

Alameda PDX

Summer 2020

Volume 34 Number 2



The Arrangement Turns 40

When owner Sue Mautz began planning for The Arrangement's 40th Anniversary sale, she never imagined the events that would unfold in the coming weeks. The sale was scheduled for May 3, but by mid-March it was clear COVID-19 was getting a foothold in Oregon.

On March 23, Gov. Kate Brown issued an executive order to close all non-essential businesses due to the pandemic. The order hit local businesses hard - especially smaller retail shops like Mautz's - and forced them to either rethink their selling strategy, or face permanent closure.

For almost 50 years, The Arrangement has been the Alameda/Beaumont-Wilshire go-to location for everything from gifts and greeting cards to clothing and home décor. A neighborhood institution, the store survived the eruption of Mt. St. Helens and the economic recession of 2007-09. Mautz was determined to keep the business going one way or another.

"We never closed our doors in 40 years, said Mautz, "but the virus definitely forced us to think of new, creative ways of selling."

"We jumped on online sales quite soon," reported Mautz. She and her staff prepared customized "Bunny Bags" for Easter, and also filled phone orders. They designated a

pickup spot just outside the store, and Mautz occasionally even delivered orders herself.

Another creative idea included selling boxed cards with 10 postage stamps included, so that customers wouldn't have to make a trip to the post office.

Toward the end of April, Mautz also began staging "private shopping days" by appointment. She allowed one to two people into the store for an hour a day, requiring them to sanitize their hands on entry and wear masks.

As expected, big sellers during the pandemic have included jigsaw puzzles ("We sold out three times," said Mautz), journals, bath and body products, and jewelry. Mautz often



ARRANGEMENT OWNER SUE MAUTZ

features products by local artisans, and noted that Dani Naturals - a Bend company - and Girl in the Pearl jewelry were especially popular.

One unfortunate downside for Mautz was that she was forced to furlough the majority of her staff. "Many were longtime employees," said Mautz, "so it was a difficult decision." Her daughter-in-law, Deena Spang, remained as store manager, and at least one staff member was on site daily to fill orders.

The Arrangement reopened earlier this month, with safety protocols in place. Phone orders and private appointments are still offered on request, but most shoppers are coming into the store. According to Mautz, neighborhood response has been "terrific."

"Never in a million years could I have predicted what happened," she added. "It's been a challenge, but now that we've reopened we're trying to resume 'business as usual' as much as we possibly can."

While Mautz definitely couldn't have foreseen the Covid-19 pandemic, it's just one of the unprecedented events she has encountered during her long career as a business owner.

Back in the late 1970's, Mautz was a teacher and young mother with a creative bent. She described herself as "passionate about flowers," and ... (continued on page 4)

EDITOR'S NOTE

Please note that all content in this issue was current at press time. Due to rapidly changing events - particularly concerning Covid-19 - be sure to check websites and other sources for the most current information on business openings and closings, event listings, etc.

We also want to recognize the historic Black Lives Matter protests happening in our city, and around the world. We plan to follow up with localized coverage of these events in our next issue. In the meantime, please see our Alameda Statement of Inclusion and Support on Page 2.

Take a peek inside

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Editor's Message by Annette Bendinelli



It would be an understatement to say a lot has happened since our last issue in mid-February. The world has changed in ways none of us could have imagined, and in many ways it will never be the same.

For those of us lucky enough to live in Oregon, our rapid reaction to Covid-19 helped prevent the large number of cases some other states have seen. Here in Alameda, you can almost forget for a moment that a war is still raging against this disease in other parts of the country, and the world.

When I walk out my door, I see our neighborhood trees and flowers blooming, I hear the laughter of children playing in nearby yards, and the #17 bus still rumbles by (almost) on schedule. But then a couple of joggers go by wearing face masks, and I see a woman automatically

step aside to allow six feet of space between her and an oncoming walker. Immediately I'm jolted back to the new normal.

Most people in Alameda seem to be taking these new habits in stride, and many are also doing their part to support others. Alameda Elementary School teamed up with local food banks to collect donations during its teacher and 5th grade graduation car parades. And the Alameda Neighborhood Association has organized a neighbor assistance program you can learn more about on Page 3 of this issue.

Many of us also continue to support local restaurants by getting takeout or delivery, and patronizing other retailers that remain open. Page One and Page Three both feature stories about nearby small businesses that have successfully adapted to serving customers in a rapidly changing environment.

The world changed in a different way when George Floyd was killed on May 25. Black Lives Matter protestors and

other civil rights groups gathered in downtown Portland the next day, and continue to make their voices heard with mostly non-violent protests around the city. Several marches have passed through neighborhoods near ours including Alberta and Grant Park, and many Alameda residents have shown support for the BLM movement by joining the protests, posting window and yard signs, and donating to civil rights organizations. We plan to feature coverage of the protests and neighborhood responses in our next issue.

The first six months of 2020 have been chaotic to say the least, but it's heartening that here in Alameda people continue to step up and help others. The positive attitude, compassion, and resilience Alamedans have shown so far definitely bodes well for whatever challenges we may face in the future.

During these unsettling times I hope this issue of our newsletter will brighten your day a little, and I wish you all a safe and healthy summer.

— Annette

ADVERTISING RATES

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Sizes and Prices:

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Prices are per issue.

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Please submit pdf, jpg, or Adobe Distiller X-1A compliant artwork at 300dpi or greater.

Contact: Charles Rice at charlesricepdx@gmail.com

Notes From the ANA Board

We reached out recently to the Co-Chairs of the Alameda Neighborhood Association to see how they and their families were faring during the quarantine. Here are their thoughts:

From Steve Backer:

It's been a strange spring so far and an experience that few of us have ever been through. Life has slowed down, but there is always a reason to smile and find pleasure in the small things. Things are slowly returning to normal (or whatever this new normal will be) and it is uplifting to see how we have become closer and stronger as neighbors and friends.

After wrapping up work each day showing houses and checking in with clients, I find myself walking the neighborhood with my lovely Golden, Sally, who loves to say hello to everyone. It is wonderful to see neighbors out walking/biking around. Gardens are blooming, vegetable starters are up, and neglected house projects are finally getting worked on. Puzzles are being brought out of retirement and sour dough starters have been shared around.

While getting used to virtual classrooms, my kids learned quickly that by asking dad for help with a lesson, they end up having to teach ME about pre-algebra, multiplying fractions and ancient world studies. Needless to say, they aren't asking me for much help any more. Unsure of what the summer will bring in terms of social gatherings and day camps, my wife Ella and I are daydreaming of future travel destinations with family and friends.

I am so very grateful for all of the restaurant, grocery store workers and health care professionals who are putting themselves in harms way. For those friends and neighbors who have been affected by this virus, please know your neighborhood association is here to help. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of our board members for help with a food shop, medicine or meal drop. We are here for you.

Steve Backer

From Robert McConville:

It is definitely a time where my family is grateful every day for what we have. The fact that we have a two-year-old helps our perspective. Her neuroplasticity and ability to adapt to a new daily routine has been an inspiration. We haven't figured out if our house-cat is happy or upset we are around more often.

We love our family walks in the neighborhood and saying hello to our neighbors - appropriately distanced of course. The bears in the windows have been a special treat!

We have been fortunate to maintain our careers with minimal disruption. The Public Health Emergency has changed the nature of my wife's work. She works at OHSU and sees only urgent and emergent surgical cases, which come with a different set of emotions. She and her colleagues have been extremely appreciative of the personal protective equipment that has been donated by a number of local groups and companies.

We are happy to be a part of such a great community and wish everyone well.

Robert McConville

STATEMENT OF INCLUSION AND SUPPORT

Our community declared the Alameda neighborhood a hate-free zone in 1995. Today, we reaffirm Alameda's commitment to be a loving, caring, supportive and inclusive community for all who reside, work, do business, or visit our neighborhood. We stand against hatred, racism, xenophobia, discrimination and/or marginalization of any kind. We are committed to growing, nurturing and sustaining a community where all feel welcomed, safe and included.

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The ANA meets on the 2nd Monday of every month at 7pm at Fremont United Methodist Church.

