

Early May 2020



and Jewish Community Center



Reconstructionist  
Congregation  
Beth Israel *A Contemporary  
Look at Tradition*

# Temple Talk “LITE”

## Bits of News to Stay Connected to the TI-JCC community

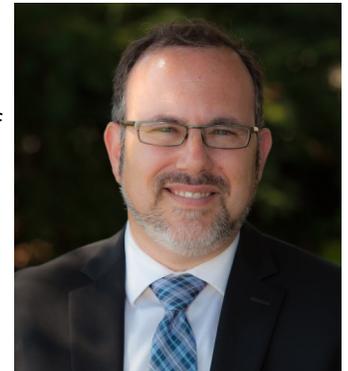
*Editor’s note: As we all maintain a physical distance during the COVID-19 pandemic, we continue to bring you short Temple Talk newsletters to help stay everyone stay connected until we can once again be at TI-JCC.*

### FROM THE RABBI’S STUDY

#### THANKING OUR FRONTLINE HEALTHCARE WORKERS AT VALLEY HOSPITAL ON MOTHER’S DAY

Out of the malaise of quarantine and the COVID-19 crisis comes the courage and heroism of our frontline healthcare workers. A couple weeks ago, Alla decided to thank every staff person at Valley Hospital—doctors, nurses and all employees—who had to work on Mother’s Day with a rose. When I reached out to Audrey Meyers with this idea, she warned me that to cover all the shifts throughout the day, we would need 830 flowers.

I was not worried about raising the money, and I am grateful to all who have or will be donating to my discretionary fund to cover these costs. Preparing each flower was a different story. Alla first had to clean and trim each stem of thorns, and then Ariel and I



went to work with her in wrapping each flower is cellophane, tying a ribbon, and affixing a sticker that read “Thank you! Happy Mother’s Day! Temple Israel and Jewish Community Center.”

Maureen Nassan and her husband Bob Seltsam helped us design and print the labels, and Tina Polen cut ribbon into 850 pieces that we used (we made a few extra).

We turned our garage into a refrigerated flower warehouse (thanks to the cold weather leading into Mother’s Day). At 5:30 on Sunday morning, Laurence and I started loading the flowers into Josh Holden’s pickup truck, and Alla and I delivered the flowers to the hospital where they were distributed throughout the day.

The pictures that I received of Valley Hospital employees smiling underneath their masks as they were given their roses lifted our spirits. Working on the front line on a holiday rather than being home with family can never be easy. This year, our own front-line heroes were a part of our family.



## WORDS FROM RABBI LEIAH MOSER

Spring has been springing out there as a fairly gloomy and cold April has given way to what looks to be a much sunnier May—a helpful reminder that despite everything, the world continues to turn, and we along with it. As the shelter-in-place situation has worn on, folks at RCBI have been settling into new patterns of living and being together in community. We're all becoming real pros when it comes to services on Zoom, and as everyone has grown more confident with this new way of being together, we've started getting a little more ambitious.

Not long ago we held our first Synth Pop Shabbat since we all began to shelter in place (over Zoom, of course), and a fun time was had by all. What tune did we use for Adon Olam this time, you may ask? Why, Billy Idol's "Dancing With Myself," of course!

We've also been looking for ways to reach out and make an impact on the wider world outside of our little community—both as a way to support the folks who continue to go to work outside the home to make our lives safer and easier, and as a way to remind ourselves that that wider world really does continue to exist! To that end, we've been collecting donations to provide medical workers with meals from a local restaurant to make their lives a little easier and show them how much we appreciate what they're doing.

Above all, I continue to be impressed with the ongoing resilience and enthusiasm with which members of the TI & JCC community have been coming together to worship, to mourn, to celebrate, and to learn, despite the stressful circumstances. It is in times like this that people really need a community, and it has been so encouraging to see the way people have been reaching out to support each other in these uncertain times. It's difficult to know exactly how things will develop as spring turns into summer, but one thing is certain: whatever may come, our Temple community will be going strong, growing, learning and caring for each other.

