



THE DAY'S FAVORITE  
PHOTOGRAPHS *of*

2020

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# A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

SCENES FROM 2020

**T**HE YEAR 2020 started out like any other for the photo staff at The Day. As 2020 comes to an end we can definitely say it has been a year like no other.

Over the course of a year, The Day's photojournalists will take tens of thousands of photos, covering everything from the routine to the unique events that make up life in southeastern Connecticut.

Our goal every year is to tell the stories of the people, organizations and events as best we can. We strive to be as comprehensive and diverse in our coverage as our resources allow. We always aim to expand the experiences of you, our readers, by offering a view into the places and events you may not get to, or may miss out on.

As the coronavirus pandemic spread across the nation and world, and into our corner of it, The Day's photojournalists stayed on the job, continuing to document — as best we could given the precautions everyone has had to observe — the lives and experiences of our region.

Working from our cars, or our homes, and not from The Day's newsroom in New London, the staff faced the challenges both of staying safe in the face of a public health crisis as well as a community transformed. The events we often relied upon for our daily coverage were suddenly canceled, and many people were no longer accessible to us.

No collection of photos is going to be truly representative of either the community, or the narrower body of work created over the course of the year. But we hope that two collections, our Favorite Photos feature here and online, as well as a gallery of The Day's Best Photos, at least give you a small sense of the year and how we saw it.

You can see the collections at [theday.com/2020favorites](https://theday.com/2020favorites) and [theday.com/2020best](https://theday.com/2020best).

— Sean D. Elliot, director of photography



Crew members with Anglin Aircraft Recovery Services look through debris of a plane that crashed into a home in Groton in August.

**I**JOKED WITH A COWORKER as we were at the scene of this crash that this was the most 2020 thing. In a good way. A plane crashed into a house in Groton, landing in the living room where moments before the resident had been sleeping on the sofa, and everyone from the pilot to the resident walked out the front door. It seemed wild for everyone to make it out unscathed.

— Sarah Gordon, photojournalist

## ON THE COVER

Maureen Lawton, center, of Naragansett, R.I., holds up a Donald Trump doll as she cheers during the Trump Boat Flotilla along the Mystic River in September. More than 800 boats flying pro-Trump flags and carrying groups of cheering supporters of the president paraded up the Mystic River on a Sunday afternoon.



**DON'T THINK ANYONE**, participants included, expected such a large turnout this summer for a local Trump Boat Flotilla. There was no parking, legal or illegal, to be found in Noank and the waters were just as crowded as nearly a thousand boats of all shapes and sizes circled the Mystic River for hours. With cardboard cutouts of Trump, his face on their socks, and flags galore, fans of the president were on hand and weren't going to be ignored.

— Sarah Gordon, photojournalist



## SCENES FROM 2020

Sequoiah Burrello and her brother Ridge, of the Narragansett Indian Tribal Nation, participate in a traditional dance during a rally to recognize the removal of the Christopher Columbus statue at Columbus Square in New London in June. “We’re standing on beautiful soil and beautiful land,” said organizer and City Councilor Curtis Goodwin. “And this, today, is called history.”

**I**N A SUMMER FULL OF heightened emotions, as race and the pandemic came to a head in many different ways, this rally in downtown New London was so much more than a beautiful moment. It was a reckoning of sorts, happening all over the world, and here in our little corner of southeastern Connecticut it was powerful watching people come together. I chatted with a local city councilor, Curtis Goodwin, before things got started, and he made a comment about watching history unfold that has stuck with me in more ways than one.

— Sarah Gordon, photojournalist



## SCENES FROM 2020

KC Cloud of Groton holds a sign while attending a vigil for Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in September in front of the New London Superior Court in downtown New London.



**DON'T REMEMBER A YEAR** that had as many big news stories as 2020. We had wildfires, severe weather, a presidential race, Black Lives Matter protests and the COVID-19 pandemic. Locally, I covered a couple of storms, debates for state Senate races, several marches and numerous pandemic-related stories. When Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died, I thought about how this was yet another big news event that will have an impact for years to come. It has been very interesting watching history being made, and also challenging to document it safely with COVID-19 restrictions in place.

— Dana Jensen, photojournalist



## SCENES FROM 2020

Taylor Winger-Sieve, of Waterford, screams “I can’t breathe” during a Walk for Justice in Waterford in June. Several hundred participated in the march and rally that went from Clark Lane Middle School to the Town Hall and police station before returning.

**HEARD TAYLOR’S SCREAMS** before I saw her, something that rarely happens when you think visually first. Walking alongside the rally I had already taken lots of “march photos” and thought I had really gotten the best possible images. I had fallen back toward the rear of the crowd to touch base with a coworker and hadn’t even touched my cameras for a few minutes. When I heard her I knew I had to pick them up again.

