

# PURA News

Purdue University Retirees Association

April 2020

## COVID-19 Info From UnitedHealthcare (For PURCare and PURA Medicare Advantage Plan Members)

This is a time of concern and uncertainty for us all. Hoping to allay some of the stress and concern, UnitedHealthcare (UHC) has informed PURA that their top priority is the well-being of their health plan members and the safety of those who deliver healthcare.

UnitedHealthcare is aligned with guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) and is taking actions to insure that those affected by COVID-19, including Purdue retirees covered by PURCare and the PURA Medicare Advantage plan, have the support and resources they need. For updated information, please visit <https://www.uhc.com/health-and-wellness/health-topics/covid-19>

In summary, the following is of significant interest:

UHC has waived all member cost sharing-including copays, coinsurance and deductibles for approved diagnostic testing for COVID-19 for all commercial insured, Medicaid and Medicare members who may be affected by COVID-19.

UHC will cover a provider visit for COVID-19 in the same way it covers other provider visits based on health benefits plan. Where available, UHC, is encouraging a Virtual Visit with a provider.

You have probably heard this many times already, but the following is most important information:

### STAY INFORMED

Those at highest risk are older adults and those with serious health conditions. Protect yourself:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with others--especially with those who are sick.

- Clean and disinfect things that you touch often.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or your sleeve. Place used tissues into trash.
- If you feel sick, stay home.

We hope that this information will be helpful to you. We encourage you to visit the above web link frequently for updated information. Be careful and stay well!

## PURA Events Cancelled

In keeping with other Purdue efforts to protect the health of the Purdue community in the wake of the COVID-19 virus pandemic, PURA events are cancelled until further notice.

When activities are able to resume, PURA will update the membership via email, the newsletter, and our website: <https://www.purdue.edu/retirees/>

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## PURPOSEFUL LIVING IN RETIREMENT CANCELLATION

We were sorry to cancel the PLIR conference set for April 22, 2020. In compliance with both Purdue and local requests not to hold meetings for groups over 50 attendees, and the fact that our ages place us in the most vulnerable risk group, we must be “better safe than sorry”.

Due to all the uncertainties posed by this health issue, rescheduling is just not possible. Our planned program was so good that it will be just as relevant in 2021, and our speakers are interested in participating at next year’s conference depending on the availability of their schedules.

The PLIR committee was going to invite attendees to wear tee shirts with a humorous saying or a favorite sports team to the PLIR conference. We were going to present a program during the noon hour for your entertainment with selected tee shirt sayings that were humorous or imparted wisdom. We are taking this opportunity to leave you with some humor, badly needed in this time of uncharted territory in our country. Below are listed some of the tee shirt sayings we did NOT choose for our noon program.

You’ll have to attend the 2021 conference to see what we did choose to entertain you. We hope you will enjoy these and start planning your tee shirt for the 2021 conference.

“You know that little thing inside your head that keeps you from saying things you shouldn’t? Well, I don’t have one of those.”

“To me Drink Responsibly means Don’t Spill It”.

“I can only please one person per day. Today is not your day. Tomorrow doesn’t look good either!”

“I may be wrong, but I doubt it!”

“We don’t have bottled water. We grew up using a garden hose.”

“I’m not old...I’m 25 plus shipping and handling!”

Olivia’s favorite: “I’m on my second guardian angel. My first one quit and is now in therapy.”

We hope to see you at PLIR in 2021!

*From Olivia Wood, Chair, PLIR Committee*

## Corns, Calluses and Neuromas—Oh My!

Last month we addressed the care of our feet. In this article we will address a few common foot problems and how to care for them. Corns, calluses and neuromas will be the first of the series.

Corns most commonly appear on the sides and tops of our toes. Calluses tend to appear or form on the bottoms or soles of our feet. Both corns and calluses are caused by the bones of our feet rubbing against our shoes. The best time to care for corns and calluses is after bathing when the skin on the foot has been softened by the water.

Rubbing a pumice stone on these areas will help reduce the size and take any hardened area of skin off. Also, some over-the-counter remedies are available in the foot care section of your local stores. Do not shave corns or calluses since this may lead to infection, especially if you have diabetes or circulatory problems. You may apply non-medicated foot pads to these areas to protect from constant rubbing. At times a simple band-aid will protect a small area on the foot.

Padded soft shoes are a better choice of footwear when you have corns and calluses. It is best to wear socks with your shoes to prevent the skin from rubbing on the insides of your shoes.