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Support the Businesses that are Safely Serving You by Dan LaGrande

We all know Alameda is a wonderful neighborhood to live in. It's convenient to great shops and restaurants, and the good news is that many of them are still open to serve you safely during this prolonged pandemic.

Here are two great examples in the heart of Alameda, at NE 24th & Fremont. Garden Fever has closed its front door to the public, but has thrown open the back gate to its parking lot, where you can drive up and an employee will load the order you have submitted and paid for on-line.

This is a busy time for garden shops. One afternoon, even as customers were pulling into the Garden Fever parking lot, a huge truck was being unloaded with tons of garden supplies to replace the inventory. Owner Richard Vollmer was there helping his employees unload the pallets.

Next door to Garden Fever, the rush of customers at Lucca gathers later in day. Again, this popular restaurant is closed for inside business. But outside, business is booming at Lucca's curbside pick-up spot. Again, an example of ingenuity and the dedication of the owners and employees to provide their loyal customers with the same level of delicious, distinctive Italian food and beverages they usually serve.

To the west, at NE Fremont & 14th, the busy little coffee shop Caffè Destino is bravely and efficiently serving its wonderful breakfast sandwiches and baked goods, as well as luncheon specials, at two take-out counters. In January, Holly Higdon and Elias Herrera became the new owners of Caffè Destino, having worked there for a number of years. The pandemic certainly threw them a curve, but they have responded quickly and creatively – and with a smile.

To the east, at NE Fremont and 45th, Grand Central Bakery continues to offer its wide array of breads and pastries, as well as its signature soups and made-to-order sandwiches. Customers are served promptly and safely from two take-out stations. Another example of a business in our area that has quickly adjusted its practices to safeguard the health and safety of its customers and employees.

For these businesses, and others like them, it is costly and challenging to make a go of it now. They're counting on neighbors to patronize them - and to be as generous as possible in tipping - as that is more important than ever to their economic survival.

As always, be sure to check websites for current info and updates.



The ANA is Here for You

We recognize that the Coronavirus has disrupted daily life for many in our neighborhood. The Alameda Neighborhood Association is organizing volunteers to exclusively run essential errands for Alameda community members at high risk as defined by the CDC. Connect with us to get help or volunteer at alamedaportland.com.

The ANA will match volunteers with neighbors who need assistance within 48 hours if possible, and notify both parties. Details can be worked out directly between the volunteer and neighbor.

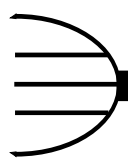
We prefer that you pay for your items in advance by calling the store you're purchasing from. If this is not feasible, we request you restrict purchases to less than \$100. In the event a neighbor pays with check, we are asking volunteers to purchase the items and the ANA will reimburse you through Venmo or check to avoid direct money exchange. When a volunteer delivers your purchases, it is your responsibility to disinfect your own items.

All volunteers are welcome - we just ask that you be conscientious about your own health, and the safety of others.

You can go to <https://beta.portland.gov/wheeler/covid-19-economic-relief-resources> to find other neighborhood and Portland resources to help with Covid-19 related needs.

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The Power Burns Within

(The Arrangement, continued from Page 1)

often made dried arrangements and vine wreaths for friends as a hobby, working out of her garage during weekends and evenings. Eventually, she connected with Nordstrom and began doing in-store flower arranging demonstrations. As the popularity of her work increased, Mautz began to think about opening her own retail shop.

When she heard of an available storefront on NE Fremont Street in the Beaumont-Wilshire neighborhood, she took a chance and rented the space now occupied by Americana Frame. She named her store The Arrangement, and opened for business May 3, 1980. Two weeks later, Mt. St. Helens erupted and NE Portland was covered with ash.

"It was difficult," Mautz said, but she managed to sell enough in her first year to stay afloat, eventually adding macramé, pottery, and greeting cards to her inventory.

Her lease came up for renewal in 1983, coincidentally at the same time an older gas station across the street went up for sale. With financial backing from friends and relatives, Mautz decided to buy the property.

She credited her longtime partner, John Otterbein, with having "great vision" in turning an empty gas station into an attractive retail space. A carpenter by trade, Otterbein saw what needed to be done, and completed much of the work himself in record time. He had the gas tanks removed, remodeled the property, and in less than six months The Arrangement was ready to open in its new location.

Originally, Mautz leased out part of the building to other retailers, including a coffee shop and a wallpaper store. When the coffee shop moved out, Mautz expanded her greeting card area and called that section of the store "Papers." Eventually the wallpaper shop also relocated, and The Arrangement took over the entire building.

"The 1990's were boom years," said Mautz, and in 1993 she remodeled again, adding a clothing section and a storeroom onto the east end of the shop.



FORMER GAS STATION AND FUTURE SITE OF THE ARRANGEMENT, CIRCA 1983.

When the Great Recession hit in 2007, Mautz managed to keep the store going yet again, weathering the economic downturn when many other stores were forced to close.

This year marks The Arrangement's 40th anniversary, and it also marks Mautz's 50th year as an Alameda resident. Generations of families have bought their holiday gifts and decor at the store, and it has survived to become one of the oldest businesses in the Beaumont-Wilshire neighborhood.

Growing up in SE Portland, Mautz never would have believed she would become the successful retailer she is today. A Franklin High School graduate, she earned a degree in education from Portland State University and began her career as a teacher at Rigler Elementary School. Along the way, she married and had two children – a son, Aaron, and a daughter, Amy.

That she has steered the course through a volcanic eruption, the Great Recession, and now the COVID-19 pandemic is a credit to Mautz's creativity, and her ability to pivot in a changing retail landscape. Now that the store has reopened, she's looking forward to seeing her customers again.

"We're seasonally driven, around special occasions and holidays" said Mautz. She hopes The Arrangement will be here to help neighborhood residents celebrate for many more years to come.

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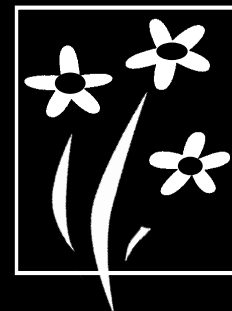
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Restoration and Adaptive Re-Use by Doug Decker

When the dumpsters and porta-potty arrived a few weeks ago in front of the old run-down house up the block, we presumed the worst. We'd watched the 1921 Craftsman bungalow near NE 30th and Skidmore decline as bags of garbage piled up on the front porch, bushes grew up over the car in the driveway, and the electricity was turned off.

Along with its slow descent over the last couple of years, the recent signals seemed to make it clear that the property had changed hands and would be torn down to make way for another quickly built, three-story box (or two of them) that would maximize lot lines and financial returns. We've seen this story play out before, including for the old bungalow that used to stand right next door to this unlikely survivor.

But this story is headed in a different direction.

The 1,000-square-foot 1921 Alameda bungalow that looked like the next candidate for a teardown is now being revived, restored and repurposed by a nearby neighbor couple who couldn't bear to see another teardown / big box happen, and who wanted to make room for their extended family (they're adding an addition to the back of the old bungalow to give the modern family a bit more space).

Harry Ford and Amy Garlock, who live in the house directly across the backyard lot line, watched back in 2016 as the former house kitty-corner across the backyard did get torn down and replaced by two three-story, semi-attached boxes which sold for almost \$1 million each. When it looked like the bungalow directly behind them was headed down the same path, they began to wonder if there was something they could do.

"We bought it partly so that there wouldn't be another giant duplex in our backyard," says Ford.

But Ford also explains the house—which will share a big, now-open backyard with their own place on NE 29th—will help meet a very real contemporary need: a quality place to live for their aging-in-place parents.

It's interesting to note that back in the day, a similar multi-generational family-as-neighbor arrangement was in place just around the corner with the family that once lived in the now-gone bungalow, and their in-laws who lived right next door. Former residents of that house remembered dinners that went back and forth, the sharing of tools and supplies, and grandparents helping

with babysitting. It worked out great for everyone.

Today, Ford is looking forward to having his in-laws just across the backyard, and to interrupting the teardown trend by keeping—and adapting—the historic fabric of the neighborhood. He acknowledges that pretty much any other purchaser of the very run-down house would have razed, rebuilt and sold high to repay the construction loan, then moved on to the next project.