*L'shalom,  
Rabbi Leah Moser*



## IN NEED OF FINANCIAL HELP DUE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS?

The **Paterson Hebrew Free Loan Association** will provide interest-free loans to support individuals and small businesses with financial challenges due to the coronavirus outbreak in Bergen and Passaic counties. Through its COVID-19 Impact Program, PHFLA will provide interest-free loans up to \$3600, due to emergencies because of: lost wages, small-business owner needs, childcare costs due to school closures, or medical costs related to the virus. **To get started, call the Paterson Hebrew Free Loan Association at 201-791-8395.**

## Chesed: Here When you Need Us

The Chesed Committee maintains a collection of gently used medical equipment available for loan by congregants. We currently have canes, crutches, walkers, and a wheelchair. We hope you won't need any of these, but remember us if you do. If you have **gently used medical equipment (small items only)** that you'd like to donate, or if you have need of these items, **call Elyse Levene to make arrangements at 201-306-1283.**

## Reconstructing Judaism's Virtual Shabbat Box

As a pandemic resource, Reconstructing Judaism sends out a weekly virtual Shabbat box to foster Reconstructionist community. It contains materials, essays, meditations, and other resources to add some joy, comfort, and inspiration.

You can access the weekly virtual Shabbat box at <https://www.reconstructingjudaism.org/>; from the Home page go to Connect>Pandemic Resources for the link.





## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear friends:

Social distancing, shelter in place, Zoom, work from home, curbside pick-up, and COVID-19 are all present-day phrases we did not use only two months ago, and now permeate our everyday language. We've had deaths of members, birth announcements, engagements, and a Bar Mitzvah coming up this coming Shabbat, May 16th! Those with school-age children who are learning from home, and parents working from home add to the stress of our activities of daily life. And for those of us who are (were) empty nesters are stressed from our isolation and lack of freedom. Our daily routines are severely disrupted; however, life goes on despite our altered lifestyles. When will we return to "normal?"

Despite our current environment, life and business do move on here at TI and RCBI. Rabbi Leah has been conducting regular Zoom discussion groups over Zoom and Rabbi Fine hosted his preview lecture on Alternative Jewish History over Zoom on May 11.

We have engaged a committee to discuss options for High Holiday services this September in the event social gatherings are restricted. Our Friday night and Saturday morning Shabbat services are well attended. Rabbi Fine makes plenty of time for questions and discussion. Feel free to tune in for any amount of time that works for you; it would be nice to see you!

Sisterhood has planned a Zoom meeting for Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 PM, led by Elaine Silverstein on planting an herb garden; this is bound to be a fun time. The Men's Club had a spirited meeting last Thursday evening that was well attended. The BMC is looking forward to rescheduling the MOY/YOY roast of Josh Holden and honoring Max Rothschild. Jessica has been busy making sure our school programs and classes do not miss a beat, with all classes being Zoomed in. Sue Hill and Nadine Genet remain active with our Tikkun Olam committee in looking after those in our community in need of food or meals. Maureen has been managing our business by processing our payments and receipts to keep us current. Jose and Tina are doing well, too!

I can speak for all members of our board of directors that we are very proud of every one of our leaders for keeping our spirit alive during these times.

**The Temple Israel general membership meeting with elections of new officers will be held on Wednesday, May 27 at 7:30 p.m. (Details on pages 9 and 10).** Please join us that evening and if you have questions on any aspect of Temple Israel & JCC, please let me know by email. All suggestions are always welcome.

*L'hitraot,  
Howard Schreiber, President*

## RITUAL ROUNDUP

Congratulations to Jett Lincoln, our first virtual Bar Mitzvah!

Ritually, we continue to have good turnout to our weekly virtual services. Everyone is welcome, and the choice to broadcast your video is up to you. Here are the times & links for TI's weekly services.

Friday night, 6:30 p.m. <https://zoom.us/j/112730866>  
Saturday morning, 9:00 a.m. <https://zoom.us/j/429158661>  
Sunday morning, 9:30 a.m. <https://zoom.us/j/810221010>

**NOTE: RCBI changes links to its Zoom services weekly and Rabbi Leah sends out an email with the updated info.**

**Remember that Shavuot is coming up with services scheduled as follows:**

Erev Shavuot, Thursday, May 28 at 9:00 p.m.  
Shavuot day 1, Friday, May 29 at 9:00 a.m.  
Shavuot day 2, Saturday, May 30 at 9:00 a.m. (Yizkor at approximately 11:00)



## ADULT EDUCATION

Thanks to everyone who “tuned in” to Rabbi Fine’s preview of his fall class on Alternative Jewish History. There was a Zoom meeting on Monday, May 11 to give members a sneak peek. Here’s a look ahead:

### Alternative Jewish History

Next year, Rabbi’s Fine’s Sunday class will be a survey of “alternative Jewish history,” a series of “what ifs” of key moments in Jewish history and how specific events might have changed historical trajectories. As an introduction to this exploration, the rabbi will discuss Philip K. Dick’s 1962 novel, *The Man in the High Castle*, as well as the four-season Amazon Prime series based on the novel that ended last year. *The Man in the High Castle* imagines an alternative 1960s reality where the Axis won World War II.