Neuromas are inflammation of a nerve. Neuromas may occur anywhere in the body and produce numbness,

tingling and pain. The most common type of neuroma in the foot is called Morton’s neuroma, which most often occurs between the third and fourth toe.

Repetitive movement such as running or tennis may cause foot neuromas. Pain may start out sporadic and then become continuous. The pain can last for months and it may give you a feeling of a small rock in your shoe. You may experience pain in your heel or toes upon standing.

Self-care includes applying ice, changing to more comfortable shoes, taking ibuprofen, rest and stretching exercises. You may also apply an insert in your shoe. Often healthcare providers may be able to provide a custom made insert that is exact to your foot.

Healthcare providers may also inject corticosteroids into persistent neuromas. A surgical procedure can also be done that includes cutting around the nerve to take some tissue pressure off of the nerve. An ultrasound can diagnose a Morton’s neuroma or soft tissue problem in your foot. Wearing soft padded athletic shoes are best for balance and neuroma pain. Morton’s neuromas are more common in women and this may be due to women wearing high heels.



*Author: Chris Rearick, MSN, RN, Nursing Center for Family Health, 496-0308*

## PURA March Monthly Meeting Recap

Dr. Greg Knipp, Professor of Pharmacy presented the March program on “Challenges of Delivering Effective Therapies to Mitigate Neurodegenerative Disorders (Dementia, Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s Diseases)”.

As a society, we are living longer lives due to our improved quality of healthcare. However, we are also seeing significant increases in many neurodegenerative disorders including dementia, Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s Diseases, and other problems with brain function.

Treating these maladies is complicated by the fact that the blood vessels in the brain often limit the ability of new medicines to reach the site of action. He discussed this blood-brain barrier and the role it plays in influencing how effective therapies may be for mitigating neurodegenerative disorders.

He mentioned the following items for prevention of Alzheimer’s Disease:

- Avoid risky behaviors, such as smoking.
- Eat well-balanced diets.
- Exercise – go for walks.
- Mitigate your cardiovascular risk factors, such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, etc.
- Increase your intake of fish and flaxseed oils, which are rich in omega fatty acids.
- Keep an active mind, practice cognitive skills, such as crossword puzzles and Purdue trivia.

- Be proactive.

He also indicated there are seven stages of dementia:

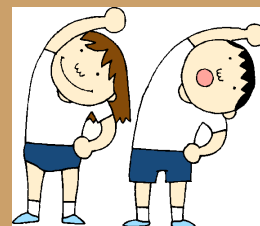
- Impairment – no main symptoms
- Very Mild Cognitive Failure
- Mild Cognitive Decline and Memory Loss
- Moderate Cognitive Decline – this stage is similar to early Alzheimer’s
- Moderate Severe Cognitive Decline
- Severe Cognitive Decline
- Very Severe Cognitive Decline – patient needs assistance as they are unable to care for themselves.

### Purdue Recreation and Fitness (Recwell) Offers Free Online Resources



Check out cooking demonstrations, fitness classes, wellness master classes, and GroupX exercise classes—all for free!

<https://www.purdue.edu/recwell/virtual-programs>



## National Library Week Is April 19-25: Celebrate It Online!

Although both Tippecanoe County and West Lafayette libraries’ physical locations are closed at the moment, both offer links to online library resources and suggestions about other informative and interesting online sites. Check their web and Facebook pages for their regular news posts and updates.

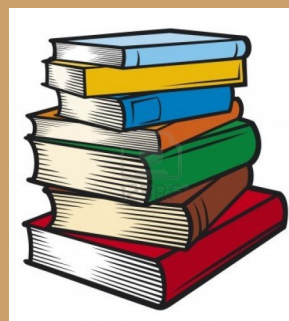
**West Lafayette Public Library:** <https://wlaf.lib.in.us/>

- Listen to Director Nick Schenkel’s book reviews on WBAA’s website (<https://www.wbaa.org/rss#stream/0>) for a list of available podcasts. The book reviews are about 2/3 of the way down the page).
- On the library’s Facebook page, find links to free online classes and other places you may “check out” online books in their posts.
- On their website, log in to access Overdrive (ebooks, audiobooks, and streaming video), a children’s database of downloadable books, and other content.

Contact West Lafayette library by phone (765-743-2261) if you need a library card to log into their site and resources. They state they’ll be monitoring phone, email, and social media messages during this unusual time.

**Tippecanoe County Public Library:** <https://tcpl.lib.in.us/>

- Log in on their website to access their downloadable and streaming content on the Hoopla and Overdrive databases, and their adult/teen/kids “reading rooms”.
- Watch their virtual children’s Storytimes and other interesting content on Youtube.com. Type in **tcpllibrary** in the Search field.
- On the library’s Facebook page, find news posts, links to their online resources and other suggestions for online resources to discover.



