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# Time Passing in the Time of COVID-19

by Martha MacLachlan

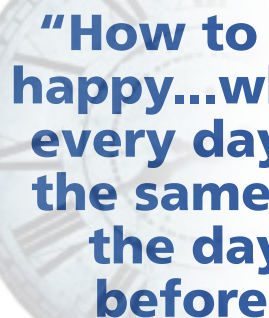
We begin each day with the ominous COVID hovering over us, the repercussions controlling how we conduct our daily activity. The new normal is well, normal now. We've been fear filled, legally imposed upon. We offer no resistance. We have coalesced.

Inside our beloved Homewood the bustle of residents coming and going has lessened. Passing a neighbour in the lobby becomes the highlight of the day. In our hallways we sometimes catch sight of a resident speed walking to the exit door, doing the stairs is the workout de jour.

On one of those essential walks to pick up provisions, I encounter a neighbour. Standing two metres away from her I listen to her complaint. "Loblaws is open for shopping to seniors from seven to eight each morning but the LCBO doesn't open until 11 a.m.", chagrin in her voice. I concur that this is a valid complaint if they want seniors to minimize going out and then I laugh. It feels good.

Laughing that day helped relieve the heaviness in my heart. I know of two residents recently hospitalized (not COVID related), one with expected recovery, one in palliative care, both alone with no visitors allowed. We are rendered impotent

while our vulnerable fellow citizens, captive now in long term care homes, are dying, with the absence of loved ones at their bedside. Every day is a numbers game as we check the news for the daily update of positive cases. The dips in the stock market are no longer the headline.



**"How to be happy...when every day is the same as the day before?"**

Life is what matters. We can live with less money; we can't live with COVID suppressing our ability to breathe.

The longer this goes on, the more the conspiracy theories abound. I no longer know if it's a pandemic or bio-chemical warfare, an evil plot emanating from who knows where, to collapse capitalism, to destroy the western world, add what you will to the list. A security guard out-

side of the Shoppers at Yonge and Charles, tells me Bill Gates inflicted COVID. I extract myself from this sheer stupidity and walk away.

How to be happy – what an empty word – when everyday is the same as the day before, no change in sight, no power to make that change, with spring not even bothering to weave its magic. Each morning, as I make leave of my bed and rearrange the covers, I think ahead to night time when I will be able to go back to bed and wake up to the next day, when maybe time will be finally rendered back to how it was.

In my head an earbud raises me up from the gloom, and I seek the song, 'Pocketful of Sunshine' by Natasha Bedingfield, [here on YouTube](#).

And I dance like no-one is watching, and I sing out loud, like no-one is listening, *"Take me away, a secret place, a sweet escape, take me away, take me away, to better days..."*

In the time of COVID, time stands still, but there is nowhere else I'd rather be, suspended in time, than with all of you here at Homewood. Stay safe. Be patient. This too shall pass.



# Questions & Answers

• TO AND FROM •

## the Board & Management

prepared by Brian Brenie

**Q: I want to install an air conditioner in my window. Is there anything special I should know?**

It's May and we expect more and more window air conditioners being installed. The following was published last year and is re-published here to help protect the sliders in our windows.

If you want to install an air conditioner please be sure to use the metal shelf provided last year or get a metal shelf from the management office to fit under your air conditioning unit. This shelf will protect the fragile metal sliders in the windows. If you have not previously picked up a shelf from the office please contact them to get one. If the window sliders get damaged, the cost to repair them will be charged to the unit owners. Please be mindful of the window sizes and ensure your air conditioning unit is the proper size for your window. We've seen very heavy air conditioners installed in windows and they have bent the new window frames.

**Q: Why were the gym and other common areas closed in mid-March?** The gym, party room, library, meeting room, patio and lobby seating areas were closed on advice from city and Toronto Public Health and Provincial notifications.

We have curtailed contractors coming into the building, except in emergency situations. We have also been told that contractors providing essential emergency services will not enter private residences at this time. Open houses have also been stopped and we ask that, if possible, you request delivery people meet you in the lobby to collect

any deliveries you may receive. We hope everyone is maintaining physical distancing and washing hands often with soap and water.

