



Orlando *** Winter Park
BRANCHLINE

MAY 2020— BONUS EDITION

We are living through what must be the most difficult time that any of us can or will ever remember.

Our physical, mental, and emotional well-beings are experiencing unknown stresses. The resulting shifts in behavior may remain with us long after the virus is gone. Will shaking hands become as obsolete as the blunderbuss? Will meetings and conferences become extinct? Will Zoom become the new normal?

My own personal stress resulted in an unfortunate omission. Our President's message got lost. And despite long, exhaustive searching through hundreds of emails, the elusive article remained missing. I strongly suspect it may be waiting 6 feet behind another message.

Not wishing to wait until September, since the omitted article is topical, I have chosen to create a "Bonus Edition" for May, which will include Leslie's message, along with some other articles that, due to length, didn't make it into the regular May issue.

Since Covid-19 is not the only thing to go viral, some of my choices may already be familiar to you. (Indeed, my thanks go out to Facebook and those of you who forwarded jokes and cartoons to me!)

Comments I received after the previous issue indicated that most of you enjoyed the humorous features. So despite the seriousness of this global pandemic, I have again chosen to intersperse some humor among the more serious portions.

This is the first time in history we can save the human race by lying in front of the TV and doing nothing. Let's not screw it up!

Remember when we thought we were going to have a bad week because of the time change, full moon, and Friday the 13th? We didn't have a clue!

Definition of irony: gas under \$2 a gallon and no place to go.

Home schooling going well – two students suspended for fighting, one teacher fired for drinking on the job!

In one week, we've seen how healthcare workers, truck drivers and grocery store employees are more im-

portant than athletes, actors and the supposedly famous.

All these kids who have been learning Common Core math are about to learn how to "Carry the One" from their new home school teachers.

Due to panic buying, Walmart has opened register 3.

Pro tip: if you get pulled over, just start coughing.

Also highly contagious is kindness, patience, love, enthusiasm, and a positive attitude. Don't wait to catch it from others . . . be the carrier!



From the President



As I write this column, I vacillate between ‘shouting’ the internationally recognized distress call, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, the requisite three times, or thinking lovely thoughts about MAY DAY, the first day of the Merry Month of May and the international celebrations that mark the beginning of spring— blooming flowers and young women

with garlands in their hair dancing around maypoles. On the other hand, we do not hear much about this other tradition that contrasts with the previous image of



maypole dancers: in England, male Morris dancers wear bell pads on their shins and wield sticks, swords, and handkerchiefs. A contrast in visions.

For most of Europe, May 1 is also International Workers’ Day celebrated as a national holiday much like our September Labor Day. This celebration of workers, the proletariat, has a dark side too as reflected in past protests and rallies citing infringement of their rights or poor working conditions.

History repeats itself—sort of. The similarities and contradictions are many:

1. On May 4, 1886, the Haymarket affair (or riot or massacre) took place in Chicago as workers demanded an 8-hour work day at the same wages they were being paid for much longer days. A peaceful demonstration turned deadly when a



bomb was thrown and rioting ensued. Many other peaceful rallies were held throughout the US. So far workers’ demonstrations to open businesses in the midst of our pandemic have had no violence, although incendiary tweets and signs and guns are evident.



Protesters in Austin, TX

2. In 1886 and now, the philosophy and rhetoric of political fringe, radical groups spurred on protestors. Historically, it was the socialists and anarchists, but today it is the far right.

3. Both protests occurred after a period of economic downturn.

4. The Haymarket riot catalyzed a national wave of xenophobia leading to the arrest of foreign-born ‘radicals’ and labor organizers. The current response was a Presidential Executive Order eliminating almost all immigration to the US.

What will actually happen with both the economy and the pandemic are co-evolving with many unknown factors. The resolution of employment issues will take a while, but the good news is that we are beginning to understand COVID-19. Most people are practicing behaviors to protect themselves and others, many people are financially and materially aiding those most needy— women leading in this effort—and polluted skies around the world are blue again.