For his family though, the ability to acquire an existing older home at a reasonable price literally in their own backyard, combined with the ability to meet the families' needs at the moment and for the foreseeable future, made this a reasonable thing to do. Ford and Garlock look at the investment in restoration as a good long-term proposition given the multiple types of "bottom lines" it helps them achieve: economics, quality of life, aesthetics and sustainability.

The origin of the house has an interesting story: It's a Sears Roebuck house, built in 1921 by builder Albert W. Horn. The floor plan is pure Sears Argyle, one of the company's most successful kit homes, sold between 1917-1925.

On a recent visit, the scope of the work necessary to bring back the 1921 bungalow was evident: Heating, plumbing, electrical, all interior walls, kitchen, bathroom, fireplace, chimney, exterior siding, finishes, window trim. The 100-year-old foundation and framing are solid. Everything else needs attention.

"Sometimes, going down to the studs in an old house like this is just easier because you know exactly what you're working with," said Craig McNinch of McNinch Construction who is running the project utilizing drawings by Lynn Harritt. He also restored Ford and Garlock's current bungalow on NE 29th. "This place has great bones," says McNinch, gesturing to the full dimension 2 x 4 framing lumber, the solid oak floors and the foundation.

McNinch has worked on many restoration projects in the area and acknowledges this one is indeed a challenge. But he likes the vision of restoring what was once a new and exciting home for a young family, the



THIS COMPACT 1921 BUNGALOW NEAR NE 30TH AND SKIDMORE IS BEING REVIVED FROM WHAT LOOKED LIKE A SURE PATH TOWARD TEARDOWN.

backyard connection of the two houses and families, and the constant stream of positive comments he's had from neighbors and passersby who are happily surprised with the work. During a recent afternoon, we heard McNinch and his crew loudly encouraged to "keep up the good work" by a passing driver calling from a rolled-down window.

Ford and Garlock's project to revive the old place reminds all of us that there are alternatives to demolition; that it's ok to adapt something old to meet current needs; that the grace and history of an old place adds its own kind of meaning to family life.



For more photos and to see the original Sears Roebuck Argyle drawings, visit Doug Decker's blog at www.alamedahistory.org

Neighborhood historian
Doug Decker prepares
history studies of homes,

leads history walks, and makes presentations to groups interested in learning about local history.

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Distance Learning Going Strong at The Madeleine by Cheri Krebs

When Governor Kate Brown announced on April 8 that Oregon schools would be closing for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year, The Madeleine teachers and staff had been preparing for the announcement for a couple of weeks.

Principal Kate Chambers shared, “We were aware of what was happening in other parts of the world and within our own country and felt like we should prepare to transition to online instruction, if needed. I am so proud of how hard our staff worked to be ready to go on day one. My admiration continues to fill to the brim in witnessing everyone’s grace with this transition to distance learning.”

The Madeleine Pastor, Fr. Mike Biewend, also reflected

on the change, noting “I am thrilled with the expertise and professionalism of our Parish school staff and their round-the-clock distance teaching to our Madeleine students. Prayerfully, we stand in solidarity with the world community during this pandemic. St. Mary Magdalene, pray for us.”

Jennie Ehleringer, mother to a third grader, a first grader and a four year old, shared that while there have definitely been challenges adapting to life and education at home, there is still a lot to be thankful for. She’s grateful to The Madeleine for all they are doing. “I feel like the teachers have gone above and beyond during this time. They have been extremely supportive. The Madeleine didn’t miss a beat with being prepared for learning from home.”

Ehleringer continued, “We start our week with Mrs. Chambers’ Monday video message, a reminder of Monday assembly when the kids were at school. It has been so helpful for us to transition to schooling for the week. Not every day is easy, but for my kids, hearing their teacher’s voice in the daily recordings and Zoom calls has been so grounding.”

The learning continues, and so do some of the students’ favorite events, revised. These have included a virtual Spirit Week and The Madeleine Strong Jog-Along, which replaced the school’s Jogathon and encouraged families to participate in an afternoon of exercise together.



MADELEINE DISTANCE LEARNERS INCLUDE (L. TO R.) NORA O'BRIEN AND ELJAH AND AALIYAH MEHRETAB. CELINE, LUKE, AND LEO GLAVAN PARTICIPATED IN THE MADELEINE STRONG JOG-ALONG ON MAY 1.

Alameda Disaster Meet-Up Info by Con Bricca

Editor's Note: Following up on the February ANA Pizza and Preparedness presentation, we asked Beaumont-Wilshire/Alameda Neighborhood Emergency Team Leader, Con Bricca, if there's a designated place where Alameda residents can meet up in case of a major disaster. Here's Con's reply:

You have touched on a difficult, but very real, issue for our neighborhoods. Do we have a “meeting place”, or a place to go for help, etc.? This is a front-burner topic for Portland’s Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NETs).

The existing NET model calls for a neighborhood meeting place after a disaster scenario. The designated place for our NET team is Wilshire Park. This is based on the existence of the Beaumont-Wilshire NET going back some 26 years or so.

Since Beaumont-Wilshire and Alameda now have a merged NET team, there have been discussions of adding a lower Alameda meeting place, such as Alameda School, or Madeleine School. The NET program has seen the impracticality of having meeting places that are a distance away from where neighbors need medical care.

Should we carry/transport an injured family member 5,10, or 20 blocks to a centralized location? This could be impractical, unrealistic, and perhaps dangerous. This model also would expect 20-25 trained NETs to try to meet the needs of 9,000 people in our two neighborhoods. Impossible. Perhaps 500 trained volunteers could be up to the task, but 20?

Therefore, rather than establishing one meeting place, the current direction of Portland’s NETs is to focus on

a “hyper-local” model, helping to organize neighbors in small groups, block by block. For example, a local group—maybe one block, and two side-connecting blocks comprising 20-30 homes—could meet, get to know each other, and learn how to prepare for an emergency scenario.

Things to consider may include: Providing items for shelter (e.g. tents/tarps/sleeping bags) and an outdoor watertight container in which to keep them, water and food storage, sanitation, first aid, fire suppression equipment, and more.

Neighbors learning together, getting to know each other, and supporting/helping each other—is the BEST way to prepare for an unknown disaster, be it an earthquake, windstorm, firestorm, terrorist event, or yes, a pandemic.

While NETs are not professional first responders—we are volunteers—we have the skills to help our neighbors organize and support each other. We can all learn who on our block needs help shopping or getting a prescription, whose children may need to be picked up at school while parents work, who is isolated, alone, and what skills (medical, counseling, pet care, construction, etc.) that



NET MEMBERS ANSWER QUESTIONS AT FEBRUARY ANA EVENT.

we have as a block to be able to assist each other.

We have addressed this on our block by sending a group email to our neighbors, and meeting together (not currently an option, of course) to discuss and display equipment, tools, first aid items, and other basic supplies for disaster management, as suggestions for others to follow if desired.

This is the direction of Portland’s Neighborhood Emergency Teams. We are ready to help you be prepared, and as a group, to support each other.

Grant Thunder 3rd in State by Brad Wilson

The Grant Thunder is a Girls fifth grade neighborhood recreational basketball team that is parent-coached by Jason Dalton. The team formed when the girls were in second grade, and started with eight members from the Alameda Elementary boundary area, plus a few girls from neighboring Grant feeder schools. They called themselves the Alameda Thunder, but later changed to the Grant Thunder to encompass nearby area players outside the Alameda school boundary.

This group of friends has never had a tryout, and has had the same players for the last two-plus seasons. They include Nora Bonnin, Delaney Brennan, Maddie Crawford, Finley Dalton, Sara Jaurigue, Caitlin Loughran, Stella Mikolitch, Eleanor Price, Kate Stiefvater, Izzy Tamerlano, and Charlotte Wilson.

The girls all live within walking distance of one another, and they have developed into a team that is successful competing against tryout-based teams across the region. In their fifth grade year (2019-20), they had an overall record of 34 wins and 9 losses competing against some of the toughest teams in the state in their age division.

Based on their success in qualifying tournaments, the Thunder were one of the better seeds in the Gold Division at the fifth grade level for the 2020 Oregon Middle School Basketball Championship in Redmond, Oregon March 6-8 (right before we were ordered to stay at home for the COVID-19 pandemic).

