

TCU Retirees in Pandemic Times

AN INFORMAL POLL BY JUDY GROULX



Many thanks to Judy Groulx for helping with the newsletter this month!

Here we are, living (we hope – so far, so good –) through this pandemic. We are coping, waiting, watching, and working at staying safe. Not much is happening that makes for important newsletter “news”, so we decided to conduct an informal survey among ourselves, on how we’re threading our way, and what we’ve been doing during pandemic times. Newsletter editor Nancy Madsen sent TCU executive board members a few questions. Not all of us responded to her prompts (n=7), and some elaborated more than others, so this is a VERY informal poll.

READING VORACIOUSLY

Of course we have been reading: the *Times* and *New Yorker* (“religiously”); the entire Lee Childs Jack Reacher series, the last three J.D. Robb detective books, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, and eight

Nora Roberts books; mostly academic books; *End of October* by Lawrence Wright; *The Splendid and the Vile* by Erik Larson; *The Ninth Hour* by Alice McDermott; *Coco, the Queen of Paris* about Coco Chanel.

EATING ALL THE TAKEOUT

Only one of us reported eating indoors at a restaurant, but we sampled takeout from all over Fort Worth: Texas Roadhouse, Mexican Inn, Los Vaqueros, Jack in the Box, Panda Express, Spice, Salata, Olive Garden, Grimaldi’s Pizza, TruFire, Chuy’s, La Madeleine, Classic Cafe, Pearl Chinese Restaurant, Panera, Greek House, Chadra, Eatzie’s, Charleston’s, Carshon’s, Ellerbe, Tricky Fish, Horned Frog Cantina (formerly the Bottom), El Fenix, Lunch Box, McKinley’s, Swiss Pastry Shop, Campisi’s, also tried Hello Fresh, who deliver meals-to-cook.

TRAVELING AND STAYING IN

Some have traveled, others stay

put: Drove to the airport four times (everyone travels but me); drove to New Orleans to visit daughter and grandson and flew to Denver (with N95 mask); went to Galveston with our kids and grandkids to stay at a resort with a private beach so we were pretty insulated; visited Palo Duro Canyon. One made a 1,300-mile drive to northern Michigan, with travel trailer, which kept them “safe” not needing lodging, dining or anything but gasoline.

ZOOMING AROUND

For social and recreational time we have relied on: Lots of phone calls, football (finally!!), book club Zooms, lots of Zoom meetings where we get to talk before and after; regular walks or biking on Trinity Trails or in the neighborhood; outdoor gatherings at home or friends’ homes with masks and social distancing; cooking; yoga outdoors or via Zoom, attending grandson’s athletic events

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outdoors, visiting/keeping/playing with grandkids; spending relaxing weekends forgetting all about COVID at our ranch near Jacksboro; some boating and swimming in Michigan.

WHAT WE MISS

We miss: teaching and tutoring, eating out, swimming, traveling, going out with friends, family gatherings, being with our kids and grandkids, entertaining friends at home, going to yoga, meeting in person for book group or writing circle, going to the movies, going to church (Zoom only), playing bridge with friends, football games, getting a haircut or a facial – generally we miss participating in-person at anything!

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

We learned: the importance of cats and how a granddog supports mental health; how great one's friends are; to let go of routines involving TCU; appreciation for an amazing, caring neighborhood; how to try dealing with insomnia; to be careful and listen to what the medical people are telling us; how to be more self-sufficient. One of us reports learning how divided this

country is on everything and the negative impacts of the divisiveness. Others felt prompted to reflect more comprehensively, writing that they learned what their priorities are, that they can let go of a lot of activities that formerly felt pretty important but that now seem petty. They learned patience and how to be more flexible; how to better tolerate uncertainty; better sensitivity to all the hardships that so many others are dealing with; gratitude for simple things, awareness of many blessings, immense admiration for the professionalism, courage and expertise on the part of health professionals, a better appreciation for “essential workers”, a better understanding of how connected we all are – all over the planet – economically, socially, and spiritually; how creative people can be – how the huge limitations of isolation or performing remotely somehow bring out even more impressive creativity; how children's art can cheer us up; how much enjoyment comes from being with grandchildren and how bereft one would be without them; how to look to nature to boost one's spirits; how differently each individual or family has made choices regarding public behavior and risk-taking and trying to learn how to tolerate those differences when feeling threatened.