Of course another important date to celebrate is May 10, Mother’s Day. So wishing all of our members who are mothers, grandmothers, great grandmothers, godmothers, stepmothers, surrogate mothers, or any other type of mother the happiest of Mother’s Day— even if they are enjoyed virtually.



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WE ARE NOT IN THE SAME BOAT



I heard that we are all in the same boat, but it's not like that. We are in the same storm, but not in the same

boat. Your ship could be shipwrecked and mine might not be. Or vice versa.

For some, quarantine is optimal. A moment of reflection, of re-connection, easy in flip flops, with a cocktail or coffee. For others, this is a desperate financial & family crisis.

For some that live alone, they're facing endless loneliness. While for others it is peace, rest and time with their mother, father, sons and daughters.

With the \$600 weekly increase in unemployment some are bringing in more money to their households than when they were working. Others are working more hours for less money due to pay cuts or loss in sales.

Some families of 4 just received \$3400 from the stimulus while other families of 4 saw \$0.

Some were concerned about getting to Trader Joe's to buy Ginger and Turmeric shots while others were concerned if there would be enough bread, milk and eggs for their families.

Some want to go back to work because they don't qualify for unemployment and are running out of money. Others want to kill those who break the quarantine.

Some are home spending 2-3 hours/day helping their child with online schooling while others are spending 2-3 hours/day to educate their children on top of a 10-12 hour workday.

Some have experienced the near death of the virus, some have already lost someone from it and some are not sure if their loved ones are going to make it. Others don't believe this is a big deal.

Some have faith in God and expect miracles during this 2020. Others say the worst is yet to come.



So, friends, we are not in the same boat. We are going through a time when our perceptions and needs are completely different.



Each of us will emerge, in our own way, from this storm. It is very important to see beyond what is seen at first glance. Not just looking, actually seeing.

We are all on different ships during this storm experiencing a very different journey.

Realize that and be kind.

Unknown author

I was on a long line at 7:45 a.m. today at the grocery store that opened at 8 for seniors only. A young man came from the parking lot and tried to cut in at the front of the line, but an old lady beat him back into the parking lot with her cane.



He returned and tried to cut in again but an old man punched him in the gut, then kicked him to the ground and rolled him away.

As he approached the line for the 3rd time, he said, "If you don't let me unlock the door, you'll never get in there."



Getting nails done in Amsterdam



DEAR DIARY

Day 1 - I Can Do This!! Got enough food and wine to last a month!

Day 2 - Opening my 8th bottle of wine. I fear wine supplies might not last!

Day 3 - Strawberries: Some have 210 seeds; some have 235 seeds. Who knew??

Day 4 - 8 p.m. Removed my day pajamas and put on my night pajamas.

Day 5 - Today, I tried to make hand sanitizer. It came out as Jell-O shots!!

Day 6 - I get to take the garbage out. I'm so excited, I can't decide what to wear.

Day 7 - Laughing way too much at my own jokes!!

Day 8 - Went to a new restaurant called "The Kitchen." You have to gather all the ingredients and make your own meal. I have No clue how this place is still in business!

Day 9 - I put liquor bottles in every room. Tonight, I'm getting all dressed up and going bar hopping.

Day 10 - Struck up a conversation with a spider today. Seems nice. He's a Web Designer.

Day 11 - Isolation is hard. I swear my fridge just said, "What the hell do you want now?!"

Day 12 - I realized why dogs get so excited about something moving outside, going for walks or car rides. I think I just barked at a squirrel.

Day 13 - If you keep a glass of wine in each hand, you can't accidentally touch your face.

Day 14 - Watched the birds fight over a worm. The Cardinals lead the Blue Jays 3-1!!!

Day 15 - Anybody else feel like they've cooked dinner about 395 times this month?!?

Shakespeare was quarantined for the plague when he wrote *King Lear*. We, on the other hand, have whole societies of inventive, creative, imaginative, resourceful citizens as illustrated below.