Before the tournament started, Coach Dalton said, "I am so proud of the girls for being in the Gold bracket this weekend and, beyond that, being "contenders" in that bracket to boot. The girls have worked hard and have earned this chance to go toe-to-toe at the highest level. I am excited to watch how it all unfolds!"

Dalton added that, "No matter what transpires this weekend, these games will be a celebration of the girls' progress and their hard work to date."



GRANT THUNDER BASKETBALL TEAM, PLUS COACH DALTON'S SON, DREW.

In the first game at the State Championships on March 6, the Thunder came away with a 31-28 win over Clackamas. The Thunder led 18-11 at halftime, but Clackamas came roaring back to tie it 26-26 on a three-point play before the Thunder closed out the game with strong defense.

The road to the Final Four was paved with determination. After trailing for most of their second game on Saturday morning and being down 17-20 with just a few minutes left, the Thunder prevailed with a 23-22 win over the host team, the Redmond Panthers. The contest was a nail-biter that came down to the last shot of the game, after strong defense and rebounding in the second half.

The next morning, the Thunder played Oregon City, which is a perennial powerhouse program. The Thunder started with an early lead and provided Oregon City with all they could handle. In the end, Oregon City edged out the Thunder 45-39. Oregon City went on to win the State Championship against West Linn later that day. In the final game of the season, the Thunder took home third place

after beating the Crook County Spurs 33-20.

The keys to success for the Thunder include:

- Year-round dedication and hard work from all the girls and their families.
- A volunteer coach who is prepared for every practice, and playing a fierce full court and "man" defense that results in a lot of turnovers.
- Running a fast-paced offense with unselfish girls making great passes ahead.
- Substitution in waves that utilizes two equally talented units that wear the other teams down.

Thunder Coach Jason Dalton played high school basketball for now-retired coach Mike Doherty, who logged the most wins of any coach in Oregon history. Doherty's legacy lives on as his lessons and principles influence this Grant Thunder team.



ELSA AND AZARA MAKE A DELIVERY.



ELSA MODELS ONE OF HER MASKS.



NEW SEWING SKILLS PAY OFF.

Sabin 4th Grader Starts Mask Business

Elsa Hess, an incoming 4th grader at Sabin School, has created her own business called "Fancy Faces," which began as a school project and utilizes her new sewing skills to create fabric masks for her neighborhood community.

Elsa's teacher, Ms. Harris, challenged her class to create their own business plan as her lesson plans shifted to distance-learning. Elsa had already begun growing her interest in sewing while watching her Mom sew

fabric face masks to donate to Portland-area home care workers during this past March.

This experience led her to brainstorm the idea of "Fancy Faces" for her class project, which she gave the finishing touches to with her hand-drawn logo and company name. Elsa has even employed her younger sister, Azara, who gives each mask its unique name. With help from her team, Elsa sews and delivers her face masks to residents within Alameda and surrounding neighborhoods.

For more information, go to:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LLQBaV5WKMERQw1K_Ohitjh_XoY6gCWF (for kids-sized masks ages 3-12) or
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1VALdm9srRmT8kwrSwz8EOEYvC4dyobZf> (for adult-sizes), or email maureen.waite@gmail.com.

Grant Con Team Competes in Virtual “We the People” Competition

Editor’s Note: Recently we reached out to Jen Maas, a Constitution team parent and the team’s volunteer treasurer, to get an update on how Grant fared in a year where the trip they’d earned to Nationals was replaced by a virtual competition. Here’s what we learned:

On April 25, after many months’ preparation, Grant’s Constitution Team competed with 30+ teams from across the nation in the National “We the People” Competition. The competition is run annually by the Center for Civic Education, and simulates congressional hearings where students testify as Constitutional experts before panels of judges.

Grant had earned a wild card spot in the competition, and the 30 seniors on the team were set to represent Oregon (along with Lincoln High School), in the National Finals in Washington, D.C. in May.

Unfortunately, the live event was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic, so for the first time in history the competition was held virtually, with teams joining via an online platform. It employed a modified format, with only one question per unit and shortened question times (6 minutes instead of 10 for each unit to do the back and forth questioning after their presentations).

Although Grant placed just out of the top ten, their Unit IV won first place among individual units. Lincoln High took second place.

According to Jen Maas, “While the year didn’t end as the Grant team had hoped, they, their coaches, and teacher Angela DiPasquale worked hard all year, and we are proud of their accomplishment. The students’ participation on Con Team helps establish a strong foundation on which to grow as citizens and civic leaders, and we appreciate their commitment and hard work in challenging circumstances.”

Alameda Teacher Parade *by Raddy Lurie, Alameda Elementary Principal*

On Friday, May 1, Alameda staff set out to drive through the neighborhood and wave hello to their students. What they didn’t expect was that not only their students, but families, alumni, and neighbors stepped out of their homes and onto the parade route to come together and share an outpouring of love and support.

Inspired by others in neighboring communities, 37 Alameda teachers, administrators, and support staff were blown away by the magnitude of love! The quick and blurry glimpses of students with colorful signs and big smiles will continue to lift us all through the heaviness of these times.



New Store on Fremont



Pacific Holiday Consignment is a new boutique at 4443 NE Fremont (across from Grand Central Bakery). The store sells women’s resale clothing, shoes, handbags, jewelry and accessories as well as local beauty and skincare such as Olio e Osso, Light Goddess Alchemy, Paradox candles and more. Their focus is on sustainability, boutique brands, and quality goods like cottons, linens, cashmere, and denim.

The boutique also sells online via Instagram, offers consignment porch pick-ups, private shopping by appointment, neighborhood delivery, and special events. Current hours are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information go to <https://www.pacificholidaypdx.com/>.



RESALE CLOTHING AVAILABLE AT NEW BOUTIQUE.

NE Community Center Update

Like so many other businesses, in mid-March the Northeast Community Center was forced to close its doors. But this local, independent non-profit community center is still as busy as ever. Aware that many people of all ages in NE Portland rely on their programs, classes and services, the NECC quickly pivoted to providing virtual-online programming to support the emotional, social, and physical well-being of their members and NE Portland neighbors of all ages.

Shortly after closing their doors, NECC staff started calling more vulnerable members to ensure that older adults and those facing other challenges had access to food, adequate supplies of medicine, and secure housing. Staff then connected those in need with resource groups to make sure they could get their basic needs met, and set up recurring phone calls to create regular connections with those who reported feeling socially isolated. Since

mid-March, NECC staff members have called over 1,400 people.

Also since mid-March, the NECC has been offering “live” fitness and wellness classes over Zoom. They currently have 21 classes each week, including yoga, Zumba, HIIT classes, and Tai Chi. Recognizing the importance of its “specialty” classes, the NECC has also provided live Parkinson’s exercise classes and “dry” water workout classes.

As a community-centered organization that serves people of all ages, the NECC also has classes, programs and activities for children. Each week’s schedule includes a virtual basketball class, craft times for different ages, virtual story time, a Zumba class for kids, and a week-long Scavenger Hunt appropriate for the entire family. You can sign up for these activities – as well as updates on the NECC’s reopening – at necommunitycenter.org.

Letters to the Editor

Stretching the Truth on Infill:

Dan LaGrande's piece on infill in the Spring issue of AlamedaPDX at best stretches the truth on this matter. Yes, fourplexes and even sixplexes (I believe at corners) will be permitted, but these are a far cry from the multistory apartments that we see springing up on transit arterials.

And I believe I am correct in pointing out that while current rules allow huge, 6,000 square foot, single family homes, the new zoning will limit square footage to somewhere around 4,000+ for fourplexes. So more dwelling space for more families, with less overall square footage.

The photos on Page 10 give no location, but I don't recall such scale or lack of design anywhere in Alameda, at least so far. Of course the devil is in the details. We live in the eastern-most street of the Irvington Historic District, in the "overlap," where some design guidelines are in place. Not sure what affect that will have, but we need more housing in PDX, and especially more affordable housing.

Lenny Anderson

Editor's Note: Writer Dan LaGrande responds that the homes pictured in his article were in the Alameda area, at NE 30th & Skidmore, NE 28th & Skidmore, and NE 43rd and Klickitat. For current zoning info on multi-unit dwellings, visit the Portland Residential Infill Project website at <https://beta.portland.gov/bps/rip>



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On Leaf Blowers:

Did you know that the pollution generated by gas leaf blowers could increase your risk of complications or death from COVID-19?