— Sarah Gordon, photojournalist



## SCENES FROM 2020

The Mayflower II sails with the Coast Guard barque Eagle in Block Island Sound in July. At the suggestion of Coast Guard public affairs staff member Capt. Michael Turdo, the Eagle invited Mayflower for the two to sail together during Mayflower's sea trials. The waters of Fishers Island Sound, where Mayflower had been training, are too tight and shallow for Eagle to navigate under sail, so Mayflower was towed out to deeper, more open, waters several miles south of the Rhode Island shore for the joint operation.



**T**ALL SHIPS ARE KIND OF MY THING. It's been a love affair for over 30 years, from the first time the crew of a schooner let me climb the rigging. Honestly, had I not gone into photojournalism, I might have been a tall-ship sailor. Or, maybe I still would have been a tall-ship photographer. Despite the pandemic curtailing so many tall-ship events this year, there still managed to be a couple of amazing moments. The sea trials of the Mayflower II, and a week later, the rendezvous of the Mayflower II and Coast Guard barque Eagle in Block Island Sound, were two of the most memorable days, and produced many spectacular photos. The feedback I've received suggests I'm not alone in my fascination for these graceful vessels.

— Sean D. Elliot, director of photography



## SCENES FROM 2020

Teles Campos of First National Floor Service, of Nashua, N.H., sprays disinfectant on the floors of a guest room in preparation for steam cleaning at the Mystic Hilton in May.

**A**S THE REGION FELL into the grip of the pandemic, I was assigned to a story on how the hotel industry was coping with the restrictions — and more important, the cancellation of reservations — as summer approached. Walking through the silent and abandoned halls of the Mystic Hilton was, quite frankly, a little creepy. Rounding a corner I followed a stretch of hoses until I found a crew that was spraying disinfectant in a set of rooms. The mirror image of the two rooms caught my eye, and I just had to wait for the worker to move into the right position.

— Sean D. Elliot, director of photography





## SCENES FROM 2020

Graduate Derek Shaw holds his hand over his heart for the national anthem during a drive-in graduation ceremony for Norwich Free Academy in June at Dodd Stadium. After COVID-19 canceled original graduation plans, the school screened the pre-recorded ceremony for graduates and they were invited to participate in a car parade.

**I JOKED WITH A COWORKER** that as a photojournalist there are events, like graduations, we cover year-in and year-out, and all you can do is work to find different storytelling images in ceremonies that tend to always look the same. Some years all you want is something different, and we certainly got that this year. Every school had a different plan, a different creative approach to graduation and making things special for the class of 2020. Being there to document and capture these unique ceremonies was some of the most fun I've had on assignment and the most creative I've gotten to be — something I never thought I'd say about a graduation.

— Sarah Gordon, photojournalist







## SCENES FROM 2020

Taylor Palmer touches up her makeup as she and Tom Ortolani get ready at their home in Waterford in April to go to their wedding ceremony. Taylor and Tom had to cancel their original wedding plans due to the coronavirus and were having a private ceremony at Langley's Country Club.

**FIRST MET TAYLOR AND TOM** when I had an assignment to take a portrait of the couple for a story about people forced to alter their wedding plans because of the virus. It was very nice to be allowed to photograph the couple as they got ready for the ceremony. It was such a happy occasion and a welcome change from some of the other pandemic-related subjects I had been covering.

— Dana Jensen, photojournalist



## SCENES FROM 2020

Taylor Donovan, 17, of Stonington, and fellow students practice in July in the parking lot of Eastern Connecticut Ballet in East Lyme. Since March the students had trained online, and this was the first time they all came together for a class while social distancing. The students studied online with professional dancers from Broadway, the New York City Ballet and others.

**T**HIS YEAR, due to the pandemic, people were trying to find ways to continue their activities and yet be safe. It was fun photographing the girls as they danced together for the first time in months. Capturing images of ballerinas dancing in a parking lot is something you don't see every day.

— Dana Jensen, photojournalist

## FOLLOWING PAGE

A common loon emerges from the water with a black fingered mud crab in its beak while searching for food in the waters of Stonington Harbor in January.

**I AM NOT A WILDLIFE** photographer. I can't count the number of times I've made that statement, and yet several times each year I manage to make a memorable wildlife photo. I have to give it all to luck, since I do not take the time, nor do I really have the patience, to do wildlife photography right. In this case, I had stopped at Town Dock in Stonington because the word was out that a harbor seal was loitering in the area. While I did make photos of the seal, it was the pair of common loons that caught my eye. When this loon emerged from a dive with a crab clamped in its beak, I rattled off a series of frames and caught this moment, as the loon gave the crustacean a quick toss before gulping it down.

— Sean D. Elliot, director of photography