After all, it appears we are still life-long learners, living in pandemic times.

GOOD NEWS / BAD NEWS

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



LINDA MOORE

It seems as we move through the year 2020 that there are many contradictions; things are not always as they seem. We are in the throes of indecision and don't have a handle on the best answers. I hope we have all learned to try to meet challenges, to savor the friendships we have, and to trust that better times are ahead if we work

for them. We on the board appreciate all of your support for the work of TCURA and your comments and insights about how to work best for you. The TCURA board

Zoom meeting in September was a good time to see each other after a long and busy summer and to try to plan, particularly without clear direction regarding next spring. We hope to meet as an organization in the spring perhaps without a traditional buffet but rather a “bring your own lunch” model. We will keep you posted. The present board has worked overtime so we also need to develop a slate of nominees and hold an election for a new board to begin next June. If you are interested please let me or Janet Herald know. We need your energy, your knowledge, and your enthusiasm.

I have good news BUT as it usually happens I also have bad news. Here goes:

- Retirees are going to get lockers back in the Rec

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GOOD NEWS / BAD NEWS

Continued from Page 2

Center and be allowed to come in. BUT Return is dependent on COVID rates dropping to safe levels.

- The Frogs beat UT! BUT they lost to K-State and OSU by one score each
- Enrollment and retention are up which is very encouraging. BUT we now are told the potential drop in students means keeping cost-cutting necessary.
- Texas COVID rates are dropping BUT 22 states are rising fast.
- TCU is awarding the FY 2021 merit increases (decided April, 2020) December 1, 2020 BUT although administrators hoped to provide merit increases retroactive

to their original effective date, June 1, 2020, they could not.

- Our cookbook has been reviewed and the committee is working on revisions. BUT there is no date for final approval but hope remains for the holiday gift season.

The latest news is we had a meeting of the University Compensation Advisory Committee (UCAC) on October 5. We were informed the budget has to be cut to address loss from this year despite enrollment and retention being up. The Board of Trustees wants to lower the percentage of the budget dependent on tuition and probably will not raise tuition costs for the next year. We estimate we will lose \$7 million in athletics. We will have a permanent \$65 million increase in financial aid (so we can compete with Vanderbilt). We did take out a loan to cover COVID costs but have not had to use it. We have

not cut or furloughed any employees although we are not filling openings. Our debt rating is good and much of our debt will be paid in the next 5-10 years as donors fulfill their pledges on buildings. The UCAC is charged with developing strategies for saving money, cutting costs, and making money for the future using entrepreneurial skills. We will be moving forward during the fall semester with few specifics yet. Benefits seem to be off the table permanently so future efforts may have to be to renegotiate benefits. It is frustrating to be thanked for our commitment and our service to TCU without true discussion. But we will continue to assess the state of the university. Please let us know what we should emphasize as we move forward.

Stay safe, keep your sense of humor, and support the Frogs as they represent us all in very strange conditions. Keep in touch and let us hear from you. Thanks!