That is exactly what Harvard researchers concluded. According to a report issued this month, a small increase (1 microgram) in the concentration of particulate air pollution means a big increase in COVID-19 deaths. This is troubling, since a single commercial gas leaf blower can produce millions of particle micrograms every hour.

Quiet Communities, a national nonprofit working in coalition with Portland's Quiet Clean PDX and other national organizations, has analyzed the research. The conclusion is that, given the health risks to the public and especially to landscape workers, an immediate moratorium on the use of gas blowers is warranted. Quiet Clean PDX is advocating for a voluntary moratorium rather than a government ban until a vaccine for COVID-19 is available.

Happily, it is springtime, and blowing grass after mowing is unnecessary and counterproductive, and use of a blower has a destructive impact on soil, plants, and pollinators.

What does this mean? A moratorium on the use of gas leaf blowers will benefit essential landscape workers. There is no evidence of landscape workers losing jobs in cities that have already prohibited gas leaf blowers. We recommend that lawn care workers employ the quiet manual tools of rake and broom for the present time, or use battery powered blowers at low throttle. And those of us residents who own and use gas leaf blowers can also voluntarily suspend their use.

If you feel uncomfortable asking a lawn care contractor to suspend the use of gas powered blowers, please remember that you are the customer, and you can determine the nature of the work being done on your property. Your neighbors will thank you – and your workers as well.



"When it comes to blowing leaves around uselessly and creating an insane amount of noise, this model can't be beat."

Please know there are already many successful lawn care companies out there that do not use gas leaf blowers.

What can you do? Read the Quiet Communities white paper on the Quiet Clean PDX website: quietcleanpdx.org. Scroll down the home page and click the COVID-19 button, which takes you to the link for "COVID-19 and Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers: A Lethal Combination." It's a powerful argument for a moratorium.

If you support the campaign to adopt a voluntary emergency moratorium on gas leaf blowers during the pandemic, please share the white paper widely. We can only hope that education of the issue will result in grassroots action by all of us.

If you wish to become part of the growing list of Quiet Clean PDX supporters, our website will give you the opportunity to do so. We currently have about 400 Portland area supporters signed up for our occasional news updates. You are welcome to join us.

And if you would like a 'Leave the Leaves' iron-on patch, please contact us via the website and we will send you one, as long as supplies last.

Together, we can forge a healthier and quieter lawn care culture in Alameda!

Michael Hall, Quietcleanpdx.org

On Invertebrate Conservation:

I'm a part-time resident of the Alameda neighborhood and have been for over 30 years. The neighborhood newsletter has always stood out in my experience for its broad scope and relevance. I often pass our issue on to friends not so fortunate in the Rose City Park and Irvington areas.

The most recent Spring 2020 edition of AlamedaPDX was no exception. Two articles of particular interest to me were the ones dealing with conservation of butterflies and bees.

I recently discovered there is a local organization that operates on a national scale dedicated to "Protecting the life that sustains us." Although it is not located in the Alameda area, your readers may be interested to learn more about its mission and operations. Here is what information I have:

The Xerxes Society for Invertebrate Conservation
628 Northeast Broadway, Suite 200, Portland, OR 97232.
855-232-6639. www.xerxes.org

I've only just this past fall become acquainted with this organization. I've found Membership Associate, Laura Rost, a very good and helpful source of information. She can be reached at 855-232-6639, ext. 117, or at laura.rost@xerxes.org



The Xerxes Society also publishes a small pamphlet of essays featuring projects it is involved with, and information and sources to help conserve insects. Monarch butterflies and bees are a particular focus, but the last issue also discussed efforts to preserve native species in the Hawaiian Islands.

I'm hopeful you will pass this information on to Barbara Brower and Ida Galash, so that they might learn of this supportive effort for their particular interests.

Dick Slawson

Why Can't I Get Enough Sleep? by Dr. Sarah McConville

Below, Alameda resident and sleep expert Dr. Sarah McConville offers tips for getting a good night's sleep while coping with heightened stress and anxiety due to concerns about COVID-19. McConville is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine at Oregon Health & Science University, and is married to Alameda Neighborhood Association Co-Chair, Robert McConville. This article was originally published on OHSU's "96,000 Square Miles" blog.

Stress and anxiety are common causes of trouble sleeping. For some, this might mean they have a hard time falling asleep. For others, it might be hard to stay asleep. Some have a hard time with both.

A common theme I hear from patients having trouble sleeping is they can't "turn their brain off." When the topics floating around in your brain become more stressful or worrisome, it might be even harder to fall asleep. I want people to know that if this sounds like them, they aren't alone! This is a difficult subject for researchers to study because not everyone talks to their health care provider about trouble sleeping. But some estimates show that around 40% to 50% of adults have trouble sleeping at some point.

Can lack of sleep affect my immune system or likelihood of contracting COVID-19?

Sleep certainly plays a role in maintaining a healthy and strong immune system; it can affect how certain cells in our body respond to infections. Healthy sleep means that we are getting enough sleep, and that it's good quality. It's true that the average adult should get at least seven hours a night, and children need more sleep than adults do. But I don't want people to worry if they have a few nights of bad sleep – this happens to all of us!

The most important things people can do to minimize their chance of catching the novel coronavirus are to practice good hand hygiene, avoid touching their face, and follow

the recommended guidelines for physical distancing. Wash your hands and wash them often!

How can I get better sleep?

Sleep is an important part of our health, like eating a nutritious diet or exercising. So we should allow ourselves time to get enough sleep as often as we can. Keeping a consistent schedule can help us sleep more easily. Even on weekends or non-work days, it's best to go to bed and wake up at roughly the same time.

Avoiding stimulants in the hours before bed can also help. Ideally, stop drinking caffeine or energy drinks by early afternoon. With everything we hear about the coronavirus, I think it's especially important to have time to wind down and relax at the end of the day.

People should avoid activities that are stressful or anxiety-provoking in the hours before bed. This might mean turning off the news or taking a break from smart phones or social media. Instead, consider reading, spending time with family, or maybe connecting via telephone with a friend or loved one you can't visit in person.

What if I get in bed and simply can't fall asleep?

Believe it or not, one of the most important things to do is to get up and out of bed! When we spend a lot of time in bed while awake, we teach our brains that it's OK to be in bed and not sleep. We want our brains to learn that when we're in bed, we can fall asleep – or fall back asleep – pretty easily.

If you can't sleep, it's best to be somewhere else comfortable, like in a chair or sofa in your living room or somewhere else quiet, doing something relaxing like reading or working on a jigsaw puzzle. When your eyelids feel heavy and droopy and the sleepiness kicks in, that's the time to get back in bed and try to fall asleep.



Can medicine or supplements help sleep?

The best thing people can do is establish a consistent sleep schedule. Going to bed and waking up at roughly the same time each day can help the body sleep more easily.

Having a pre-sleep routine that allows you to wind down is also a good idea. I generally recommend making these types of schedule and lifestyle changes first.

What if I never get enough sleep?

I would encourage people to look at their schedule and see how they might add time for sleep. This could mean cutting out some screen time before bed or getting a few tasks done at night so you can sleep a little later in the morning.

I realize this can feel easier said than done. If this is an ongoing problem, it would be worth discussing it with your primary care provider to see if health-related factors might be affecting your sleep. They may recommend that you see a sleep medicine specialist.

At Home With the Spencers by David Spencer

With two exceptions, we haven't gone anywhere since March 23. After I had to call AAA to start my car in the driveway, I charged up the battery by driving out to Troutdale and back along the river. For exercise, I've walked Alameda Street from Klickitat to 54th and back. Linda walks the track at Grant High daily with a friend. Staying within the confines of our yard, we do projects, binge-watch new-to-us programs on cable, and call friends and family on the phone. Our son gets our groceries when he does his own shopping.

Photographs. Like most families, we have piles of photos to organize. Some we've taken; others we inherited from our parents. Gradually, we're getting them into a usable form. Linda does scrapbooks. She's created books with four Europe trips and two domestic

cruises. She's got a book for each of our sons underway, covering their school days, significant events and holidays, and sports. We had scanned lots of pictures from our parents' collections to a PC some years ago. I copied them to a 2-terabyte drive, creating a single archive for all our digital sources. During the stay-at-home time, we can spread these projects out and take our time without having to pick up for visitors.

