



# PORT OF CALL

The newsletter that keeps Port's retirees connected and informed.

**PWTA RETIRED EDUCATORS CHAPTER  
PORT WASHINGTON, NEW YORK  
Covid-19 Pandemic 2020 Vol. 30 No. 1**

NYSUT NO. 19 080R Visit our website at: <http://pwretirees.org/>

## The Tonic of Nature - Jim Jones

I would like to offer a suggestion. As we are all being forced to face the grim realities of dealing with a covid-19 virus pandemic, we are also being asked to engage in a behavior which is contrary to human nature - social distancing. There are valid reasons for this to be sure, but I would like to propose an alternative - **nature engagement**.

We are social animals; asked to abandon or at least decrease our associations with each other, we can easily bond with something equally important to our survival - we can connect with nature! Even on an Island, Long on humanity, there are numerous places where you find wild places filled with wild things. Have no fear, there are no longer large predators with us on the menu, and most (if not all) of the problematic insects will not be around until later in the year. Dress for the weather, bring along a pair of binoculars if you wish, but be prepared to stimulate your immune system, ward off the real dangers of nature deficit disorder, allow the sun to help you make your own vitamin D, and all the while strengthening your cardiovascular system. All your senses can be employed: hear the dense winter wind exhale its' way through white pine needles, feel the difference between lichen and moss, smell the newly-emerged skunk cabbage, and see - everything you can!

There are dog-friendly parks if you choose, so bring a friend or two, keeping 6 feet distance and wear a mask, or simply enjoy and embrace the solitude. Then remember the words of John Muir; **"Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.**

There is much to experience at this time of year: watch a soaring pair of red-tailed hawks as they 'sky-dance' to prepare for nesting, listen to a 'murder' of crows as they mob an unseen predator, find a deer track and follow it, identify a bird call by finding its maker, listen to woodpeckers chisel for food, check the bays and marshes for migrating feathered visitors, inspect knotholes for residents. If you are both lucky and persistent, find (but do not disturb) our two early nesting raptors; bald eagles and great horned owls. As they are now returning from parts south, check out the nesting platforms of our fish-hunting osprey; be the first to witness their arrival. There is **always** more to see than you can ever observe!

As a long-time nature watcher and naturalist at Bethpage Park, I know the benefits of being in the wild. Over the last two weeks, I have watched as a pair of great horned owls (winged-tigers) have begun to nest. The dutiful parents produced one pearly-white egg, which only a few days ago, hatched into a down-covered owl chick (check out the three photos). Miracles do occur, even in the cold of winter. Go out and enjoy them.

**'And forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair' - Kahlil Gibran**



2 days old



3 weeks old

# DON'T BE A VICTIM - Mary Anne Cariello

It has been said that "A sucker is born every day." Now it can be said that a scam is born every hour. Therefore, you have to be even more aware than ever, so that scammers will not take advantage of you or members of your family. Following is information and advice so that you will not become a "sucker."

Use your Caller ID and answering machine, or voice mail to begin to protect yourself. Don't even answer the phone if you are not sure of the caller's identity. You can always call back.

Unfortunately, scammers can manipulate Caller ID, and calls may falsely appear to come from government agencies, utility companies, or the police. If you answer a call or receive an email or text message instructing you to purchase a prepaid merchant Gift/Debit card, cryptocurrency or money order to pay law enforcement, the IRS, a utility company, immigration, Social Security or Medicare for fraudulent activity involving your number, ransom or for hospital emergency treatment for a loved one, **KNOW IT IS A SCAM!** This does not exhaust the list of scams. There are new ones all the time. Always be suspicious.

In addition to other scams, a number of people have had their mail stolen even if posted in a mailbox. Do not put mail in a mailbox that does not have a very narrow slit. Don't leave mail out for the mailman to pick up. Envelopes have been stolen and checks changed and forged. People have been able to get their money back but it was a hassle. Always check your bank statements for accuracy. Don't get SCAMMED!