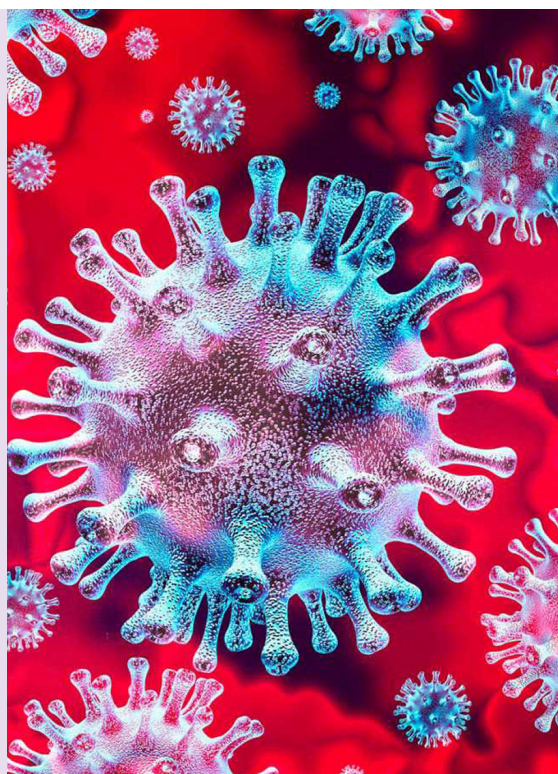
NEW YORK TIMES SURVEY OF COVID ON CAMPUSES

A recently updated New York Times article revealed that there have been more than 178,000 individuals infected with COVID at more than 1,400 colleges and universities in the United States. At least 70 deaths, most of employees, have occurred, but two students died in recent weeks at Appalachian State University and California University of Pennsylvania.

At 45 of the institutions, there have been at least 1,000 cases, and at more than 300 institutions, there have been about 100 cases.

Number of cases at certain Texas universities are: 1,167 at TCU; 1,102 at Baylor; 31 at Texas Women's University, 277 at UNT and 665 at SMU.

[CLICK TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE.](#)



WHAT TO DO WHEN IMPRISONED BY COVID

BY PAUL HARTMAN

Becky and I have managed to reach our 59th wedding anniversary and celebrate our enforced togetherness! We've read a lot of books (my personal favorite Erik Larson's *The Splendid and the Vile*), streamed the best of the Masterpiece Theatre series, Zoomed everything from church to family gatherings, and taken afternoon drives to both interesting and uninteresting places. We've missed most our children coming to visit us, though we've gone to visit them, and going out to restaurants.

"Ol Silver" (my bike) is approaching 21,000 miles, but riding this summer has opened an exciting new scene along the 69 miles to Trinity Trails. In addition to the wildflowers and wildlife that have made every ride a restorative experience, there now is the "Painting the River" project to watch as it develops. Individual artists have been commissioned to paint murals on floodgates all along the bikeway. I've included a couple photos (see right), but I encourage TCURA friends to check out the link below, then grab a bike and go!



PAINTING THE RIVER: A TRINITY TRAILS MURAL GALLERY

[CLICK HERE](#) to read how this gallery aims to "transform utilitarian structures into destinations and provide chance encounters for regular users of the trails."

FROM THE LIGHTER SIDE

SENIOR WEDDING

Bob, aged 92, and Mary, aged 89, were excited about their decision to get married. While out for a stroll to discuss the wedding, they passed a drug store. Bob suggested they go in.

Bob asked to speak to the pharmacist. He explained they're about to get married, and asked, "Do you sell heart medication?"

"Of course we do," the pharmacist replied.

"Medicine for rheumatism?"

"Definitely," he said.

"Medicine for memory problems, arthritis, jaundice?"

"Yes, the works."

"What about vitamins, sleeping pills, Geritol, antacids?"

"Absolutely."

"Do you sell wheelchairs and walkers?"

"All speeds and sizes."

"Good," Bob said to the pharmacist. "We'd like to register for our wedding gifts here, please."

I'm not turning my
clock back an hour on
Nov. 1
because seriously
none of us need an
extra hour of 2020.

DID YOU KNOW? YOU ARE 'SEASONED' IF:

- Your family's car had plastic seat covers!
- You rolled car windows up and down.
- Your family piled into a station wagon for road trips and vacations.
- You listened to transistor radio.
- You remember portable soft bonnet hair dryers.

