



Building a caring community for residents who want to remain in their homes safely and affordably while maintaining a meaningful lifestyle.

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2020

PRESIDENT'S POST



It was a strange feeling when I took a look at my post from last month. I had expressed such glee and excitement with spring on its way and our fantastic front page story written about AIP-TW in The Woodlands Villager. All of us were excited that prospective members and volunteers were calling us every day. Momentum was building and things were looking so positive.

It's astonishing how our world, nation, and communities changed so abruptly with the advent of Covid-19. Had anyone ever heard of "social distancing" before? In a matter of weeks we have become experts at it even though we really don't like it. We are "staying safe at home," working remotely, going to school online, leaving home only for essential trips and washing our hands more frequently than ever before.

The ramifications from Covid-19 are significant. Everyone has been affected by this horrid virus and too many have paid the ultimate price. We all are longing for things to get back to "normal." However, we can be sure it will be a new normal. Though it may be hard to imagine now, our new normal will likely be better than ever.

The human spirit is formidable, and Covid-19 will not destroy it. Every day despite the sadness, grief and pain people are experiencing, we are also witness to the enormous sacrifice of our healthcare providers, essential workers and everyday heroes.

Today I read a story about a 16-year-old young man who wanted to do something to help during this crisis. Though he does not yet have a driver's license, he does have a pilot's license. He learned that critical access hospitals in rural areas in his home state desperately needed medical supplies such as masks and gowns. He worked with others

to collect these items and then flew them to the hospitals. What a welcomed lifeline he surely was.

Below you will read a wonderful selection of what some of our members from AIP-TW are doing to stay positive and fulfilled during these uncertain times. I am impressed with their formidable spirit.

I wish all of you good health of mind and body. Stay strong. Be well.

Peggy Reinhold
President, AIP-TW

MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS FIND WAYS TO COPE WHILE SOCIAL DISTANCING

Editor's Note: We asked a handful of randomly selected members and volunteers how they are spending their time while sheltering in place. Here is a brief introduction and what they told us via email.

“Dancing With Myself,” a popular song from the mid-1980s, could well be the soundtrack of our lives as we practice social distancing. “If I had a chance, I'd ask the world to dance,” sang Billy Idol. As we wait for the time when the whole world can dance again we are doing our best to connect through phone calls, social media and video chats. With our lives thrown off-kilter by Covid-19 we try to be positive and optimistic. Our call managers have ramped up check-in calls to all who want them. Even so, as one member says, “Virtual hugs are okay, but real ones are what I miss most.”

Some of us have discovered our inner hermit and are perfectly happy curled up with a good book, listening to music, silently reminiscing, doing yoga or meditating. Small pleasures are more important than ever as our lives are altered for the foreseeable future. When the weather is nice, one couple takes their folding chairs and a thermos of home-brewed coffee to isolated areas of neighborhood parks for their morning coffee break and a change of scenery.



Ken and Mary Dorland had planned to spend this week in Utah with their children and grandchildren touring, hiking and horseback riding in three national parks: Zion, Bryce Canyon and Grand Canyon. “Instead we are home catching up with deferred maintenance (weeding, fertilizing, cleaning),” Ken says.

Colin MacRae was self-quarantined for three weeks. “I am working my way through 960 pages of Winston Churchill's early days—fascinating what a character he was,” Colin writes. The grit and determination Churchill expressed in his wartime speeches is the kind of courage we need now.

A movie fan, Colin recommends the Academy Award acclaimed film “1917”. He thought its depiction of World War I was brilliant. “My mother lost six siblings in World War I—she was the youngest of 12—and the movie brought me to tears a lot of the time.”

Colin says he misses live sports on TV, especially golf, but more than anything misses his sons, five grandchildren, and being with friends. “When this is all over, I plan to spend time with the boys in Austin and Atlanta,” he says. His oldest grandchild, Kate, recently returned from Spain where she and a friend were doing a 'live with a Spanish family' course from Gonzaga University. Luckily, they were able to get out and she completed her quarantine March 29.