## Come to the PWRE Book Club

*If you plan to attend, please RSVP to the host.*

Date: Book:  
Date: Book:  
Host:

Date:  
Book:  
Host:

Please check our website for future book club meetings

[http://www.pwretirees.org/pwre\\_news/news\\_book\\_club.shtml](http://www.pwretirees.org/pwre_news/news_book_club.shtml)

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**Covid-19 Pandemic 2020 Vol. 30 No. 1**  
Published by the Retired Educators Chapter  
Port Washington Teachers Association  
99 Campus Drive  
Port Washington, NY 11050

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Our PWRE website has a new home! Our new web address is: [pwretirees.org](http://pwretirees.org). Please change your bookmarks/favorites to our new domain name.

## FRIENDSHIP/ REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE



*Norma Ziegel*

## Condolences Were Sent:

To family of Jamie Barchi  
To the family of Diane Davan  
To Maria Dubie on the death of her husband  
To the family of Margaret Fulgenzi  
To the family of Bruce MacDonald  
To the family of Donna Magee Sanchez

**A \$100 contribution was sent to the PWRE Scholarship Fund in memory of:**

Jamie Barchi  
Diane Davant  
Margaret Fulgenzi  
Bruce MacDonald  
Donna Magee Sanchez

# PW COVID - 19 Community Response Fund

Tessa Jordan is a member on the board of the Port Washington Community Chest. This organization has sent out the following letter. As we all have such a deep connection with the Port community you might want to consider making a donation to those in need.

The Community Chest of Port Washington has started a PW COVID-19 Community Response Fund and has committed an initial contribution of up to \$100,000 of Community Chest funds to these efforts. Community Chest will be working with and through existing local community and faith-based organizations that have experience supporting Port Washington families, residents, and the frail elderly who will be needing assistance. At this moment the organizations that have been identified are Our Lady of Fatima, Outreach; St. Peter of Alcantara, Social Ministry; Littig House Community Center; and Port Washington Community Action Council. The Town of North Hempstead, Clergy Association, school district, public library, and Port Washington police are collaborating with this effort.

A GoFundMe campaign is up and running to raise money for this effort. It has been set up as a Certified Charity Campaign, which means that all contributions to it are tax deductible. If you wish to make a contribution, click here: [https://www.gofundme.com/f/covid19-pw-residents-need-our-help?utm\\_source=customer&utm\\_medium=copy\\_link&utm\\_campaign=p\\_cf+share-flow-1](https://www.gofundme.com/f/covid19-pw-residents-need-our-help?utm_source=customer&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_campaign=p_cf+share-flow-1).

If you prefer to contribute directly to Community Chest, go to <https://www.portchest.org/>. You can also send a check to The Community Chest of Port Washington, 382 Main Street, Suite 105, Port Washington, NY 11050; indicate on the check that your contribution is for the PW COVID-19 Fund. 100% of contributions to the **Port Washington COVID-19 Community Response Fund** are going to be distributed to help Port Washington residents.

In addition to the **Port Washington COVID-19 Community Response Fund**, the Community Chest is also mobilizing volunteers to help home-bound seniors with immediate food and other needs through the Port Washington Crisis Relief Team. They are tracking all community volunteer activities (including the purchase of local business gift cards, special store hours, donations of masks, gloves, restaurants that are open and delivering, other delivery services, et. al.) through the Chamber of Commerce. Residents are encouraged to share efforts with the Chamber at: [Office@pwcoc.org](mailto:Office@pwcoc.org). For questions, to seek assistance, or to offer help, contact Julie Meer at the Community Chest at [info@portchest.org](mailto:info@portchest.org).

## A Pandemic Suggestion from Larry Silberman

Read a great book, folks; make a drawing or painting....yeah, I know, you don't have to show it to anyone, but it could be a very absorbing and fun thing to try, ya know? Stay well!! I'm reading These Truths: A History of the United States by Jill Lepore. Excellent scholarship and writing.