At a later date in June Rabbi Fine will discuss Philip Roth’s 2004 novel, *The Plot Against America*, as well as the HBO series based on the novel, which imagines an alternative 1940s America where FDR loses the election of 1940 and an isolationist administration keeps the US out of World War II, resulting in a surge of anti-Semitism in America. Both discussions will focus on the Jewish aspects of the stories.

### COMING UP VIA ZOOM:

#### Seeking God in the Pandemonium, with Rabbi Gloria Rubin

May 14 at 8:00 p.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83930669251>—Meeting ID: 839 3066 9251

Lift your mood. Reach for the heavens. Armed with our siddurim (please have one handy) we will travel together on a heroic journey of insight and self-discovery. What can we find that will lighten our load?

#### Anne Frank: A Living Voice, hosted by Dr. Tamara Freeman

May 21, 8:00 p.m.

*Watch Tidbits for details or check the online calendar*

### CONTINUING VIA ZOOM:

Rabbi Leah’s **Wednesday evening “David” reading group** on alternating weeks and her **Thursday afternoon midrash class** at 3:00 p.m. Check the online calendar and emails for log-in information.



Thank you to Irit Burkeman for her hour-long discussion last Thursday morning on poems that are relevant to today’s current situation. Members joined in over Zoom for “From the Shadow of Corona: A Look at Modern Hebrew Poetry” and enjoyed Irit’s provocative moderation.

Born and raised in Israel, Irit studied literature at Bar Ilan University Tel Aviv. Now living in London, she is a former faculty member of Leo Baeck College there. Irit has presented her workshops in England, Germany, and the U.S. We will look forward to having here join us again in the near future!

**Here is one of the poems she presented and the group discussed:**

Rain after the war, as if it washed away  
The footsteps of Jacob and Esau.  
How can one continue from here on end,  
To breathe the air. Maybe an attempt to beat the sword and the tank.  
To wipe the dust of the destroyed house.  
To plaster a perforated wall.  
To stretch a line so its not thin, thin.  
To stand in the rain, to get really wet  
To swallow the tears water, and footsteps  
And continue to live.

*Pnina Eliani Shuruk*

### Free online learning from YIVO

YIVO’s Shine Online Educational Series fills a critical gap in Jewish Studies education today, with courses that focus on the 1,000 years of Ashkenazi Jewish life and culture in Eastern Europe. These online courses are flexible and interactive, allowing users to study at their own pace and to delve into YIVO’s unique collection of resources. Learn more and register at <https://yivo.org/shine>.

## NNJA News



Wow! It has been an incredible past few months at NNJA.

Our grades 3 through 7 students and faculty seamlessly transitioned to online learning. It has been so special to watch it all happen. At first, we were all a little anxious. This was new, and we'd never tutored students in this way before. What we've learned is that 20 minutes of intense one-on-one attention yields great results! We've had so many students pass tefilah goals. We are so very proud of them.

It's also been wonderful for parents to be able to hear what their students have been working on. We appreciate parent involvement so much. Parents, you have been so incredibly supportive and helpful. *Yasher koach* to all.

Our entire NNJA community is receiving weekly bulletins filled with content (a partial sample appears below). Around Pesach, the content was holiday based. Other times, we've had Jewish values-based bulletins. All offer discussion topics, videos, and crafts to continue Jewish life and learning at home.



Friday 5/1/2020, 7th of Iyar  
Parashat Achare-Kedoshim  
Topic: Shalom Bayit

Since mid-March, we've all gotten very intimate with our own houses. We all live in different houses with different types of families, but one thing remains the same for all of us. We all want peace in the home.

How's the sibling bickering been? Are your students doing their at home school work without much push-back? Does everyone pitch in?

