

# Letters to the Library



**Describe yourself in a sentence or two, for example your age and occupation (or, if you do not have one, what you like to do). What is your household like?**

I am retired from what I consider the best career ever. Missed working so I went back part time and also volunteer in my career field. Moved here a few years ago to be near family. Have a grandchild I adore and miss so much during this pandemic.

**What is your day to day routine like now? What has changed? What has not changed?**

I continue to stay close to home, get outside to walk the neighborhood on nice days, continue with my yoga practice through online classes. At the beginning of this quarantine, I had lots of energy and got a lot of house projects done. As the weeks passed, though, I lost some enthusiasm and it now takes me longer to attack a project and complete it. I do feel so grateful when I do! Other than sleeping in and taking my time over morning coffee and news programs, my days have no set routine. I do whatever my mood can handle.

**What precautions have you taken against the virus? How have you prepared? Were there**

Early on I was very careful to wash hands frequently, wipe down surfaces at home and wipe down items that came into the house. Now I am more relaxed about that when days go by and I just stay home. I do go out for groceries every other week or so and wear a mask and wipe down the cart, use hand sanitizer, etc. On my walks I take a mask, but rarely pass anyone so don't bother to wear it. I have only been to my son's home twice, stayed outside the first time and was less careful the second when I went inside and stayed a little longer. Came home and worried, so vowed to self-quarantine for two weeks! I have been very fortunate to have everything I need, and I am able to pay my bills. Though furloughed from my part time job, I still have social security and pension income. I am very lucky in that respect. I have made numerous donations to local food bank and other organizations, especially when the stimulus check came. I felt I did not really need it, so gave some away.

## **What have been the biggest challenges for you during this time?**

Not being able to see my son and his family, my grandson, in person. They still go to work, so I am not comfortable being in their presence. But I have had little problem being home all this time. I am an introvert by nature and love my alone time. It has been easy to communicate with friends and family on social media, which I have done more than before the pandemic. And I found a delightful online program that lets my grandson and me interact, chat, draw pictures and read books together. It has been a life saver for me. I have been sad to lose my job and the volunteer work. Those things kept me connected to the community and helped me feel useful and got me out of bed some days! I have also missed being able to think about my next trip and plan visits with family and friends who live far from me. I usually would be planning an overseas travel as well as booking a trip or two to visit someone. But that is all on hold, so I am not even thinking about it.

## **How have you stayed busy?**

As mentioned, I had a lot of energy at the beginning and got right into some major home projects, painting and deep cleaning and re-organizing closets, deleting hundreds of email. About week three the enthusiasm for all that was greatly reduced. So I attack the projects on the list I made at a much slower pace. Some days I just don't want to do anything! But I am so happy when a project is completed that it motivates me to start the next one. These are things I have put off during non-pandemic time. I also finally have been able to read... could not focus the first few weeks. I watch a good amount of television and Netflix. And I walk and do yoga. And I am revisiting my genealogy research which I abandoned when I moved here.

## **Have there been any positives to this situation?**

For me, more positives than negatives: being forced to slow down, and to see the world slow down and quiet, families and people having time together. I have loved witnessing how people embraced this time, have reached out to help and entertain and engage with one another. I know my neighbors better because we stop to chat (at a distance) when before we might just pass one another with a hello. I love that I have finished projects that I have wanted to do forever. And for me personally, I have loved that my days are totally my own. No one expecting me to be anywhere, and the gift of not just hours, but days with no agenda. The first weeks of this, I was amazed at how quiet it was on my walks... no traffic noise, no hum of the highway in the distance, hardly a car passed me. It was lovely thinking of the earth breathing a sigh of relief!

## **What local Wallingford places/businesses do you miss most?**

Really, just the library. Any store or food place I need has been available. Well, maybe the movie theater. And I will always miss Gigantes Too now!

### **How have you stayed social while social distancing?**

Using social media (FaceBook), Face Time and Zoom, much more than before the pandemic. I connect with friends and family who live far away much more than ever.

### **What is the first thing you are doing when things go back to normal?**

Having my grandson for a sleepover! We miss our together time. And spending time with my son and daughter-in-law. Then I will plan my next trip and go to visit friends and family.

### **How did you celebrate the Holidays? Did you see family in person, digitally, or not at all?**

I went to my son's house, they came outside and we spent just an hour visiting at a distance. Did a zoom meet up with other family.

### **How will you be celebrating Wallingford's 350<sup>th</sup> Jubilee? If you were here for the 325th Jubilee, do you have any memories you would like to share?**

N/A

### **What do you miss most about the Wallingford Public Library? What is the first thing you will be doing when you can come back into the building?**

Being able to borrow material! Can't wait to just browse the shelves.