## We Can Only Laugh!

Chris Rearick, MSN, RN  
Purdue Nursing Center for Family Health

We have all heard the saying, “laughter is the best medicine.” Currently, laughter is the only medicine that can combat the Coronavirus or COVID-19. Laughter can boost your immune system, make you happier and temporarily distract you. COVID-19 is totally out of our control, so let us laugh!

So, why do frogs seem so happy? It is because they eat whatever bugs them! (Yes, I know we are not frogs but we cannot let an amphibian trump us.)

A geology professor once lectured to the class, “Don’t be stressed! Some rocks become diamonds under extreme pressure.” A student was quick to respond with, “But diamonds are very valuable!” The geology professor responded with, “Ahh yes, but diamonds are very rare, and the rest of the rocks become dust.”

In fact, just the other day I was standing in line at the grocery store to buy toilet paper, and this duck went around me to the front of the line with a tube of lipstick. The duck yelled for the cashier to put it on her bill and went walking out. Poor duck must have forgotten her purse in this COVID-19 mess.

On a more optimistic note, I did want to share that I heard Chuck Norris came down with COVID-19. The rumor is that they had to quarantine COVID-19 and not Chuck Norris!

I wish Chuck Norris could get us out of this pandemic mess. It just is not that easy. Although, if by chance you do have to take an essential trip to the grocery store in your car and happen to see a frog alongside the road with a broken down car, don’t worry, it will get toad.

If this corny article got you to admit it IS corny, or made you smile, then it did just what I wanted. It took your mind away from reality for a few seconds and made you think of something else.

I would like to acknowledge and thank my grandchildren, Evan and June Kasamis, for their jokes. Do not hesitate to reach out to family, friends and each other.

Feel free to email me at [crearick@purdue.edu](mailto:crearick@purdue.edu). Send me your phone number and I will reach out to you.

Remember to laugh!

## What Have You Been Doing For Fun? Are You Willing to Share?

With all the activities and events canceled at Purdue and within the PURA organization, we know many of you have been busying yourselves with interesting things that others would like to know about.

Are you willing to share a bit about your favorite hobby or activity that has kept you "busy" this past month or so? Maybe recommend a good book?

Doesn’t have to be elaborate. A photo and brief description of your “project” or book would be fine. Or something longer, if you’re enthusiastic. We’ll include these in future issues of the *PURA News*. **Please send all information to [pura@purdue.edu](mailto:pura@purdue.edu).**

P.S. Don’t forget to let us know if we may list your name or you’d prefer to remain anonymous!

### More Free Online Classes

If you don’t find anything of interest among the suggestions from the local libraries, Coursera may have something that appeals.

Courses from major universities, taught by university faculty, are available on Coursera ([coursera.org](https://www.coursera.org)). Though they charge fees for classes that are part of professional education and certification programs, they also host over 1500 free classes on a variety of topics—science, finance, the arts, culture, and Excel, to name a few. One course that may be helpful in these stressful times is a popular course from Yale, ‘The Science of Well Being’.

When you visit Coursera’s web site, search for “free classes” to see the list.

*Note: if you discover other free resources that would be of interest to PURA members, please share and we’ll include in future newsletters. Send to [pura@purdue.edu](mailto:pura@purdue.edu).*





## PURA Tech Bytes

By Scott Ksander



### Election Year Technology Will Be Challenging

As the 2020 elections approach, election technology is going to be increasingly important and challenging. The challenge basically divides into two areas: the act of voting and counting the votes, and the influencers that help us decide how to vote.

Let me state clearly from the beginning that this article is about technology and NOT politics. Nothing here should be viewed as for or against any person or cause. The only political statement I will make is that you *should* vote. Make your voice heard!

The problem of counting was on full display during the Iowa Caucus. This was a professional embarrassment for Information Technology (IT). The app was badly designed, poorly implemented, and not tested in the environment where it was going to be used. This was simply IT malpractice.

Sadly, this is far too common. As IT tools become easier to use, it seems everyone believes they can code an app. Using IT tools does not make you a trained IT professional, just like using a hammer doesn't make you a Master Carpenter. Some want to view the Iowa experience as part of a larger conspiracy. Napoleon Bonaparte said it best when he observed, "Never ascribe to malice that which is adequately explained by incompetence." Iowa was simply a matter of IT incompetence.