Bob and Marsha Vienneau have always taken pleasure in their eclectic landscape but being forced to hunker down at home has given them the serendipitous joy of closely watching the blossoming of their backyard this spring. “We have been blessed with a robin, chickadee and wren making nests and laying eggs,” Bob writes. Much of the activity is taking place near their front door, so they have capitulated to the birds and now go in and out through the garage. They have made a few trips to nurseries to get more milkweed for monarch caterpillars. Last year they had very few monarchs. “So far this year we have twenty in the chrysalis stage and another ten chowing down,” Bob says.

Bob spent much of his career aboard Merchant Marine vessels at sea and was often absent for milestone family events. Because of that experience enforced isolation is a bit easier for him to cope with than it is for Marsha who is friendly and sociable even with strangers. They were looking forward to a family reunion with his siblings and cousins that was planned to take place in Florida in May. It was canceled in favor of a

virtual get-together on Zoom. “Zoom is now part of our lives,” he says somewhat wistfully.

Even while social distancing, coronavirus has affected their lives. Two relatives, both middle-age males, one in Seattle and one in New York, have been hospitalized but are now home and recuperating. They also lost a dear old friend who passed away in a Conroe nursing home because of the virus.

There are many things Bob and Marsha miss, but as Bob says, “With things happening so close in the family we are pleased to thank the Lord for what we have and for watching over us.”



Vicki Bradley prefers phone calls and video chats to social media. Now that she is practicing social distancing she is on the phone more than ever, often with her son, a special needs child who lives with his father near Dallas. She was very much looking forward to a visit from him over the Easter holidays but that, of course, had to be cancelled. A visit from her sister has also been postponed so they chat frequently as well. It isn't unusual for her to be on the phone several times a day with family and friends.

Vicki does not drive and misses the friendships she has developed with some of AIP-TW's call managers and volunteer drivers. “I am a person who doesn't sit still for any length of time, so this is new for me,” she says. Despite an urge to be up and moving, she sometimes sits quietly watching people, dogs, squirrels and birds from her window. She plans her day around a routine that includes things that need to be done and things she enjoys doing. “I make sure that every day I have at least three things to do that seem important and give me a mild sense of urgency.” She likes to spend her evenings knitting and watching television. Her current project is a throw blanket in shades of turquoise and teal.

“I go for a walk every day and have appointed myself a Social Distance Coordinator. Whenever I see someone else approaching me on the hike and bike paths, I yell out, ‘Which way are you going?’ They tend to reply by waving their arm left, right, or straight ahead. If they are walking in my direction I veer off the path and give them at least ten feet of social distancing.” We can think of other places (grocery stores, anyone?) where customers need a shout out to keep their distance.

Erika Pratt is finding plenty of ways to apply her boundless energy while under stay-at-home lockdown. As is often the case with Erika, she has found a way to help others. She is sewing face masks and giving them to people who need them. Until recently she was also preparing healthy foods for a friend who is a cancer patient.



“When we started the lockdown I was fine because I have paperwork that I postpone for things I’d rather do like go out with friends or take a bike ride. I also like to cook so the paperwork gets shoved aside again.”

Erika misses getting together with friends, concerts in the park, and just leisurely going to the supermarket when needed. “I always do my stretching exercises each morning and now I have added biking on a stationary bike. I was planning a trip to Europe in May, but now that won’t happen,” she says with regret. Erika also likes to paint and is mulling over some ideas.



VILLAGE TO VILLAGE NETWORK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS AIP-TW IN MARCH ISSUE

An article on AIP-TW that ran in The Woodlands Villager on Feb. 8 was published in the March issue of Village to Village Network News. It is nice to be noticed on a broader scale by the umbrella organization that includes groups like ours all over the United States and abroad.

**Our Village is a
Proud Member of
the Village to Village
Network.**



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