Home-improvement. When it's warm and dry, I work on various outdoor projects at least half the day. After months of procrastination, I completed a new fence to make our backyard more private. Building the fence panels in my driveway gave me a chance to chat at a proper physical distance with neighbors who walked by. I have a list of smaller tasks to keep me busy through July, if the stay-at-home orders last as long as we expect.



DAVID SPENCER'S NEW FENCE.

Zoom. Linda meets with her book group, her PEO chapter, and two old friends that she used to meet for lunch. I attend an NECC exercise class for active older adults and a monthly Laudato Si circle at Madeleine Parish. Online meetings are okay as a stopgap, but not nearly as satisfying as an in-person experience.

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Quarantine Bingo by Tiffney Townsend

Quarantine Bingo				
You can rank neighbors by social distancing skill	Sourdough starter is healthy	Homeschooling is not for you	Kitchen is pretty darn clean	Video chat for work interrupted by naked toddler
Dishes to do. Again.	Gained 10 pounds OR can now do 100 pushups	"Maintain a routine" now only said sarcastically	Facebook friend is thirsty for the Cuomo brothers	Someone coughs and you jump
The Trolley Question is suddenly relevant	Stress eat whole bag of chips	Made a meal out of cans at the back of the shelf	No longer distinguish between day and night PJs	Groundhog Day is not a funny movie anymore
The garden is looking very nice indeed	Mother's/ Father's Day wish: Get away from kids	Mastery achieved over a new recipe	Neighborhood united in hating that dog that yaps all day	You have watched everything on Netflix
Friends are annoyingly more productive than you	Forgot to wash your hands before eating	Creeping feeling that school will not open in the fall	Found a bag of flour at the store	Trash day is the only thing that gives time meaning

Dear Prudence: "Etiquette" Advice in the Era of COVID-19 by Tiffney Townsend

Dear Prudence,

My neighbor has one of those yappy-type dogs that barks all day, and when it is taken for walks, the neighbor never uses a leash. The dog then runs around making physical contact with everyone on the street. This violates both the law and common decency, but I'm way too passive-aggressive to deal with the situation like an adult. I'm planning on getting infected with COVID-19, but I can't decide if I should then cough on the dog or the owner. Any advice?

Frustrated on Fremont Street

Dear Frustrated,

You're in a difficult situation. Your neighbor's behavior is selfish, irresponsible, and entitled under regular circumstances, but in the age of social distancing this is downright dangerous. However, as awful as the dog is, the responsibility lies with the owner. Cough on them.

Prudence

Dear Prudence,

I hate my teenager's boyfriend. My wife does too, and so do our other kids. We both thought that quarantine would be great because our daughter wouldn't be able to see so much of him. We even hoped that this situation might lead to a breakup, but things are actually worse. Our daughter got my old Segway out of the garage, duct taped an iPad to it, and set up a remote control system for it so that now the boyfriend can be in the house all the time. Worst of all, she insists that he join us for dinner. This teen romance should have burned out by now, but absence is making the heart grow fonder. How can I get this guy out of my house without picking a fight with my kid?

Raging on Regents Drive

Dear Raging,

I'd recommend breaking the Segway for several reasons, but it sounds like your tech-savvy teen would have it up and running again in no time. Instead, try to make your home somewhere this boyfriend doesn't want to be. Try getting family members to join you in chewing very loudly at the dinner table -- this can really make it hard for him to get a clear audio stream, as well as being disgusting. Cultivating as many other disgusting behaviors as possible and staging some moments that reveal more information than the boyfriend really wants to learn about your family can help put this high school romance to a merciful end.

Prudence



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The Pandemic: An Old Guy's Perspective by Dan LaGrande

In thinking about the Coronavirus pandemic that has swept the world and dramatically changed our lives, I'm reminded of two other life-changing events within my memory.

The first is World War II, which along with the Great Depression, shaped my parents' generation. Even now, I recall how as a small child during the war, I watched my grandmother take her turn each week as a volunteer "spotter," watching for enemy aircraft in the sky over the small town in Northern California where I grew up. And I vividly remember my parents listening to the radio news each evening, and worrying about their younger brothers who were away in the war — one in Europe, three in the Pacific.

The second event is the Cuban missile crisis in October of 1962, when the United States and the Soviet Union came frightfully close to nuclear war. I was a young officer stationed at a huge Air Force Base in North Dakota. To this day, I still remember how shocked I was when our air base was sealed to the outside world and the commander announced we were at Defense Condition 2 (DEFCON-2), one step from war. Within the hour, one-third of the fleet of our huge, B-52 bombers, loaded with nuclear weapons, lumbered down the runway and flew north, followed by the tanker planes that would refuel them in the air up near the Arctic circle. After 24 hours they would return, to be replaced by the bombers that had remained at the end of the runway on 15-minute alert. This went on for days, and we feared each day would be our last. Thankfully, war was averted — a war that could have ended the way of life we enjoy today.

So, my perspective of the pandemic, even though we "old folks" may be at higher risk, may be different from the younger generation's. It doesn't mean I don't take it seriously — I do — but I have come to realize I have a resiliency, an ability to adapt even in old age, that I didn't think I had. Plus, I've discovered I still have empathy as well as admiration for people I've probably taken for granted.

Take, for example, our health care professionals. Sure, it's nice to have a neighborhood clinic and a doctor I can see if I need to. And it's reassuring that there are big, modern hospitals nearby in case of an emergency, or if I really get sick. However, now that we see the daily coverage of nurses, doctors, technicians and a myriad of care givers risking their lives every day to care for Covid-19 patients, my eyes are wide open, sometimes shedding a tear, at their dedication, bravery, compassion and skill — day after day.

And then, there are all those folks in the grocery stores — and the truck drivers, warehouse workers, people who work in food processing and meat packing plants

— all those involved in growing, processing and delivering our food, that we rarely think about, much less acknowledge. Another set of heroes to whom we owe so much.

Being a creature of habit, I've been so used to simply going to the store when I need something. Now, to reduce my risk, I don't go into any store. Thankfully, many grocery stores like Fred Meyer and Safeway have quickly responded, and made it easy to order and pay online. I can simply drive to the clearly marked pick-up location at a designated time, where my groceries are loaded into the trunk and I drive home — never having set foot inside the store. I can only express my heartfelt gratitude to these dedicated, hard-working grocery store employees.

As a retiree, I'd become very lax (lazy, to be honest) about following any schedule or getting much of anything done on time. Now that I'm pretty much confined to home, "sheltering in place," I have even more free time on my hands. But a funny thing has happened. I've become more organized, dare I say even disciplined, about getting things done — some things that I'd put off for years.

Believe it or not, I've started making lists of projects that need to be completed — and some to be started. The first was outside, the yard - and I mean every square foot around our house. And after nearly two months, our place has never been so neat, orderly and weed-free. And the back garden has been hand-tilled twice, ready for vegetable planting just as soon as the soil warms up a bit more. Inside, much more to go, but I've built a new storage closet in the basement, purged oodles of files (and more to go) and up next is a major reorganization of my shop and my very cluttered office. If not for the stay at home order, none of this would have happened and our adult kids would have been left with this mess at my demise.

One of the most unexpected consequences of the pandemic has been the change — perhaps discovery is a better word — in my empathy toward the needs of others. As a church-goer, I'm aware that one of my greatest obligations is to "love thy neighbor as thyself." I suppose I've made a half-hearted effort in that regard, but that's about it.

However, something has changed in the last couple of months. Maybe it's because we can no longer go into church on Sunday, where we would see all our friends, visit afterward, and go do things together during the week. Perhaps that has shifted my attention to people I



DAN LAGRANDE'S YARD SHOWS REWARDS OF EXTRA GARDENING TIME.

don't see, or never saw at all. For example, residents all alone in a nursing home, who a friend, Father John (a retired priest), told us about. When Father John asked us and our fellow parishioners if we would write to these residents if he gave us their addresses, my wife and I said, sure — we can do that.