Judaism has a concept called SHALOM BAYIT, which translates to Peace in the Home. Traditionally, Shalom Bayit was referred to between a couple. The couple should treat each other respectfully and with honor, and try to fulfill one another's wishes. Now we speak of Shalom bayit in a broader context that includes all members of the home. And, as we enter week 8 of the new virtual lifestyle, a little shalom bayit might benefit us all!

### Learn some Hebrew: **בַּיִת**

Bayit means HOUSE. An easy way to remember it: That's a nice HOUSE. I think I'll BAYIT. Bayit-house. House- bayit!

Shalom-**שְׁלוֹמ** - Shalom is a super important word to know because it means 3 things: Hello, goodbye, and PEACE! In our context this week, we are using the word SHALOM to mean PEACE, harmony and wholeness.

## Tikkun Olam

Ways to support our greater community

This is a time not only to stay safe ourselves but also to help others in our community who are much less fortunate than we are. Through the Susan Reeves Feeding the Hungry Fund we have donated directly to Social Services of Ridgewood and Ridgecrest Senior Housing. Here are some things you can do:

### Donate

When the coronavirus emergency was first declared, the food pantry at **Social Services of Ridgewood** was cleaned out. Through community donations, it's been restocked, but the need is ongoing. Go to the agency's website at <https://www.ssaridgewood.org/>. Your donation will go directly to people in need in our community.

Many of the residents of **Ridgecrest Senior Housing** are food-insecure and rely on the food pantry and donations to get by. Out of an abundance of caution, Ridgecrest can no longer accept in-kind donations. However, Ridgecrest is in need of financial donations to help offset the cost of the care packages that are being distributed to residents. Here is a link to the website where donations can be made: <https://www.ridgecrestseniorhousing.org/get-involved>.

**S.H.A.R.E., Inc.** is a private, not-for-profit 501(c)3, non-denominational corporation that provides an affordable home-like environment for independent seniors within the Ridgewood community. You can donate money or become a GUEST CHEF by going to <https://shareridgewood.org/covid-19-impacts/>. **CHEFS ARE NEEDED FOR MAY AND JUNE.**



### Give Blood

Despite the current shelter-in-place regulations, FEMA has specifically identified blood donation as an "essential and integral component of the emergency support function." Blood drives are not gatherings: they are blood donation operations that are key to our public health and safety.

Dr. Jerome Adams, U.S. Surgeon General, said Americans need to donate blood to help stave off deaths caused by the pandemic. "One person giving blood can help up to three people and possibly save a life," he said.

### There are several ways to donate blood in our community.

- **Vitalant** has locations in Paramus and Montvale. Make an appointment online at <https://www.vitalant.org/Home.aspx>.
- **The Red Cross**: Find a location and make an appointment at <https://www.redcross.org/give-blood.html>



### Center for Hope and Safety Annual Mother's Day Meal

Thanks to Sue Coleman we continued our tradition of offering a meal for mothers and children at the Center for Hope and Safety—a haven for battered women in the county. While our tradition of having Sisterhood and others provide

home-cooked specialties will have to be resumed post COVID-19, we delivered a fried chicken dinner plus salads and desserts. Many thanks to Chicken Galore in Fair Lawn, which offered significantly reduced prices to support us, plus everyone else who made this happen.



**CENTER FOR  
HOPE AND SAFETY**  
Rebuilding Lives  
Beyond Domestic Violence

***Donations to support any of our food programs can be directed to the Reeve Feed the Hungry Fund at Temple Israel & JCC.***

### RCBI Chesed Project to Support Area Healthcare Workers

Spearheaded by Roz Altman, RCBI has been collecting funds to provide meals to workers at the John Theurer Cancer Center (JTCC) in Hackensack and St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center in Paterson. Thanks to those who already donated, 70 meals were sent to JTCC and we are working on collecting more money to send meals to St. Joe's (where RCBI member Ilene Matza works). If you'd like to contribute, send a check to TI-JCC made payable to the Assistant Rabbi's Discretionary Fund. Let Rabbi Leah know by email or phone when the donation for this has been sent.

## BRANDEIS MEN'S CLUB

We had a successful Zoom meeting on May 7, during which we discussed how to keep the Brandeis Men's Club strong during this new abnormal. The BMC was well represented at the Northern New Jersey Region online meeting on May 4 as well.

