

Building a caring community for residents who want to remain in their homes safely and affordably while maintaining a meaningful lifestyle.

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2020

PRESIDENT'S POST



I hope everyone was able to enjoy July 4th in some fashion. My husband, Herb, and I spent most of the day on the phone or on Zoom calls as July 4th is Herb's birthday. It was fun visiting with all the families and then watching beautiful fireworks on Lake Conroe.

In my post last month I outlined our plan to restart our rideshare program in a limited fashion for medical appointments only. Riders and drivers would be required to sign liability waivers and follow safety guidelines to protect both parties from the covid-19 virus. Shortly after our newsletter went out the number of active Covid-19 cases throughout Texas, including Montgomery County, began increasing.

Our Board of Directors acted quickly and decided we could not restart the rideshare program as we had envisioned given the rising number of Covid-19 cases in our community. However, we agreed we would provide transportation for members who need life-saving treatments such as chemotherapy or dialysis.

I am very proud we are a lifeline for our members in need of such necessary healthcare, contrary as other volunteer organizations that have suspended transportation. I am extremely grateful to our drivers who volunteered to provide these rides for our members in their time of great need.

The other day I was wondering how long we have been in various levels of lockdown, social isolation/distancing and mask wearing. It feels like it has been a very long time.

So much has happened. So much has not happened. I was surprised when I realized that we have only been in this situation for 3½ months. The stay at home order for Montgomery County went into effect March 27. I want to think that 3½ months of staying away from people, including our family, friends, and neighbors is a small sacrifice in the big scheme of things. That's true, but it's still really hard being physically separated from our loved ones.

Recently, my son Ted and his girlfriend Amanda who live in Arlington, Virginia, went on a road trip. They have been extremely careful during the pandemic because Amanda has type one diabetes and is at high risk if she contracts the Covid-19 virus. However, on this unusual day they took a special "tour of love" to visit four older relatives who didn't know they were coming. They surprised each one with a personalized hand-crafted poster, keeping a healthy 6-foot distance while outside with their masks on.

Their first visit was to Herb's 91-year-old aunt who lives in an independent living facility in Maryland. Although she is very active and loves to get out, she has been in strict lockdown. Ted and Amanda gave her a call from the parking lot, and she bribed the gal at the front desk to let her out (not really, but close to it!). They held up her poster with early happy 92nd birthday wishes as she was turning 92 in a few days. She was thrilled with the surprise and got an employee to mount the poster on her apartment door.

Next stop was to Herb's parents' home not too far away. They are 87 years old and have not left their home the past few months. They stay in touch with family and friends via Zoom, but they were so happy to see their grandson and his wonderful girlfriend.

Now the road trippers were off to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Amanda's great aunt's home. She also had a recent birthday, so she got a bouquet of flowers in addition to her poster.

The final visit was to Amanda's grandfather Jimbo who lives in an assisted living facility. He recently turned 100 and was interviewed for a local TV news program. Ted and Amanda called Jimbo on his phone, and despite a "Do not open this window" sticker on his bedroom window, he opened it and beckoned the visitors to come closer and talk to him. At that point Amanda burst into tears and could barely say a word to her grandpa. She hadn't seen him in almost a year; couldn't be with him for his 100th birthday and couldn't take off her facemask and give him a hug.

I hope I haven't rambled on too long with this story, but I think it is meaningful in these challenging times. Of course, Ted and Amanda's tour of love was an impressive act of thoughtfulness, but it also demonstrates how much we all miss togetherness even though it has only been 3½ months that we have been physically restricted.

Please do what you can from a distance to stay connected to those you love.

Peggy Reinhold

President, AIP-TW

ZOOM SOCIAL IS A VIRTUAL TRIP TO INDIA'S BOLLYWOOD ON JULY 22



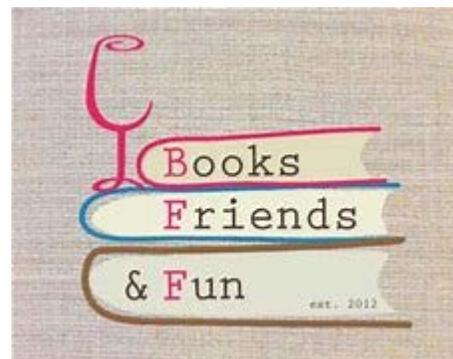
Join host Erika Pratt for a virtual Bollywood-themed social at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, July 22, via Zoom. Set the stage by wearing attire you would see in a traditional Bollywood movie such as a colorful sari, salwar kameez, kurta or dhoti – or simply put a dot (bindi) in the center of your forehead. Erika will provide music and teach us some cool dance moves we might

want to fit into our exercise routine.

RSVP no later than July 21 by sending an email to aiptwtx@gmail.com, or call 281-845-4441. You will receive an email invitation with instructions on how to access the Zoom social. We look forward to seeing you.

BOOK BUDDIES TO HOLD FIRST MEETING MONDAY, JULY 27, VIA ZOOM

Read any good books lately? Our first Book Buddies social will be hosted by former board member **Helen Bostock** at 3 p.m. on Monday, July 27. We will start off with a get-acquainted chat during which members can talk about the kinds of books they read or a book they would like to add to our lending library to pass along to someone else. It will be followed by a brief discussion of *Extra Time: Ten Lessons for an Ageing World* by Camilla Cavendish. Details on how we will handle book exchanges will be ironed out in the Zoom meeting or supplementary emails or texting. Look for the Zoom access code in your inbox closer to the date or call or email our virtual office for more information: 281-845-4441; aiptwtx@gmail.com.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: MEET NEW MEMBER JANET GHOBASHY



Janet on one of her last visits with her father before he passed away.