Now, I'm not the type of guy you would call "touchy feely." I think of myself as practical, fairly self-sufficient and reasonably handy around the house. But in Father John's gentle request, it dawned on me that this is what "love your neighbor" really means. And it means calling and checking in with friends I haven't talked to in months or years. And it means being more generous in responding to various appeals to help those in need.

So, the point of this rambling discourse is that while the Coronavirus pandemic has certainly changed and curtailed the comfortable life that many of us were privileged to enjoy, it has provided an unexpected opportunity. For an old guy like me, it's a chance to rethink what is really important, and to live whatever years I will be given to be a credit, not a burden, to my family. And to try harder to love my neighbor as myself.



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In the Garden There is Always Hope

by Barbara Strunk

If there is a silver lining to the coronavirus pandemic it is that it is occurring during spring. The days are getting longer, temperatures are warming and gardens are bursting into growth and bloom. Not only the plants are active but also all the creatures that live in the garden, including humans. Our gardens are a safe haven for us while circumstances outside are threatening and disheartening. Gardeners by their very nature are optimists. "Our gardens" are anywhere plants are growing: windowsill gardens, planted pots on a balcony, or a single favorite houseplant.

My garden provides me solace and hope for the future: a sense of normalcy. I am nurturing the growth and health of an entire community that includes plants, insects, birds and people. The colorful bumblebee in the photo made me laugh as it gathered pollen from a small narcissus that is not much bigger than the bee. Anna's and Rufous Hummingbirds feed off the wild currant in my front garden. For a short period before garden flowers opened Bush Tits scavenged the ants that gathered on the hummingbird feeder, while the hummingbirds waited their turn.

I am harvesting compost from the piles of leaves and kitchen scraps that have been broken down into soil by an active community of microbes. This lovely, nutritious, living dirt will be added to my vegetable beds. With some gentle digging on my part the vegetable bed will soon be ready to grow peas. It is less easy to obtain seed during the shutdown but my gardening friends have bailed me out by giving me their extra seed. I hope to return the favor with produce and plants in the near future. From microbes to peas: Amazing!

I love to propagate plants. I recently divided a clump of trilliums into a dozen plants to give away to friends

and to spread around my garden. Gardening can be a solitary activity but the gardening community is strong and supportive. We can enjoy each other's gardens and share, even if it is online, on the phone or from a six feet, or more, distance.

Working in the garden does not need to be a large project. The "working" that gives me the most comfort is puttering, or just looking around to see what has changed since yesterday. Pull a few weeds, deadhead some flowers that might send seed in unwelcome directions or check on the newly planted seeds. Sit in the sun.

While walking the neighborhood take note of how parking strips and front gardens are planted. If you see something you like and the gardener is out and about ask what it is and how to grow it. My parking strip grows vegetables in pots and many plants that thrive in a sunny, drier environment. Even from a safe distance gardeners love to share their successes and hard earned lessons.

The title of this article is borrowed from a reader's comment on Allan Jenkins' Sunday gardening article in the online version of The Guardian newspaper. These articles and the wonderful resulting comments illustrate what a sense of community gardening can encourage, even in a distant place such as a newspaper comments section.

To read Allan Jenkins' full article in The Guardian, go to: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/apr/05/in-worrying-times-there-is-nurture-to-be-found-in-nature>.

Barbara Strunk's article was originally published in the May-June 2020 edition of the Beaumont-Wilshire Neighborhood Association Newsletter.



Friends of Wilshire Park: We Did It!

by R. Peter Mogielnicki

Despite all the coronavirus chaos, residents of Beaumont-Wilshire, Alameda and other neighborhoods pitched in with amounts large and small to assure that youngsters will see a new playhouse installed in Wilshire Park by the summer. Let's just hope that social distancing is lifted, and the playground is open for use by then!

The playhouse represents the third major project driven by The Friends of Wilshire Park. It follows the NatureSpace which was completed in the fall of 2018, and the new toddler playcar that was installed in September of 2019.

None of these improvements would have been possible without the generous contributions of hundreds of park users, many local businesses, and the Beaumont-Wilshire and Alameda Neighborhood Associations. They also would not have been possible without the assistance and cooperation of NE Portland Parks Maintenance Supervisor Mike Grosso, NE Parks Horticulturist Johnny Fain, and Portland Parks and Recreation's Ecologically Sustainable Landscape Program Coordinator, Eric Rosewall.

As most park users know, the PP&R budget was severely reduced in May, 2019 when "structural" deficiencies were discovered, indicating that major changes were required to reduce the department's ongoing annual commitments. As



NEW PLAYHOUSE INSTALLATION ON JUNE 6.

a result, multiple layoffs have been projected, park recreation centers are slated for closure, and park maintenance and replacement budgets have been reduced. That reduction passed on a 4-1 vote, with City Councilor Jo Ann Hardesty - the only councilor not up for reelection this November - casting the single "nay".

Wilshire Park is a magnificent local resource and as residential infill becomes a reality, its use will certainly increase. Keeping it well maintained, pitching in to help PP&R staff keep it beautified, and seeking every opportunity to find ways to make it even better will be the Friends of Wilshire Park's near-term goals.

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Desert Plants Thrive in Area *by Blythe Knott*

When I think of the flora of Portland's eastside, I think of coniferous trees, ferns, rhododendrons, grass, and roses. Plants that do well with mild, rainy winters, and mild, dry-ish summers.

I certainly don't think of the cactus family when I think of Portland's plant life. But I have recently learned that there are quite a few dry-climate plants that have beaten the odds, as it were, and thrived here in the Rose City.

In fact, my neighbor has a palm tree in her backyard. It makes me smile because I'm from Los Angeles and it reminds me of "home." Plants such as this palm didn't just sprout from a wayward seed - someone wanted to have a palm tree in their yard. And, I see on the Portland Nursery website that a number of palms can thrive here, and there are a number of species for sale.

Having a few unexpected plants in one's garden can make the space much more interesting. Perhaps the plants are distinctive in color, or size, or rarity. It's an easy way to put a personal mark on our outdoor space, while creating something different to look at for passersby.

As an example, in southeast Portland, there is a giant mountain agave, named "Monte", that is currently creating quite a stir. The reason is that it is starting to bloom for the first and only time in its roughly 20-year lifespan.

Monte's owner, Lance Wright, is a retired Portland Parks and Recreation horticulturalist who believes in making statements with plant life. He planted the agave (knowing that it would survive in our climate) 19 years ago. The species is native to Mexico and it looks generally like an agave plant. But when it flowers, a tall center stalk called a peduncle (that looks like a large piece of asparagus) grows out of the center. Flowers eventually bloom from the top, which at the time of this writing is over 14 feet tall.

Wright's garden, including the agave, was designed to interest people in adventurous gardening. Wright told *The Oregonian* recently: "I would like to see more



GIANT PRICKLY PEAR ON GILE TERRACE.



"MONTY" THE MOUNTAIN AGAVE.



PRICKLY PEAR IS CURRENTLY IN BLOOM.

gardeners reclaiming their front yard and its public space ... sharing more of what they value to inspire gardener and non-gardener alike." On his blog, Wright wrote that people should "plant large, bold and unexpectedly."

Right here in Alameda, there are a number of interesting, surprising garden plantings. Since we're mostly confined to our neighborhood these days, now is a good time to walk the streets and discover ones near you!

For example, up on NE Gile Terrace there is a large, beautiful, prickly pear cactus that should be blooming by the time you read this. Alameda residents Melissa Sheiko and Aaron Glasgow tell us that although the cactus is on their property, its provenance is lost to time.

Sheiko says, "We really don't know much about the cactus. Our neighbors tell us that it was planted two owners ago, so it's at least 15 years old. They say it started as a tiny cactus and has kept growing from there. It's a really dry and sunny spot in the summer, and I think it's perfect for the cactus. It's getting so big that we will likely have to trim it at some point; we can't have it overflowing onto the road."

I asked my biologist friend about garden cacti in Portland, and he pointed me to several websites that exclusively cover this topic. Truly, there's a website for everything! But, it's not just desert plants that are interesting around here. What have you seen? Do you have a plant in your yard or on your walking route that's unusual or unexpected?

