. This was the only time there has been a tie in the electoral college.



### TODAY

Expect a mostly sunny day with a high of 36 degrees — but snow could start falling in the evening.

ILLUSTRATION BY BROOKE INSERRA, 10, ARLINGTON



### KIDSPOST.COM

Read about animals threatened with extinction in our Endangered Species special report.



FAMILY PHOTOS

### TODAY'S NEWS

## No Mardi Gras crowds, parades during pandemic

Limited access to the French Quarter and frigid weather prevented what New Orleans usually craves at the end of Mardi Gras season: streets jam-packed with revelers.

Parades and parties on Fat Tuesday and the days leading up to the annual bash before the Christian season of Lent usually draw more than a million people to city streets.

But traffic was light on St. Charles Avenue, ordinarily a parade route. The median that usually is a sea of parade watchers was empty but for an occasional bundled-up jogger. The temperature was an unusually cold 29 degrees at midday.

Downtown Canal Street also was all but empty. Bourbon Street, where Mardi Gras crowds are usually the biggest and rowdiest, was blocked off by police barricades. Bars were closed.

Parades also were canceled this year in Mobile, Ala., which boasts the nation's oldest Mardi Gras celebrations. There was no plan to close bars there, but some streets were to be shut down Tuesday to control traffic and allow for more outdoor seating and service at restaurants and bars.

— Associated Press



GERALD HERBERT, RUSTY COSTANZA/ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Bourbon Street in New Orleans is much quieter in 2021 vs. in 2020, as seen above, because of virus restrictions and cold weather.**

## Young birder tells others to flock to nature and observe

BY MELISSA HART

Gracie McMahon and her mother didn't have much time. A friend had reported a bird — specifically, a blue grosbeak — hanging out by the airport near their Rockford, Ill., home, so they hopped into their car and raced over to see it. "It's unique and special because it's rare to our area," Gracie, 14, says of the bright blue bird with a black mask. "It was fun to see."

Gracie is an American Birding Association (ABA) "young birder of the year," one of two kids or teens honored each year for their conservation efforts and field work. She participates in the organization's mentoring program and learns everything she can about local species. She keeps a field notebook with her writings and illustrations of birds.

Gracie was 6 when her parents took her to Sand Bluff Bird Observatory in northern Illinois. Volunteers were busy trapping migrating songbirds in a thin net. They caught and weighed each bird and put a metal band around its leg to identify

**Gracie McMahon, 14, was honored as a "young birder of the year." She learns everything she can about local species and keeps track by writing and drawing in a notebook.**

### Resources for kid birders

American Birding Association maintains this list of young birders' clubs state-by-state: [aba.org/connect-with-other-young-birders](http://aba.org/connect-with-other-young-birders).

Audubon offers a website devoted to birding resources for young people: [audubon.org/get-outside/activities/audubon-for-kids](http://audubon.org/get-outside/activities/audubon-for-kids).

Cornell Lab of Ornithology provides lessons, activities and virtual bird clubs for kids: [birds.cornell.edu/k12/virtual-bird-club](http://birds.cornell.edu/k12/virtual-bird-club).

eBird gives young birders information on camps, clubs, colleges and careers: [ebird.org/about/resources-for-young-birders](http://ebird.org/about/resources-for-young-birders).

it as part of their study on migration patterns. Then they released the birds back into the wild.

"I loved the birds and the people. I got hooked," Gracie says. "I've been going there on weekends to volunteer ever since. It's a big part of my life."

It's her job to take the birds carefully out of the net so adult volunteers can record data. She enjoys seeing the warblers and sparrows up-close.

"You get perspective on something so small that can migrate so many thousands of miles," she says. "Plus, there's always a chance that you're going to see something really neat like a pileated woodpecker. They're cool to take out of the net because they're so large."

Gracie tells new birders to grab a pair of binoculars and a guidebook such as a Sibley field guide to birds, then head for the nearest banding station or wildlife refuge and simply observe. Young birders can find each other on Instagram, and through the American Birding Association's online mentoring program.

The association also runs a summer

camp near Colorado's Rocky Mountain National Park, specifically for teens.

"I think every aspiring young birder should participate," Gracie says. "You'll meet new people and expand your knowledge. I've learned so much from ABA mentors — people like the editor of Birding Magazine."

Thanks to her passion for birds, Gracie has a large social circle of teens and adults. She soaks up avian information from everyone she meets.

"Take advantage of the people in your community, and figure out what they know and how their knowledge can help you," she says. "I've even had people take me behind the scenes in museums to watch how they prepare birds for exhibitions."

While Gracie isn't sure whether she'll focus on ornithology (the science of birds) in college, she knows she wants to work in science. For now, however, she's happy to keep studying birds.

"It's addictive," she says. "You never know what you're going to see when you go outside."

