

Oxford Circle Chapter 1301 President Steven Tengood

March 2020 Newsletter – Janet Stack, editor; Nancy Salkowski, Photographer

Thomas Paine once said: ‘These are the times that try men’s [and women’s] souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country.’ This may be the first crisis that the boomer generation has had to confront head on in this country, and not in a faraway battle field. And self-isolation amid the incessant discussions of the corona virus is not easy to manage. Last night, I woke up because I coughed, once. And my first thought was, omigod, do I have the corona virus? Well, it doesn’t appear so. But it is so easy to get mired in the fear and uncertainty of the pandemic. So, I do have a few short words to share about the virus from The Week magazine, and then, we’ll explore things that we can do at home to lift up our spirits.

If you have a fever, dry cough, or other worrisome symptoms, your doctor can determine whether you should be tested. Test kits are hard to come by, but you can expect a test in which a swab is inserted in one nostril, with results after a wait of a few days. If you are told to visit your doctor’s office or ER, call ahead so the staff can take precautions, and wear a kerchief or respiratory mask to contain your cough. And more on this subject below. Don’t bother with masks if you’re not sick, because there’s a nationwide shortage and health care workers need them. Most people who contract the virus will recover without intervention, so if you’re not considered high risk and don’t require urgent medical attention, stay home and self-isolate for at least two weeks, avoiding even the people you live with. Stay in your own bedroom, and ideally, use your own bathroom. Wash your hands often. Only grab food when no one else is in the kitchen, and disinfect any surfaces you touch. Drink lots of water, sleep as much as possible, run a humidifier, and manage symptoms with over the counter

cough suppressants and fever reducers such as Tylenol. Your doctor can tell you when you’re no longer contagious.



The two photos on the previous page were graciously supplied by our Photographer and Membership Chair, Nancy Salkowski. Nancy has demonstrated in these photos how you can make your own facial mask with a napkin, two rubber bands and a stapler. Thanks, Nancy!

And now, here are some things that you may consider doing to occupy your time and lift your spirits as we go through this vexatious time:

Write a letter to a friend. Give it to your mail carrier if you don't want to go out to the mailbox.

Watch the sun rise, from your deck or balcony if you have one.

Exercise. If you have Comcast, which I do, you can check out Exercise On Demand. While there are some exercise programs that require a subscription fee, there are far more that are free. There are even walking exercise programs that you can do in the comfort of your own home.

Write a poem.

Write a list of things you are grateful for.

If you have a garden, go out and cut flowers and bring them inside, even if you normally wouldn't do so. I cut down all my daffodils and brought them in.

If you don't have a garden, and you don't mind the splurge, order flowers on line and send them to yourself.

Read a good book.

Read THE Good Book.

Try a new recipe.

Try mixing a new cocktail.

Send a check to a charity that you want to support, with a note of appreciation for the work that they do.

Start a project you've been putting off doing, like reorganizing a closet.

Take a walk.

Draw.

Paint.

Start a craft project.

Listen to music.

Learn something new online.

Rent a movie from your cable or digital provider, even if you normally wouldn't. And Nancy advises that Comcast is offering Epix On Demand and Showtime free until April 14.

Go to Google Arts and Culture where there are virtual tours of more than 1200 art museums. I really like the Prado museum in Madrid.

Attack one small area of clutter and tidy it up. Sigh. This is on my list. I have many areas to choose from.

Organize your photos.

Organize your papers and discard very old bills that you no longer need. (I'm guilty, again).

Complete your census form. This one only takes 10 minutes.

Play board games with your friends online. Pogo is a website that offers classic games, including Scrabble, Trivial Pursuit, Risk, Monopoly and other games that you can play for free with your friends who are also self-isolating somewhere. You can also go bowling online on Pogo with up to 20 players. Note: I haven't tried this one myself, but I have it on good authority that it works.

I hope that you can use one of these ideas to while away the time.

Can't find Purell? You could soon be sanitizing with coconut rum. Small batch distilleries in the US and UK are doing their part to slow the spread of the corona virus. After all, effective germ-fighting sanitizers must be at least 60% alcohol, a product that distilleries have in abundance. With a little added aloe vera and botanicals and flavorings from their signature spirits as a twist, the companies are giving away their boozy concoctions, just avoid the temptation to imbibe. Brooklyn based New York Distilling Co's recipe calls for uncut gin with the scent of juniper berries and citrus, while California's Prohibition Spirits has created three flavors of sanitizer that evoke popular cocktails: key lime margarita, old-fashioned, and pina colada.

Below are some of our members who participated in our February meeting.



They include: Abigail Chavez, Jake Ruser, Walt Lewis, Stan Lamb, Steve Tengood, Janet Stack, Paul Hodowanec, Roz Soffer, Jude Husein (Guest Speaker), Paul Dubin, Ferne Adrienne, and Nancy Salkowski. My sincerest apologies if I did not list your name. It is because I didn't know it. A few of our regularly attending members had to leave a few minutes before we concluded as we did run over our time limit, and they are not in the picture.

On behalf of Steve Tengood, Roz Soffer, Nancy Salkowski, and myself, I wish each and every one of you a healthy and safe sojourn until the corona virus has peaked and recedes and we can all resume our normal activities. Hope to see you soon at our next NARFE meeting.