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## Like Many PWREs Mark Brenner Wears Many Hats

I have been a volunteer with the Huntington Community First Aid Squad since 1977. During that time, I have had a wide range of experiences (driving emergency vehicles, becoming certified as an EMT-Critical Care Technician) and opportunities (becoming an EMS instructor, serving as an Officer and ultimately Chief of my agency.)

In retirement, I work as an Adjunct Instructor for Emergency Medical Services courses at Suffolk County Community College, Instructor of EMS education courses for Suffolk County EMS, and as an Artist through Nassau County BOCES Cultural Arts augmenting the musical instruction of students at Oyster Bay High School. And, as my wife continues to teach Social Studies at Schreiber High School, I fill the role of Mr. Mom for our 1<sup>st</sup> grade son and 5<sup>th</sup> grade daughter.

But when the pandemic hit, my job at the college moved online and my contract with BOCES was cancelled. But my roles as dad and EMT have become more important. My wife, Sarah, works countless hours developing and delivering online instruction. She, like educators all over the country has moved into this new paradigm with drive and dedication; and it takes time, lots and lots of time. That's where I come in - helping our children navigate their way through online instruction!

And every Monday afternoon and evening, as I have done for many years, I standby at my EMS agency. Unlike most EMS agencies, ours utilizes duty crews, volunteers who come to the building and answer calls when activated by 911, rather than waiting at home waiting for the siren or pager to sound, summoning them to the ambulance garage. As a result, our response time is faster – we get on the road within one minute of receiving the alarm, which is vital since we cover such a large area of Huntington (from the Nassau county line in the west to Deer Park Rd in the east, from just south of the Walt Whitman Mall north into Lloyd Harbor - think Caumsett State Park.) Ours is the second busiest EMS agency on Long Island, handling over 6000 calls each year with six ambulances, three first responder vehicles and a staff of about 200 volunteers and a few paid paramedics. But when the pandemic hit, our call volume doubled! But as a person in an at-risk category (I'm over 60), I limit myself to one duty tour each week. Additionally, I develop online training for the members of my agency.

When we arrive for our duty shift, we enter the lobby, take our temperature and, if it's below 100 degrees Fahrenheit, sanitize our hands with Purell, don a surgical mask and enter the building to begin our shift. At the start of each shift and after every call we disinfect our vehicles. We perform a vehicle check-out which, now more than ever, we make certain is stocked with Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) including gloves, gowns, goggles, and our own N-95 respiratory mask.

Our calls include motor vehicle accidents (they just HAD to have a Starbucks coffee), suspected stroke calls, chest pain calls, falls, overdose calls and even industrial accidents (I had a patient who got her hand caught in a semi-automated milling machine), and of course, pandemic-related calls.

When I arrive home, I enter through the back door and proceed downstairs, disrobe in the laundry room, place my uniform in the laundry, disinfect my EMS boots with Lysol, don my robe and slippers (which I placed in the laundry room before leaving for the Squad) and head to the shower, after which I can finally say hello to my family (who are relieved that I have returned home safely.)

I urge everyone to continue to stay home, refrain from doing anything dangerous (such as climbing a ladder to clean second story windows) and practice social distancing. May we all remain healthy and safe.



Mark shown here with the advanced life support first responder vehicle he typically operates.

# We Asked to Hear From You and We Did

The recent mandate to self quarantine has taken me back to 40 years ago when I loved to sew! When all of our Airstream Club and camping plans were canceled, Tom and I realized that we needed to find indoor activities to alleviate boredom/anxiety associated with isolation. Hence, my Sweat Shop, a sewing center in my unfinished basement!

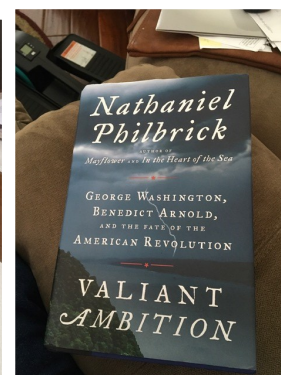
I've made a few handbags, a quilt, and numerous embroidery projects. My goal is to make quilts for our nine grandchildren! My recent obsession is with vintage Singer Featherweight sewing machines. I find them in rough condition and rehab them. I'd like to give one to each of the grandchildren and teach them to sew. If anyone has one in the attic needing a new home, I'm in the market for a few more!