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**LA TIMES CROSSWORD** By Julian Lim

**ACROSS**

- "\_\_ All That": 1999 movie
- Diver's gear
- "Fancy seeing you here!"
- Hoof it on a bad knee, say
- Ecstatic internet shout
- Driver's choice
- Oberlin's state
- "We tried, but this won't work"
- Give up on
- Superman's makeup?
- Fashion plate
- Kerfuffle
- Construction girder
- Dubuque denizen
- Serve as a reminder
- Mic \_\_: triumphant move
- Finnish company that created Angry Birds
- James Patterson hero \_\_ Cross
- Do an accountant's job
- Cheapen
- Subtle summons
- Run-of-the-mill
- Nonsense
- Yellowfins, e.g.
- Write briefly and quickly
- Cause of a crash
- Family \_\_
- Cup or star
- Emerald City princess
- "Haven't decided yet"
- Uses WhatsApp, say
- Eject
- Tibetan title

**DOWN**

- Slackens the pace
- Drum kit item with a pedal
- "Into the Wild" star Hirsch
- Took the mic
- "Just saying," in 66-Across
- Kappa preceder
- Meddlesome
- Nonsense companion?
- Black-and-white dessert
- Ian who plays Bilbo Baggins
- It might be adjusted in Photoshop
- Kang and Kodos, on "The Simpsons"
- "Affirmative"
- Sellout letters
- Sacha Baron Cohen alter ego
- Mil. truants
- "You wouldn't \_\_!"
- Black gemstone used to make beads
- Snooze inducer
- Auth. unknown
- Gun
- Actor Epps
- Fish story notable
- Backs (out)
- Popular video game series, with "The"
- Unruly groups
- Scot's Scotch order
- Yahoo
- Foreshadows
- R&B great James
- Ending with malt
- Ache
- "\_\_ we meet again"
- Fashionista
- Kamali
- Likely roster for the big game
- "I'm outta here"
- Bar flier
- Rice-shaped pasta used in
- salads
- Acronymic anxiety about being excluded from the fun
- Group with pledges
- The 1% in 1% milk
- Flabbergast
- Sales \_\_

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## Spelling out the issues to a WFH hubby



Carolyn Hax

**Dear Carolyn:** My husband says he's living his best life throughout the pandemic. For me, this has been a silver-lined struggle. Before, he woke early and commuted an hour or more to work each way four days a week. He wore suits and had to attend "important" meetings. He traveled a lot and missed most family dinners. His weekends were full of kid activities and family time or more work. He didn't take time for himself other than to do house projects. Since March, despite still having a 12-plus-hours-a-day job, he is happier and more present. I am awed by his superhuman ability to compartmentalize and avoid burnout.

I, meanwhile, am a stereotypical pandemic mom of kids under 7: I dialed back the paid work, ramped up the child supervision and shouldered all the household "stuff." My whole life is operating at 11 and I'm cutting every corner I can find. Our bills are paid, our fridge is full. And our loved ones, albeit far away, are healthy. We are FINE.

I'm proud I can foster such an incredible pandemic experience for dear husband, but his

declaration that "everything is great" is demoralizing. I burned out back in June and again in November. He doesn't understand why anyone in our situation is having a hard time. I tried to explain the constant tidal wave of terrible news and stress and anxiety and all your normal outlets are cut off from you and you never get a break and you feel guilt and stress and demands all the time of keeping your kids physically and mentally healthy. He dismissed that explanation.

Can you explain why everyone is struggling with pandemic-style living? Or maybe you have the magic bullet for how moms can thrive during this, too? This isn't a race to see who has it worse, it's an attempt to understand and respect everyone's unique struggle so we can support each other.

— *UnGreat Pandemic Wife*

**UnGreat Pandemic Wife:** I can't explain it any better than you did, or offer any relief you haven't already tried. I can curl up in the fetal position on my closet floor in sympathy, if that helps.

I can also cite your message here as the right one to send your husband. Repeat till "aha": "understand and respect everyone's unique struggle." You don't even need him to

understand what yours is — just that you're having one. Different from his. Because you're different. That epiphany would improve your world on contact.

His feelings might explain his resistance. He was never home, now he's always home. And his spouse is now miserable. So, while you may not connect your misery with his presence — blaming the pandemic only, with its added responsibilities and subtracted restorative outlets — he could easily do some math on his own and take your suffering personally. Hurt feelings block empathy more effectively than just about anything else.

So address both: "I love that you're happy, and home with us. It helps. Are you able to see, though, ways that the pandemic experience has been very different for me?" Asking may activate sympathy better than telling. "Baseline — can we agree that I'm not you?"

Thereafter, streamline: "I don't need you to understand my position, just that it's different. Please grant me that." Fingers crossed.

Write to Carolyn Hax at [tellme@washpost.com](mailto:tellme@washpost.com). Get her column delivered to your inbox each morning at [wapo.st/haxpost](http://wapo.st/haxpost).

Join the discussion live at noon Fridays at [live.washingtonpost.com](http://live.washingtonpost.com)