**Q: Who do I contact when the office is closed if I have a suite or building emergency?**

The office hours are 9 am to 6 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On Wednesday the office remains open until 7 pm to accommodate those who need to make arrangements with office staff after normal business hours. When the office is closed please contact security at 416-771-7529. We have 24-hour security available to assist you. Please note that until the COVID-19 crisis is over the office staff members work alternate days and the office is open for 10 minute time periods at 10 am, 2 pm, 4 pm and at 6 pm (Wednesdays only).

## OFFICE REMINDERS

**Feeding pigeons and squirrels on the grounds is prohibited**

**Dogs should be walked off the grounds and not on the grass on site**

**Q: I see you've installed accessibility buttons in the B2 garage and front door area. Thank you.** Yes, just before the COVID-19 outbreak we had contracted to have these accessibility buttons installed. We hope they are helpful for those wishing to avoid door handles for entering or exiting the build-

ing. Please tap the button with an elbow, a knuckle or key to open the door. Please do not use your feet to activate these buttons. They are cleaned by staff regularly and security is regularly cleaning the front door handles, intercom screen and accessibility buttons numerous times per shift.



**Q: I've got a blocked kitchen drain and tried all household procedures but think I need a plumber. Should I just call any plumber or does the condo corporation have a preferred plumber?**

When a kitchen drain is clogged and you've exhausted all options to unclog it such as using a plunger or drain opening chemicals then your best option is to call in a professional. Our residents should contact our plumbing contractor to do this. Currently our main plumbing contractor handling in-suite plumbing issues is Mainline as found on our website as follows:

**Mainline Plumbing**  
**905-761-0073**  
**Emergency Hotline:**  
**1-877-761-0073**  
**info@mainlineplumbing.com**

Our plumbers will ask for a payment option such as a credit card number before arriving on site. This is to ensure payment should the blockage be related to the drain pipes attached to your sink and not a blockage in the building drain stack. The plumber can determine whether a blocked drain's obstruction is within the drain pipe or the stack and if found in the drain pipe the owner or resident is responsible for the service call. If the blockage is determined by our plumber to be in the stack and not the drain pipe then Mainline will invoice the condo corporation and not the resident.

There are a few units on each floor that have a particular drain pipe design where two units' drains

merge before reaching the stack. In these cases the owners of the two neighbouring units would be responsible for contacting the plumber and sharing the cost of unclogging the drain if the blockage is before the stack. If you are in one of these units you're asked to contact the building's plumber directly.

If the plumber determines the blockage is found to be in the drain pipe then the bill will be charged to the unit owner or resident who called Mainline. The two neighbours would then have to settle up to share this cost. As with the example above, if the plumber

finds the blockage further on in the stack then the plumber will not charge the owner or resident but will bill the condo corporation. Blockages are usually related to what people put down the drain and very infrequently will they be stack related.

Please try to keep your drains unclogged by using a baking soda and vinegar solution in them every month. This should be followed by a kettle of boiling water. You could also use the hot water remaining in your kettle after making a cup of tea by pouring this water down the drain to help it stay clean. These tips may help to keep your drains running smoothly as well.

Be aware non-licensed plumbers are not permitted to work on any plumbing issue or installation

in our building. If contracting with a plumber that is not on our approved list they must present their credentials to the management office before engaging in any work on site.

## OFFICE REMINDERS

**Check your balcony to make sure there aren't places for pigeons to nest**

**Thank you, everyone for helping out and making a great community!**

# DIY Home Cleaning Product Recipes

by Michael Csiki

## Scented All-Purpose Cleaner

- One part white vinegar
- One part water
- Lemon rind
- Rosemary sprigs

**Directions:** Combine in a spray bottle and shake well.

**Caution:** Do not use acidic cleaners on granite, as they will etch the stone.

**Note:** this recipe is not a disinfectant. You can find other recipes online for your needs.

## Glass Cleaner

- 2 cups water
- 1/2 cup white or cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup rubbing alcohol 70% concentration
- 1 to 2 drops of essential oil for scent (optional)

Great for windows and mirrors, combine these ingredients and pour them in a spray bottle.