Stay healthy and safe! **Patti Reed**



Here are pics of my activity during the Corona Stay In including my mask and my woodcarvings. I am also reading like crazy; this is my current book. I am in Phoenix, Arizona.....  
**Ed Conti**



**Beauteous Daffodils -**  
Dave Hinchliffe



Beauteous daffodils yellow  
weighted by April night's frost  
genuflecting, divine the ground,  
reminding one of the lost  
old ones, or those held down.  
Today, they are revived-  
yet bright, now upright  
bounteously alive.  
Bouncin' back  
Self ne'er slackening,  
wondering now:  
the many ways  
one might survive



Special thanks to Carol Kratenstein  
for the Covid -19 Reminders



# Merry-Go-Round by Merry Gilbert

## Supermarket Augury

In January 2012, our house caught fire. We sat at our neighbor Maria’s house and watched out her living room window as our house burned. We stayed with her overnight. Her girls gave us toothbrushes. The next morning Maria told us that we could stay at her parents’ house in Manhasset - they were in Florida for the winter. This generous offer provided a breather until we found a place to live. We had only the coats on our backs, and by a fortunate surprise, my purse found and rescued by the firefighters.

That was so wonderful that overnight she conjured a miracle for us - we had beds with bedding, bathrooms with towels, a well-equipped kitchen, a washer and dryer...and access to Raindeew for necessities. (We did have to call Maria to ask her where her mother’s small pots were - the answer was that with four children, she had loads of big pots, small not so many.) Maria’s mom even called from Florida to tell Alan that some of the eggplant lasagna she makes that is his favorite, was in the freezer, and he should help himself.

After a few weeks, we found an apartment on Manhasset Isle. Since we couldn’t take items out of our house until the insurance evaluation was over (which ran to several months later), we rented furniture and scrounged loans of dishes and pots, etc. from friends and relatives.

AND - key to this saga, we hired a contractor who assured us he would lose money if we weren’t back in our house in seven months.

That guy must be broke, because it wasn’t until 18 months later that we returned home.

BUT here’s where the augury comes in.

During the 18 months away from home, while shopping for food, I’d look at the “best by” dates, and think, “by then we’ll surely be back in the house.” You can tell this went on for a really long time. But I persisted at doing it, honing my skill over time.

It worked, though, because after months of prognostication, I successfully predicted when we’d return home: July 2014.

I was recently reminded of this well-developed skill while shopping for food. Reflexively, I still check the “best by” dates. Suddenly, right in front of the cream cheese section, I had a flashback to the significance of my practice. From my extensive past experience with augury, I’d like to predict June 20<sup>th</sup> as the date we may be able to have relief from the Corona Virus event.

That prediction is based on... the date on a container of Eggbeaters.

My Aunt Helen had a saying: “From your mouth to God’s ears.”

Maybe “from my Eggbeaters.....”



## Trip Alerts by Snail Mail

No email? Want to go on trips but lack access to notifications?

Please let Harriet Englander  
10 Crescent Road  
Port Washington  
NY 11050

or

Merry Gilbert put you on the list for mailed notices.  
133 Reid Avenue  
Port Washington,  
NY 11050

# The Mighty Masketeers of Columbia County- Eryn Madonia

I have joined this amazing organization and have resurrected my sewing skills. It has been and continues to be a very rewarding experience. We communicate daily via Zoom, Facebook, Instagram, and email. We are neighbors who have come together to make masks for our community and our medical workers on the front line of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are an all-volunteer organization of mask makers, who are designing, cutting, sewing, packaging, and driving, providing masks to people in need in our region.

