

Our current reality

A photo essay by Elan Mizrahi

The magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic is both numbing and maddening. Some of us can lose track of the days of virtual meetings and classes, while others are forced to brave the minefields of “essential” work, hoping to return home healthy and safe. Donning a face mask or making a donation to help our neighbors has become commonplace, and home entertainment has taken on new meaning.

Life in this current reality is the focus of this issue of *h* magazine, which examines the impact of the pandemic on issues related to health, education, economics and equity in the Pittsburgh region and beyond. The stories, with their tales of uncertainties and disparities, provide glimpses into experiences that will be familiar to some, new to others and a testament to all that we're in this together.

For Jason, Mariace and Isabel Dancisin, shown from left to right, just peering out a window in their Pittsburgh home reveals changes in their lifestyle.



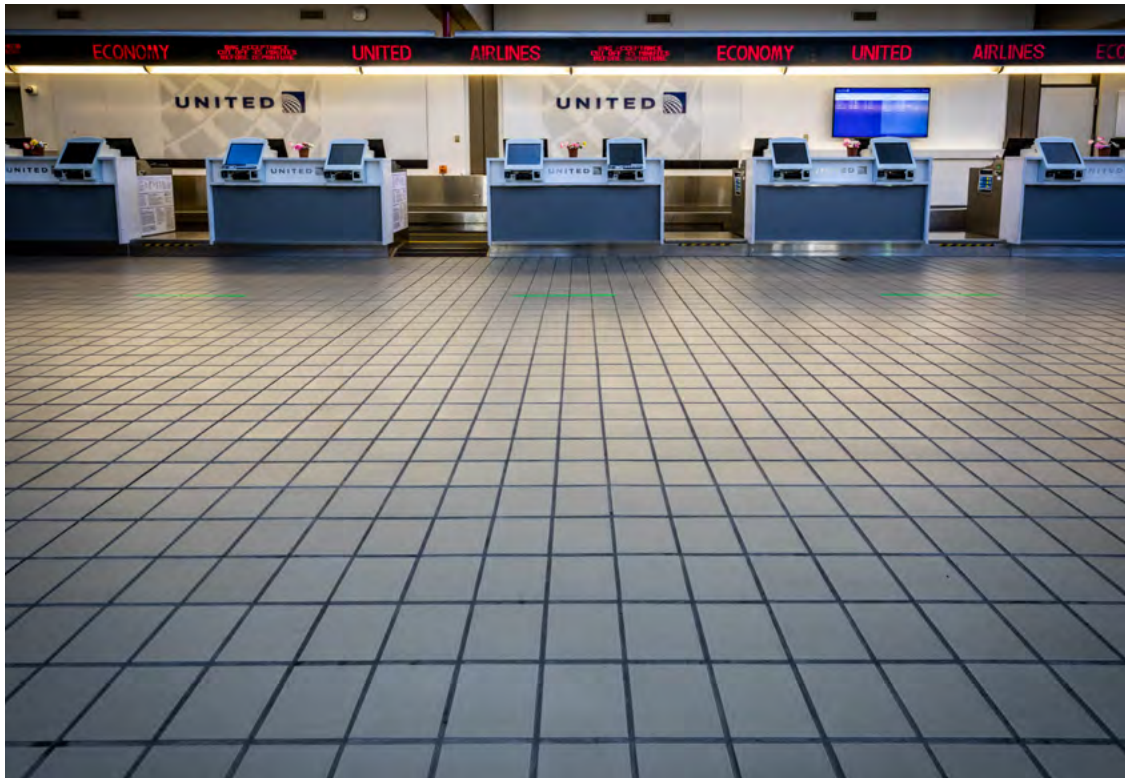
During the quarantine lockdown, our homes were our sanctuary. They also became our schools, offices, gyms, vacation destinations, and places of worship.

CAUTION DO NOT ENTER

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DO NOT ENTER

Playgrounds, like Pittsburgh's West Penn Park, left, were empty, with hazard tape used to discourage equipment use. Pittsburgh International Airport, right, joined others across the country in seeming to almost close for a while before resuming lighter than normal business. Other businesses actually shut down, bringing an uncomfortable quiet to once bustling areas.



The COVID-19 pandemic led to scenes and experiences we will long remember.



But as the crisis wore on, we put on our masks and did our best to go about life in ways large and small.



Grace Life Church hosted a drive-in Easter service, top left, complete with communion distribution at a parking lot in Monroeville, east of Pittsburgh. Students played tennis at the Carnegie Mellon University tennis courts, middle left, despite the COVID-19 warning sign. Cheryl and Gary Fedder, bottom left, used video conference calls from their home in Turtle Creek, Pennsylvania, to stay connected with their daughter Tara in Flagstaff, Arizona. Others shopped incognito at stores like Costco, top right, or took time out of their own schedules to help their neighbors by volunteering at food or clothing drives, bottom right.





And through it all, people from all backgrounds in the Pittsburgh region and elsewhere rolled up their collective sleeves and supported their communities.



1 FOOD SHARE
PER VEHICLE