If **Janet Ghobashy**, a retired dentist, ever wasted a minute it would be hard to prove. “I like to keep busy all the time,” she says cheerfully during a telephone interview. Before Covid-19, she spent some of her prodigious energy in swimming, aerobics, and fitness classes at the local YMCA. Now she exercises at home and takes walks. Like all of us, she can’t wait to resume her social life, start traveling again, eating out, and enjoying various cultural events.

Ironically, Janet joined AIP-TW shortly before our services and social programs were halted because of the pandemic. Peggy Reinhold, who visited Janet before the lockdown, says she was impressed with her eye-hand coordination for activities that take a lot of patience such as sewing and needlepoint.

As busy as she is, Janet agreed to share her advice on maintaining good oral hygiene, especially when health authorities are urging older people to stay home. (See below.)

Janet’s life’s journey began in Guayaquil, Ecuador, where she was raised and went to school. After graduating top of her class as Doctor of Odontology in 1969 from the University of Guayaquil, she was accepted into the postgraduate dentistry program at New York University where foreigners must have top grades to be admitted.

“After moving to New York City and studying there for a little while I ended up falling in love with the city and decided to stay there after my studies,” she says.

She applied to the American Dental Association to get her license to practice dentistry in the U.S., a process that took four additional years. During that time she met a dentist from Cairo, Egypt, who was also trying to get his license. They married soon after and eventually opened their own practice in Westchester, New York. They had a daughter and later adopted twin boys.

“At this point things got really busy both in my professional and personal life. I worked both in my office in Westchester and in a nursing home in New York City,” she recalls. Luckily, her mother came from Ecuador to help with the children.

After 22 years of marriage she and her husband separated, and she took over the dental practice until retiring in 2011. She moved to Houston to be near her daughter, a medical doctor. Janet lives in The Woodlands with her son, a physical therapist, who works long, flexible hours so she is on her own much of the time. She was busy sewing custom-designed pajamas for her three grandsons when we talked. Please say “hello” to Janet during our next Zoom social.

HOW TO KEEP SMILING BETWEEN VISITS TO THE DENTIST

Editor's note: Many of us are postponing dental appointments while the number of Covid-19 cases continues to rise locally. We asked retired dentist Janet Ghobashy for tips on how to keep our mouths clean and healthy until our next visit to the dentist. Are you aware that research has shown that people with poor dental hygiene or gum disease could be at higher risk of developing Alzheimer's disease? And when was the last time you sterilized your toothbrush? Did you know that simple household products like salt and baking soda can play a part in dental hygiene? Read on for Janet's timely advice.

Advice on Proper Oral Hygiene

Gum disease is the leading cause of tooth loss. Bacteria from gum inflammation gets into the blood stream and can cause heart problems and lung disease. Research has indicated that chronic periodontal infection is a contributing factor to Alzheimer disease and other forms of dementia.

Maintaining routine oral care is crucial, especially at bedtime. Start your routine rinsing with water or your favorite mouthwash. Do not rinse with water after using mouthwash because it dilutes the cleansing and strengthening benefits. Avoid alcoholic mouthwash because it isn't particularly effective against gum disease or bad breath. Causes of bad breath are post nasal drip caused by hay fever (allergic rhinitis), respiratory and tonsil infections.

Tongue cleaning is a good addition to your oral hygiene routine. Using a tongue scraper, tooth brush or oral rinse to clean your tongue once or twice a day may help reduce bad breath and the risk of cavities as well as contribute to a clean mouth feeling. A good way to clean the tongue is by using salt. Put a little salt on the tongue and gently brush it around with a wet brush for a minute or two. The salt removes dead cells and bacteria.

Rinsing the mouth three or four times weekly with salt and water has been shown to be effective for keeping your mouth healthy. Mix half a teaspoon of salt in 2 ounces of lukewarm water and swish the water around for a few seconds to rinse your mouth.

Flossing is very important because a toothbrush cannot effectively penetrate between the teeth. If you have fixed bridges or dental implants, use a simple interdental brush to remove debris, rinse with water or mouthwash, and brush.

Be extra careful to keep your toothbrush sanitized, especially during the current Covid-19 pandemic. Mix 2 teaspoons of baking soda in a cup of water and soak the brush for 15 minutes, rinse with water and let it air dry. Alternatively, you can soak the brush in mouthwash for 15 minutes. Any longer than that could damage the bristles. To clean full or partial dentures, a solution of half white vinegar and half water is a good option. Soak the dentures for 3 to 5 minutes, then thoroughly rinse using a denture brush. Also, baking soda can be used to remove offensive odors in dentures.

Janet has graciously offered to discuss your dental health with you privately. Call or email the AIP-TW office, 281-845-4441 or aiptwtx@gmail.com. Our on-duty call manager will relay your message and contact information so she can get in touch with you.

Our Topsy-Turvy World: A Temporary Response to COVID-19
By Vicki Bradley

What was free is unavailable (people).
What was off limits is free (stimulus check, virtual items like an HBO movie).
What was expected is denied (working).
What was denied is expected (staying home and goofing off).
Inaction is action (“Stay Home” Save Lives).

Editor’s Note: Vicki is a member and volunteer. If you have something you would like to share with others, such as a poem, essay, joke or photo, please email it to our virtual office at aiptwtx@gmail.com and indicate it is for the newsletter.



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the Village to Village
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