We look forward to having others join us for our next meeting, as we continue to think outside the box while inside a box. I send Zoom links out prior to each meeting; we're always happy to have new people help out so please contact me for more information or to get on the BMC list.

Thank you to everyone who supported the Yellow Candle drive!

*Scott Baslaw, president*  
*Scottbaslaw@gmail.com*

### **Pamela Grant is Making "Ear Savers"**

I wanted to do something to help during this pandemic. I couldn't shop for older people as I have suddenly morphed into an "ELDERLY" person. Sewing masks was not possible as I don't have a sewing machine and my needle-point skills are zero.

I was delighted when Kaitlyn Moceri, from the Valley Hospital Volunteer Resources, asked if anybody from the Hospital Yarn Group was willing to make "ear savers." They protect the ears from chafing when wearing a medical face mask all day.

Arlene Bernhardt told me the pattern was on Ravel. I had the yarn, I had the crochet hook, but I didn't have buttons. I called family and friends who kindly dropped off their button tins and boxes. Some buttons were in a beautiful tin with Garcia y Vega cigars stamped on the outside, which Naomi Kahn had given Susan Green for her granddaughters to play with. Susan is also making ear savers. Jewish buttons came in a tin of Barton's Almond Kisses and Ridgewood history with a box marked "Sealfons."

I went from being "ELDERLY" to "YOUNG AT HEART." I spent hours matching buttons made of mother of pearl, wood, plastic, bone, and bejeweled. Some had four holes, some had two, some were shanks and some brass buttons with navel insignias . . . all treasures and all gave me pleasure.

If you have any ¾" to 1" buttons, I would love them so I can carry on with this project.

*Pamela Grant*



**Joseph Feingold z"l**  
**Holocaust Survivor, Violinist and Humanitarian**

*By Tamara Freeman, D.M.A.*

On April 15, Joseph Feingold z"l succumbed to COVID-19 at Mount Sinai Hospital in NYC. He was 97.

Joseph was a man whose story deserves our hearts and attention:

In 2014, Joseph was listening to WQXR, the classical radio station. He was intrigued by an announcement asking for instrument donations, to benefit needy students in the NYC public schools. He decided to donate his violin, an instrument that he purchased in the Zeilshheim displaced persons camp near Frankfurt, Germany. The WQXR recipient of Joe's violin was Brianna Perez, a 12-year-old from the Dominican Republic who was a student at Bronx Global Learning Institute for Girls in the Bronx.

If you would like to see the 25-minute heartwarming story of Joe and Brianna, please enjoy "Joe's Violin," the Academy Award-nominated short documentary at <https://bit.ly/2WkGiU4>.

It is a testament of humankind's ability to transcend hardship and find joy through music and friendship.



*Image: © 2018 Joe's Violin*

**Thank you, Jose & Tina!**

*Thank  
You*

Our two TI-JCC facility managers and mighty warriors are doing well and have been diligently cleaning the building from top to bottom. From disinfecting air vents to stripping and waxing the floors, they've been hard at work so that the synagogue will be a sparkling, inviting place for us all when we return.





# TEMPLE ISRAEL AND JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER



April 6, 2020

Dr. David J. Fine  
Rabbi

Leiah Moser  
Rabbi, RCBI; Assistant Rabbi, TIJCC

Jessica W. Spiegel  
Director of Education

Howard Schreiber  
President

Dear Fellow Congregants:

Despite the ongoing health crisis in our community, or particularly in light of it, it is important that we try as best as we can to continue with some of the more normal aspects of our lives. One aspect of our "normal" routine each May is that we hold our annual membership meeting for Temple Israel & Jewish Community Center. While we may need to adjust just how we go about meeting this year (see below for details), we will hold our annual membership meeting as planned.

The purpose of this letter is to notify you that this year's membership meeting will be held on **Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 7:30pm**, as well as to share the membership meeting agenda (below) and the names of the candidates for officers and trustees who have been nominated by our Nominating Committee (enclosed).

The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Review and approval of 2020/2021 Annual Meeting Minutes
2. D'var Torah, Rabbi Fine
3. President's Report
4. Q&A
5. Motion to elect the proposed slate of candidates as outlined in the April 3, 2020 letter to the congregation from the Nominating Committee
6. Motion to accept Constitutional changes

In addition to the election of officers and trustees for 2020-2021, we will be voting on proposed amendments to the Temple Israel constitution.