**Hint:** Don't clean windows on a hot, sunny day, because the solution will dry too quickly and leave streaks. For mirrors, spray the solution on a soft cloth first before wiping.



# Guerilla Gardening for the Pollinators

by Lisa Ricciuti

Due to the unforeseen circumstances, we are unable to meet, plan, and collaborate on the pollinator garden this season. To continue last year's success, we came up with a few ways people can still participate with the pollinator garden while maintaining social distance.

1. Be a guerilla gardener – plant your own contributions directly in the designated pollinator garden area wherever you see a space. Or plant some seeds.

2. Alternatively, if you have plants, seeds, or just want to donate some money to the garden, please reach out to the Green Committee directly and we'll coordinate a socially distanced handoff.

3. Go down and water the pollinator garden anytime. We had a hard time keeping up with it last year.

4. Leave the milkweed alone! It was whacked down twice last year destroying many monarch eggs and their only food source.

5. Have a balcony garden and plant a few things for the pollinators. Some people have seen butterflies above the 20th floor.

We're grateful for all donations, but please try to contribute plants – or seeds – that are indigenous whenever possible.



Brushes & Cocktails by Donna Y

Brushes & Cocktails is becoming even more virtual. I'll be doing a live event on **May 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm**. If you wish to attend please email me to let me know. If you need supplies, (a brush set, a paint tube set and 2 canvases), they're available for \$20 and will be delivered to your door the day before the live event. I will not be charging for the courses, as

## On YouTube 'Escape to Africa'



I know many can't work right now and money is tight. If you're feeling generous, these online sessions are a 'pay what you can'. A new video is on my YouTube channel. Click here to go to **B&C on YouTube**, or look for 'Brushes & Cocktails Paint Events'. Please let me

know if you are joining and a link for the paint night will be provided. Email me at:

[info@brushesandcocktails.ca](mailto:info@brushesandcocktails.ca)



## If you have a hoard of empties...

(...& Lord knows I do! 😞😞)

Why not donate them to the Gardening Committee, once we have the all-clear, so they can buy plants & supplies?

**Donation day & time to be announced...**



## the 40 Homewood Spring Cleanup

**May 9th at 10 am**

(Rain Date: May 10th at 10 am)

Let's work together and do a spring cleanup of the grounds, the length of a hockey stick apart from each other. We'll meet on Saturday, May 9th at 10 am in front of the building, to be supplied with a bag and gloves. We can fan out over the property to pick up debris and garbage that has blown onto the property or has been left by inconsiderates.

**Hope to see you then!**

*Mother's Day*  
Sunday May 10

*Victoria Day*  
Monday May 18

## Spring Cleaning during the Pandemic

by Lisa Ricciuti

For many of us, spring can be a great time to give your place a thorough deep clean. Sometimes that includes going through your personal belongings and putting aside items to donate or gift. With the Oasis Bin, Free Boutique, and other donation options unavailable for a while, it makes this second project challenging, unless you have space available to store the give-away items.

As an alternative to the usual purging areas like closets, drawers, and shelves, consider going through the kitchen and bath-

room instead. Unlike clothes and personal effects, food and bathroom products sometimes expire so use them up while they're still good. By doing so you may be able to delay a trip to the store and save some money.

Another option is to "deep clean" your electronic stuff e.g., emails, documents, bookmarked links, contacts, digital photos, etc. This can easily be done while maintaining social distance and won't create additional follow up tasks, like visiting the recycling room.

For tips and tricks on getting started, check out these blog posts at [thedeletist.com](http://thedeletist.com):

**Purging in the Time of Pandemic: Physical Stuff**

**Purging in the Time of Pandemic: Electronic Stuff**

**Bathroom Hoarder**



## To Martha, & all the 'Marthas' at 40 Homewood

by Esther Podoliak

You must be made  
from saintly material –  
you go out here and there –  
it doesn't matter where,

to satisfy the grocery needs  
of those you come and serve,  
and sometimes what we're asking for –  
you'd think we have a nerve.