There are plenty of reasons to worry, however. Are there other nation states that are trying to "meddle" in our voting process? YES. Does the United States "meddle" in the elections of other nations? YES. These are not a political opinion. They are provable facts.

Simply stated, a vote is a transaction between you and the Government. Like any transaction, there needs to be identification by both parties, a legal "sign off", and a permanent record of the transaction for reexamination, if necessary. How do you prove your identity in an electronic world? How does the Government prove identity in terms of election machines or online voting? How do you prove you voted? How does the Government prove you voted? Do you have a permanent record of how you voted? Does the Government have a permanent record of how YOU voted that can be reexamined if necessary? How are those records securely transmitted?

All these conditions would be true for a physical transaction such as the purchase of a car. Very few of these are true for the current electronic voting systems in place in the US. Each represent a possible attack point for those with malicious intent. Just as an example, voting machines are currently a hot item on the "black market". If I wanted to disrupt the process, it would be really handy to have a machine to test the process.

Every year we have a discussion of "recounts". What exactly can be recounted if there is no permanent record from both parties that indicated what votes were cast? If Iowa proved anything, it proved we have a long way to go in terms of election technology.

The problem of how technology influences votes is an even greater concern. We make decisions on the information we get. Technology is a source of that information. Years ago, some would say, "I read it on the Internet, it must be true." Many people still believe that about their favorite technology source. Can you trust what you see? Not necessarily.

Dr. Ed Delp at Purdue is doing important research of "Deepfake" videos. You can read some of that research at:

<https://engineering.purdue.edu/~dgueraco/content/deepfake.pdf>

[https://www.purdueexponent.org/campus/article\\_8adc2cf4-9821-11e9-b981-f7b088614011.html](https://www.purdueexponent.org/campus/article_8adc2cf4-9821-11e9-b981-f7b088614011.html)

There are no simple answers as we approach the election. We all need to be as well-informed as we can be from a variety of sources. Don't believe things just because "the Internet told me so". Challenge yourself to check *why* you believe in whatever cause or person you support. After you gather a variety of information, make an informed decision and VOTE.



## Purdue Alumnus Bob Friend: A Man For All Seasons

Robert Bartmess Friend was a talented musician following in the steps of his father, an orchestra conductor. However, his father died when Bob was sixteen. He pushed back his piano bench and replaced music with sports.

Friend was a gifted athlete, achieving All State football halfback and All State pitcher at West Lafayette High School. He also played basketball and golf. His father and other family members attended Purdue and he didn't see any reason not to follow them in 1949. He dreamed of playing football for the Boilers, but a shoulder injury in high school altered his plan to playing baseball instead.

That never happened. Before he set foot on the pitcher's mound, he signed a professional contract with the Pittsburgh Pirates making him ineligible for college play. Bob didn't give up on a Purdue education though. He enrolled during baseball's off season for eight years, and graduated in 1957 with a B.S. in economics.

His Sigma Chi fraternity brothers spread the news when he was on campus. He was a part-time student, part-time athlete, and part-time businessman. On one of his student times he sold shares of Philippine Oil. The campus was abuzz with everyone comparing the shares they held. One funny story is that a professor called his name for several days with no answer. When Bob finally arrived he was asked where he had been. When he answered "playing baseball", the professor stated that he was a little bit old to be playing baseball. The man went to lunch to find that the speaker was his tardy student.

Friend played in the minors—including the Indianapolis Indians—until 1951 when Pittsburgh Pirates General Manager, Branch Rickey, called him up to the majors. They were a terrible team. The only team worse was the Chicago Cubs.

In his initial season he pitched his first shutout against the St. Louis Cardinals, but more were to come. The team gradually improved and in 1960 they won the World Series, defeating the New York Yankees. Bob Friend had many highlights in his sixteen-year career. He received an All Star status four times, was a Major League wins leader, and was a National League earned runs average leader. In 1955, he won the National League pitching title, with an NL-best 2.83 ERA. His nickname was The Warrior because he never spent a single day on the disabled list.

As of 2018 he still held the Pirates' record for innings and strike-outs. One of the honors that pleased him most was when West Lafayette named the field where he had played "Bob Friend Field".

Off the field, he represented the players. He served as the Pirates' player representative for 10 years and the National League for five years. He strongly advocated for better player benefits and pensions, but did not favor player strikes.

Bob married a nurse who worked in the office of the Pirates' team doctor. They had two children, and Bob Jr. is a retired PGA golfer. After baseball he worked as an insurance broker, becoming VP of the firm. He ran for office and served as the Allegheny County Controller from 1967 to 1975. He led an annual fund-raising drive for Pittsburgh Children Hospital to aid families who couldn't afford the treatments. He also played squash, sang in a Barbershop Quartet, and, with a handicap of six, was passionate about golf.