**Fact:** As you probably know, for the past five years we have had a partnership with Reconstructionist Congregation Beth Israel. Within this partnership, the RCBI community left their building in Maywood and became a second congregation within Temple Israel & Jewish Community Center. Together with the Conservative community of Temple Israel, we have operated as a single community. When we agreed to this partnership five years ago, we made a series of amendments to our Constitution to accommodate a second congregation within our organization.

The RCBI community has told us that they very much enjoy being part of our community, and I'm sure that everyone receiving this letter feels the same. However, with the five-year term of the initial partnership coming to an end, RCBI's membership has made the decision to switch to a tenant-based model. Temple Israel's Board of Directors and RCBI have agreed upon a framework for this which benefits both organizations and allows us to continue to share space and many aspects of our community.

Reverting to our previous structure will require us to reverse some of the changes to the constitution which were approved five years ago to accommodate our agreement with RCBI which is terminating on June 30, 2020.

**Fact:** While reviewing the constitution to identify these changes, we also identified two other areas of proposed changes. First, a set of changes have been suggested to make the constitution gender neutral (for example, changing "he" or "him" to a gender-neutral term). The second area was to correct misspelled words, stylistic changes, and



*Two Congregations, One Community*

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similar mistakes. The Board does not believe that either of these two groups of changes alters the governance of our synagogue.

The Board of Directors of Temple Israel has voted to recommend the approval of these amendments. The text of the current constitution with the proposed amendments marked in it are attached. It is color-coded for your ease of reference:

**Motion to accept Constitutional changes of:**

The proposed amendments related to RCBI are shaded in green.  
The proposed amendments related to gender-neutrality are shaded in yellow.  
The proposed amendments related to misspellings and the like are shaded in blue.  
Changes without shading are stylistic changes, including auto-numbering of the sections.

Lastly, while we hope to be able to gather in person, we will continue to follow guidelines regarding group gatherings provided by federal, state, county, and local authorities. Given that, we have made plans to proceed with an online meeting using Zoom. The link to the meeting is: <https://zoom.us/j/409770501?pwd=aVNPRXZaWktXdnRSTClORTdRWTRqUT09>. We will be sending this link out by email before the meeting so you can link and join. On that email, we will be including instructions on how to use Zoom for those who are not familiar with Zoom.

We also are making appropriate arrangements to conduct online elections and voting. If we are able to gather in person, we will provide additional notification as well.

You may wish to log onto Zoom as a trial for yourself one Shabbat morning when we are having our services on Zoom! The link is published in the weekly announcements.

We look forward to seeing you, digitally if not physically, on **Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 7:30pm**. Please join us as well for the installation of officers and recognition of those completing their service which will take place at Friday Shabbat services on Friday, June 12, 2020.

Sincerely,

*Matthew Lindenberg*  
Corresponding Secretary

**SLATE OF NOMINEES TO BE VOTED ON AT THE MEETING:**

**Officers**

President	Howard Schreiber
1st vice president	James Goldfarb
2nd vice president	Brian Della Torre
Treasurer	Stephanie Gottesman
Financial Secretary	Merille Siegel
Recording Secretary	Robert Obeiter
Corresponding Secretary	Matt Lindenberg

**Trustees**

Three years: Robyn Berger, Scott Leiman, Evan Weitz  
One year: Nadine Genet, Manny Haber, Wayne Miller

**Continuing to hold office** (terms do not expire this year)

Two years remaining: Elyse Goldman, David Millman, Bob Smolen  
One year remaining: Joe Landau, Johanna Rosen, Alex Rothschild

## A Walk in the Park (with Face Coverings) — By Bob Dworkin

Exercise is important for all of us, perhaps more so now that we are asked to stay home 24/7, except for infrequent trips to the food store, doctor's office or pharmacy.

On Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> the sun was shining brightly and the outside temperature was in the mid-70s with a gentle warm breeze: perfect conditions for taking a long walk. When had I done that last? Don't remember, since my new normal, like the rest of New Jersey's non-essential workers, has been to stay at home.

Off with my house slippers and on with my walking shoes (walking shoes? When did sneakers become walking shoes?). Face covering in hand, I stepped outside, locked my front door, out of habit I suppose, since who in their right mind would come to my door, knock on it, and when there would be no answer, turn the knob and enter the premises. What for? To sell me face masks or hand sanitizer? To rob me of my meager possessions? Are you kidding me? Aren't burglars also afraid of getting COVID-19 from going into a strange house, where they don't know whether or not the owner has the virus and constantly licks all the valuables?