In this time of social distancing we are working from our homes in and around Columbia County, adults and children alike. Our supplies (all donated from community members and local and national businesses) are sent to one house in Chatham, NY, which has become our designated "warehouse." Our cutters cut out fabric and filter material for distribution to our sewists. Others spend their time unbending paper clips for nose pieces, cutting lengths of elastic, disassembling home air filters to re-purpose into the vital filter layer of our medical masks. Our talented network of sewists then work diligently and with love and care to assemble our masks for delivery to another designated "household warehouse" for final washing and distribution.

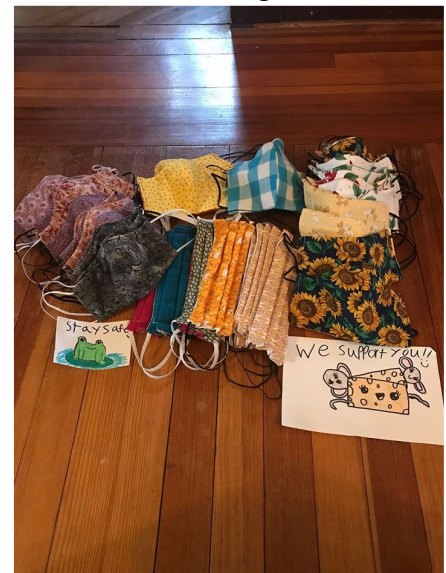
None of this would be possible without our dedicated team of drivers, who pick up and deliver all of our donations. They bring bulk fabric to cutters, cut fabric to sewists and beautiful, finished masks out for delivery. They even bring our tired and worn-out machines to one blessed volunteer who has agreed to service our entire fleet. Another kind soul sharpens our scissors and then the drivers bring them back, ready for more of this important work.

So far we have received requests from our local food banks, homeless shelters, EMTs, police departments, grocery stores, other front-line workers, and many, many community members. We've been connecting with our local hospitals to keep their healthcare workers safe. Although they currently have adequate stores of masks for their nurses and other staff in direct contact with patients, they are able to use our masks to protect ancillary staff who are at lower risk of transmission. We have also been able to connect with a dedicated COVID-19 hospital in Brooklyn, NY that is distributing our medical masks to front-line healthcare workers and our community masks to families of COVID patients.

Our goal is to provide those who are supporting us with masks to keep them safe and let them know they are loved and appreciated by all of us. No one could have anticipated how this crisis would create the opportunity to bring so many amazing and talented people together in such a beautiful, caring, and compassionate community. So far our masks have gone to:

The Chatham and Hudson Police Departments  
Bliss Towers in Hudson  
Wally Hart Lexington Foundation in Albany  
Joseph's House Homeless Shelter in Troy  
Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn  
COARC center for individuals with disabilities  
Scrub hats to Columbia Memorial hospital  
Local farms, including Ironwood Farm  
Columbia Memorial Hospital ancillary staff  
Elmhurst Hospital in Queens, NY  
Nurses and their families at Berkshire Medical Center  
Taconic & Bedford Correctional Centers' women inmates  
First Nation communities in South Dakota and Arizona

As of May 2<sup>nd</sup> we have delivered 1846 masks. Want to learn more, interested in a tutorial on how to make a mask or how to properly wear a mask? Please visit us at <https://www.columbiamasketeersny.org/>





**Port Washington Retired Educators Chapter**

Meetings will be held at the Port Washington Library on the dates and times listed, **unless otherwise notified.**

Please check your email or the website: <http://pwretirees.org/> for any meeting changes.

**2020 Meeting Dates**

Please check our website for future meeting dates  
[pwretirees.org](http://pwretirees.org).



**PLEASE NOTE: Checks for contributions to the PWRE Scholarship Fund should be made out to the PWRE. Put the name of the honoree on the memo line or in a note. Please mail to:**

**Gerri Ganzekauer  
51 Longview Road  
Port Washington, New York 11050**

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RETIRED EDUCATORS CHAPTER, PWTA  
99 CAMPUS DRIVE  
PORT WASHINGTON, NY 11050

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