But here we are shut up at home,  
too old to venture out,  
for we could catch that awful bug –  
there seems to be no doubt.

# good eats,<sup>cheap eats,</sup> sweet spots

by Dr. Cammy Lee-Bostwick

As we continue to socially distance and stay indoors, I share another recipe this month. And like the last one, this dish makes use of items many may already have. I offer you:

## The Best Tuna Casserole

### Ingredients

- 2 cups pasta, uncooked (or 4 cups cooked)
- 1 can tuna
- 1 can of cream of celery soup (cream of mushroom works too)
- 1 can of water
- 1/2 cup + 1 tbsp of mayonnaise
- 1 tbsp butter
- 2 or 3 celery stalks chopped fine
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 cup of shredded cheddar (save some for topping)
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs (or croutons)

### Directions

- Preheat oven to 325 degrees.
- Using oven-safe pan, cook the vegetables in butter till browned, about 5 minutes.
- Meanwhile, cook pasta according to instructions – macaroni works well, or penne – something that the sauce will hold onto.
- Add the pasta to the vegetables. Add a can of water (pasta water works well), the mayo, and half of the cheese. Mix through. Top with bread crumbs (I put croutons in a blender) and remaining cheese. Bake for 35 minutes.
- Serve with vegetable of choice (or not!)

**I call this the “Best” because I’ve tried many... and people, this one is it!**

**Enjoy!**

## Delivery and Takeout Container Disposal in COVID Times

by Michael Csiki

When you receive a delivery, I suggest preparing a clean surface in your kitchen, and then transferring your food contents from takeout containers to a plate or a clean container.

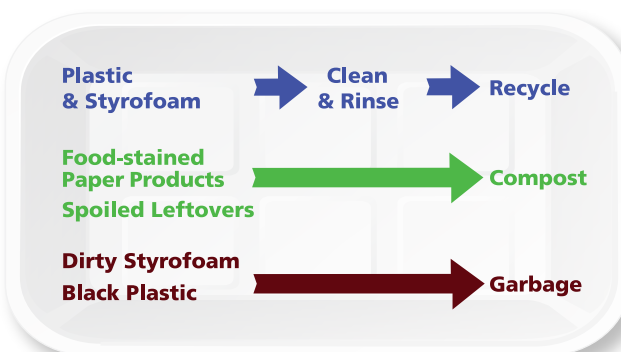
Once your food is transferred, place the empty container in a sink full of soapy water. Let it soak, and clean any food residue from it.

**Paper containers or boxes can be placed in a plastic bag and composted as normal.**

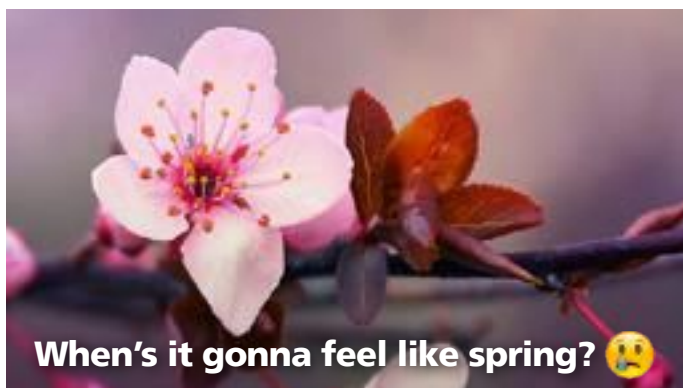
**Reminder: black plastics go into the garbage.**

**Think of ways to reuse clean takeout containers for future use.**

**When ordering, say no to single-use items such as utensils or condiment packets, such as ketchup. If you don’t need them, there’s no need to collect them.**



for the full unedited article, visit  
[www.goodeatscheapeatsandsweetspots.ca](http://www.goodeatscheapeatsandsweetspots.ca)



When's it gonna feel like spring? 🤔