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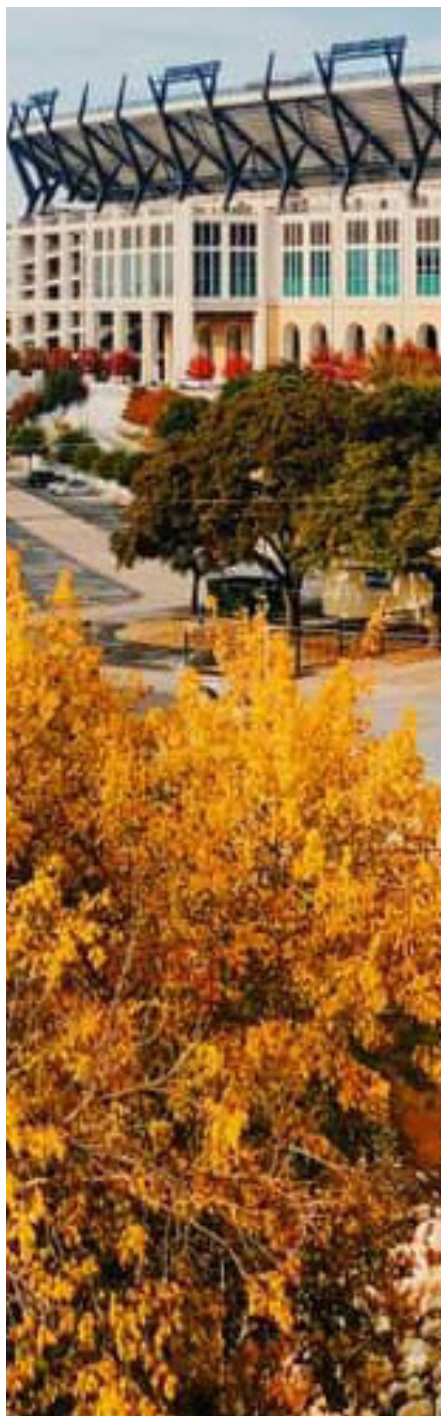
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HEADLINES OF INTEREST

KEY TCU NEWS TO KEEP YOU INFORMED

FIVE TIPS FOR SAFE HOLIDAY TRAVELS DURING THE PANDEMIC

While university travel remains restricted, the holidays are approaching and it is important to remain vigilant if you must travel for personal reasons. We asked Dr. Jane Torgerson, medical director of TCU's Brown-Lupton Health Center, for her top five tips for traveling safely during COVID-19, based on current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

[CLICK FOR MORE...](#)

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION PROFESSOR TALKS DIVERSITY ON TEXAS STANDARD AND NBC

Jacque Lambiase, professor and chair of strategic communication, was recently featured on Texas Standard, KERA News and NBC DFW speaking on the topic of diversity and racially sensitive communication.

[CLICK FOR MORE...](#)

TCU ALUMNUS HONORED IN HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL BUILDING RENAMING

The Harvard Business School announced that it would honor former TCU basketball player and alumnus James I. Cash by renaming a building on its campus.

[CLICK FOR MORE...](#)

NEW 'LEAD ON' CAMPAIGN VIDEO SPOTLIGHTS HORNED FROGS CONTRIBUTING TO THE GREATER GOOD

Now in its fourth year, TCU's Lead On campaign is turning the spotlight on Horned Frogs who are contributing to the greater good. And what's better than Horned Frogs helping to save tiny horned frogs from extinction?

[CLICK FOR MORE...](#)

THROUGH VIRTUAL INTERNSHIP, TCU STUDENT MAKES REAL IMPACT ON ADULT LITERACY

Though social distancing protocols during the pandemic changed the look of Luise Hauptmann's internship with the Tarrant Literacy Coalition, they haven't limited the impact of her experience.

[CLICK FOR MORE...](#)

In Memorium

Eugene J. Alpert
Political Science
October 9

MISSION STATEMENT

The TCU Retirees' Association exists to provide opportunities for fellowship, to promote lifelong learning, to advocate for fair benefits, to recognize the accomplishments of its members, and to strengthen the relationship between the retirees and the University.