For those gardeners who are inspired to plant boldly, Cistus Nursery and Portland Nursery frequently came up in my research as great resources. Beautiful plants make urban life more interesting. I know that going forward I'll be paying closer attention to what my neighbors have chosen to grow and I'll be inspired, in turn, to add some unexpected flora to my garden this summer. Perhaps in 20 years, my plants will follow in Monte's "shoes" as destination viewing for our community!



MONARCH WAYSTATION SIGN.

Plan Your Garden to Help the Butterflies *by Dan LaGrande*

Editor's Note: In our Winter and Spring issues, writer Dan LaGrande introduced us to Alameda resident and Monarch butterfly advocate Ida Galash, and her efforts to increase the Monarch population. With gardening season upon us, Dan has the following reminder for residents who want to include butterfly-friendly plants in their yards:

There has been an alarming decline in the Monarch butterfly population. However, home gardeners can help save this beautiful and important pollinator.

Now is the time to act, whether your garden is big or small. The key is selecting plants crucial for butterflies and other beneficial insects.

"Choose nectar plants like asters, zinnias, goldenrod, sunflowers, as well as shrubs, yarrow and Echinacea, or anything in the daisy family," advises Ida Galash, who

was recently named the Portland contact for the Western Monarch Advocates. "Be sure to include milkweed, where Monarchs lay their eggs for the next generation. Choose any of the milkweed varieties that are native to our area. Check with your local garden store or nursery to see what they have in stock."

To look at plants in the Alameda neighborhood that support butterflies and other helpful insects, walk along the sidewalk on the west side of NE 24th Avenue, between Garden Fever and The Madeleine School. Ida planted a "Monarch Waystation" which she maintains as an example - and inspiration - of what we can all do in our gardens to help save the Monarchs.

Gardeners can connect with Ida Galash by joining her Facebook group, Portland Monarchs, or by emailing her at monarchcorridor@gmail.com

Picture Windows: “Making Comics” *by Gail Jeidy*

I was gifted Lynda Barry’s wonderful book “Making Comics” at Christmastime and started following her lessons, doodling with Flair pens. Along came the pandemic and I had real world drama to draw on. Sketching comics became a satisfying way to process what was happening.

My first pandemic-themed Picture Window was a two-minute scribble when the earnest hand washing and uncertainty began. Since, I’ve drawn a comic every day and dated them, capturing whatever I was feeling or noticing.



Fear. Stress. Overwhelmed. Sunshine. Sadness. Loneliness. Joy. Sweetness of children! Appreciation. A chuckle...

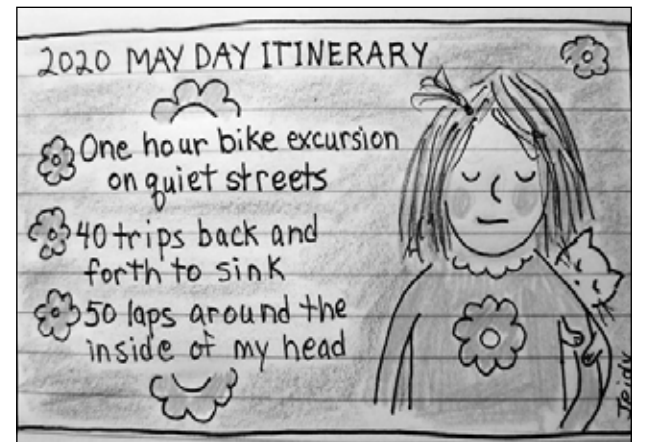
Drawings may come to life late at night, more often around 4:30 a.m. as my sleep schedule has roller-coasted since this all started. (Has your sleep shifted?)

Throughout this unprecedented time, I’ve discovered a surprising joy and a grounding practice. My dining table with Flair pens, composition books, and colored pencils draws my focus multiple times a day. My goal is 90 days of

comics, longer if the pandemic continues. It’s kept me sane and in touch with Alameda and beyond, plus I’m furthering my skills and working on solidifying a comics style.

I try not to criticize my raw drawings and to just keep going. Working on lined paper keeps my pen loose. At first, I limited my daily comic to visuals only. In the last month, I’ve allowed myself to add words.

My word count is less this issue, but hopefully the drawings make up for it



Missing Alameda *by Barbara Brower*

In 1994 I came to Portland to interview for a job at Portland State. I’d been stuck for eight years in Texas (don’t let anyone tell you, “Austin’s a terrific city!” without adding “. . . for Texas!”), and when I arrived here, it felt as if I’d died and gone to heaven.

This wasn’t the reaction I’d had to my first stint in Portland, starting college at Reed in 1969. Then I’d absolutely hated it once the rains started, and couldn’t get home fast enough. But coming from exile in Texas? It was heaven.

One of my prospective colleagues took me to NW 23rd Avenue for coffee, and I decided then and there that if I got the PSU job, that’s where I wanted to live—somewhere in those leafy neighborhoods that were so much like my California hometown of Berkeley.

Well, I got the job, and came house-hunting one October weekend with my family. We discovered very quickly that NW Portland was NOT going to be where we could afford to live, and concentrated our search in other neighborhoods. At the end of a frustrating day of looking at the dreary, outlying houses we could afford, we checked out one last one, on NE 29th Avenue, around the corner from Alameda Elementary School.

It was nicer than others we’d seen, in what seemed to be a pleasant neighborhood (if not NW Portland). We were puzzled, though, at the rank smell that emanated from the interior. The wall-to-wall carpeting downstairs had a mysterious but nasty odor. At some point we figured

out the source: there was a giant, gorgeous female gingko tree in the back yard, the ground beneath littered with ripe fruit, and the owner’s dog had tracked in enough to flavor the carpet.

That stinky gingko, we believe, kept the house from selling quickly, and so we lucked out. Knowing nothing whatever about Portland, we bought our house in the best of all possible neighborhoods. We moved in December, 1994, and the first thing we did was rip out that carpet. But we cherished the gingko, our benefactor, and figured out ways to keep dogs from tracking fallen fruit onto our new rugs. A windfall let us move a block and a half up the hill to NE 29th, to a little house on the ridge with a view south across Portland (important to someone who grew up on hills with a view). And I’ve lived happily ever after in Alameda ever since. . .

Until The Pandemic.

My Alameda house is now in the care of my housemate-tenants, and I’m hunkered down with my partner in NW Portland. The best thing that ever happened to my family, it turns out, was not settling down on the “wrong” side of the Willamette. It is not very nice here, however much the houses look like those in my native land (but they’re bigger and mostly older). Let me tell you about NW Portland, and why you should be thanking your lucky stars you live in Alameda.

The houses are too big and the people are too fancy (with notable exceptions - to be fair, there are some

absolutely lovely people here). It is much MUCH too green and damp. The sun almost never shines—a glancing blow for a few hours at most. Nothing grows in the gardens but moss, grass, and rhododendrons. Here on the edge of Forest Park (where nothing grows but Doug fir and big-leaf maples—and more moss), there is an endless stream of (usually unmasked) hikers heading for absurdly crowded trails, swinging their hiking sticks and shoving old folks out of the way.

Oh yes, there is a view—north. Who wants to look north? It’s mostly the dark underbelly of Portland down there, the coal and oil trains and refineries, reminders of the damage we do to Planet Earth when our economy is up and running. Because it isn’t, when the clouds aren’t settled over us you can lift your eyes, crane your neck around all the trees, and see through the clear air as far as Mt. Rainier (a shoulder of it, mostly hidden behind Mt. St. Helens). That is nice.

But where is the sunshine? Where are the wonderful, varied gardens? Where is the rich mix of neighbors of various ages, incomes, colors, occupations? Where are the friendly walkers, stepping out of each other’s way—which most do, in my experience. I come home to weed and walk my old dog every few days, reminding myself of what I’ve left behind, and pining for it. My own house! My own crazy, mixed-up yard! My own dear neighbors! My view, south where the sun is!

Oh, Alameda! How I miss home.



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NO gatherings with friends
 → even if you sit/stand 6ft apart
 → even if you keep it under 10 people
 → even if you have all been quarantining
 → even if you are symptom free
 → even if you are young
 → even if it is for a "quick glass of wine"
 → even if you're bored, lonely or stir crazy
 → even if it is outside/at a park/for a walk

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 → even though they're family
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