

After almost a year in the COVID-19 pandemic, it is amazing to think about what life was like before, and what it may be like after the chaos quiets down. It began on March 13, 2020. I was a senior in high school looking forward to the many activities lined up for the end of the year, when suddenly everything changed; school was cancelled for 2 weeks. Excitement and anxiety rushed over everyone. When the weeks turned into months and the end of my senior year quickly began to deteriorate, so did my excitement. No prom. No final spring sports season (for me it was softball, a sport I played my entire life). No normal graduation. Nothing but sitting at home all day watching the sun rise and set, staring at a computer screen while I sit through online classes to finish my senior year. I never said goodbye to my teachers, or a lot of my classmates. We all just went our separate ways with no celebrations. I could not see any of my friends, or family members outside of my household, as we were all quarantined, waiting for the day that we could come back out of our homes safely. Restaurants, malls, and anything else that was not considered "essential" was closed. Masks then became mandatory, so we couldn't go anywhere without one, and we still can't today. Social distancing is enforced everywhere, which means being 6 feet away from people at all times. As one can see, life as we all knew it was turned upside down. Eventually, I began to change my attitude to start looking forward to summer vacation and the future, especially preparing for college. College began, in-person classes were allowed, but with half the students, all social distanced, wearing a mask at all times. Wearing a mask became natural, where leaving without one felt like I was leaving without my phone. It is our normal for now, and it has worked to slow the spread. With

the vaccines beginning to roll out, we all hope that soon things will go back to the way we remember them a year ago before the pandemic began.