During this pandemic, there are reports of increases in domestic abuse and cyber crimes, but I'm not worried. After all, I live alone and usually don't fight with myself over squeezing the toothpaste tube from the middle or the end. As to cyber crimes, I refuse to open links on email messages from congregants or clergy asking me to lend them money because they are traveling abroad and lost their wallets. Nigerian princes offering to share millions of dollars with me is another story.

All right. Time check: 5:53 PM. I start heading towards Glen Rock's Saddle River County Park, two blocks away. It was closed the last time I drove past it two weeks ago, but now I see cars turning into Allen Street and I realized the park was indeed open, so I wouldn't have to walk around the neighborhood, while avoiding people who might possibly get closer than six feet, the suggested safe distancing requirement.

As I head into the park I put my mask on. It's a surgical mask that a nurse at my eye doctor's office gave me on my most recent visit. Of course I had been wearing a required face covering, one that I made myself weeks ago, when I got there, or I wouldn't have been allowed in.

The nurse took one look at my "mask" and disdainfully asked, "What is that on your face?" I proudly told her it was a mask I made myself from a 9 x 5 inch CVS sterile dressing, with stapled rubber bands at each end to put around my ears, holding it snugly in place. What a strange furrow to her brow. Had she thought it had been a feminine hygiene product I was wearing? Without replying, she simply directed me to the eye exam room and soon returned with a twinkle in her eyes (if she was smiling, I couldn't see it because of the mask on her face), and handed me a brand new surgical mask for me to wear next time.

I estimated about 80% or those walking, bicycling and jogging in the park were wearing face coverings—men, women and children alike. What I didn't see was a face mask on any of the dogs that were being walked, and no raccoons were in sight, with their organically grown personal masks. Don't laugh. I actually saw the cutest little dog in a shopping cart at the Glen Rock Farmers Market wearing a face mask over its snout. What would I have done if there were a sign next to it saying, "Please make a donation?"

Fifty-five minutes later I was safely home, making a mental note that for my next exercise, I had better mow my lawn, which looked like a jungle here and there. And while I was at it, I needed to cut down some low-hanging tree branches.

Yes I was safely home and had very much enjoyed the fresh air. Nobody got within six feet of me. Nobody stopped to say hello or talk. Just an occasional simple nod of the head in recognition of another human being caught up in this Alice-in-Wonderland-like world we have been forced into—temporarily.

And so we are getting used to a new normal. One where we wear a face covering when we go for a walk in the park or on the street, and certainly when entering food stores, pharmacies or doctors' offices. I don't know about you or anyone else I come across, but I am frequently smiling under my face covering.

Stay healthy, stay happy, stay well!

## COMPARISON OF FACE COVERINGS (Compiled by Bob Dworkin)

TYPE OF FACE COVERING	EXAMPLE	PROS	CONS	NOTES
Dust Mask (From Home Depot)		Good for woodworking and construction: Saw dust, Dry Wall dust.	Not for aerosolized liquids like saliva.	
Cloth (May be Home-made)		Protects others from you.	Loose-fitting. <b>Limited protection from others.</b>	Need multiple layers. Make your own: <a href="https://youtu.be/Pl1GxNjAjlw">https://youtu.be/Pl1GxNjAjlw</a>
Scarf		Protects others from you.	Limited protection from others	Need multiple layers.
Bandana		Protects others from you.	Limited protection from others.	Need multiple layers.
Surgical Mask		Intended to prevent transmission of infection from the wearer to others (source control).	Loose-fitting, may leave gaps between mask and your face.	Not a respirator. Disposable.
N-95 Mask		Protects you from inhalation of aerosolized particles. <b>Disposable (single-use).</b>	In Short supply. Fit testing is required <b>not meant for repeated use</b>	Surgical N95: FDA-cleared as a medical device.
Elastomeric Mask		Tight-fitting. May be repeatedly disinfected, cleaned, and reused. Same protection as N95s.	Fit testing and training is required	Half Face Piece Respirator. Made of synthetic or rubber material. <b>Replaceable filter cartridges.</b> Not used in civilian healthcare.