Bob Friend passed away on February 3, 2019. Sports writers and commentators lauded his athletic prowess, but the most accolades told what a decent, exemplary man he had been. (J. Thomas)

### What Can You Celebrate in April?



April 1: Sweet Potato Day



April 6: International Pillow Fight Day



April 7: National No Housework Day



April 12: Big Wind Day

April 12, 1934, the staff at Mount Washington Observatory in New Hampshire recorded the highest surface wind ever measured anywhere on earth. They officially recorded the big wind at 231 miles per hour. Guess they were not "blown away".



April 13: National Peach Cobbler Day, also National Scrabble Day



April 16: National Library Day



April 17: Blah, Blah, Blah Day



April 19: National Garlic Day

Did you know alliumphobia is the fear of garlic!



April 21: Go Fly a Kite Day



April 22: Earth Day, also National Jelly Bean Day

April 26: National Richter Scale Day



April 26: National Pretzel Day



April 27: National Sense of Smell Day



April 30: National Honesty Day

## Smile Corner

By Sara Jane (Sally) Coffman



## How I'm Coping with the Coronavirus

### Day 1:

Bought enough groceries to last for the next two weeks. Not used to having this much food in the house. For dinner, planned to have steak, mashed potatoes, and broccoli. Then I remembered there were some special meatballs in the freezer. They'd be good, too. I also remembered I had some frozen shrimp. They'd be good, too. Ended up having an eight-course meal – 1 appetizer, 3 entrees, 2 kinds of potatoes, 7 vegetables, 3 desserts, and a protein bar.

### Day 2:

Spent the day cleaning the house. Hurt my back. Will suspend all future activities involving cleaning.

### Day 3:

Bored. Washed and ironed all of my doll's clothes.

### Day 4:

Have been staying in my pajamas later and later each day. Stayed in them all day today.

### Day 5:

Have eaten all my food. Made another trip to the grocery to stock up.

### Day 6:

Got on the scale. Have gained 10 pounds in the last five days. Will need to start rationing my food.

### Day 7:

Found a Mahjong game on the computer. Played for 18 hours, vowing to stop after I played just one more game. Just one more game. Just one more game.

### Day 8:

My first visitor! Unfortunately, it was a plumber. After fixing the water leak in the basement, he started pulling off sheet after sheet from my roll of paper towels to mop up the water on the floor. I tried to remain calm as I asked him to please use the rags I'd set out for him instead of the paper towels. But instead of the rags, he used my three brand-new bath towels. Okay. Bath towels I can wash or replace. Paper towels not so much.

### Day 9:

Am resolved to use my time more wisely. Have decided to teach my new kitten some tricks so we can go on America's Got Talent.

His first trick: I threw a little toy mouse across the floor and he chased it from one end of the room to the other. I expected him to turn around and chase the mouse back across the floor, but instead, he batted it underneath my upright piano, and raised his arms, as if he'd scored a point. Then he looked up at me, wanting me to get it.

Got down on my hands and knees with a yardstick and fished around for the mouse. Repeated this throughout the day.

### Day 10:

To keep from having to continually retrieve mice from under the piano, am now throwing them up the stairs. The kitten races up the stairs, puts them in his mouth, and brings them back to me.

### Day 11:

Am getting tired of throwing and retrieving mice. Somehow the mice are reproducing. This morning I found four mice in my bed and one in my older cat's food dish.

### Day 12:

My friends and I have been comparing ailments. Are you sneezing? Me too. Is that the flu? Maybe it's just a reaction to all that disinfectant everyone is using. I'm also hiccupping. Is THAT the flu? Hope I don't have to take my temperature. Bought a digital thermometer awhile back and have no idea how to use it. Can't find the directions.

### Day 13:

Would love to go for a walk. Too cold.

### Day 14:

Would love to go for a walk. Too cold.

### Day 15:

Would love to go for a walk. Too cold.

### Day 16:

Would love to go for a walk. Now it's snowing. I feel like I'm in the Old Testament.

On a positive note, the kitten can now drop his mice into a jar. When we appear on America's Got Talent, I hope my friends will all come and be in the audience.

Until then, my cats and I are going to be fine. As long as the stores don't run out of toy mice.

*Sally's books are available on Amazon or at sarajanecoffman2@outlook.com.*



## March 2020 Campus Calendar

### Academic/Holiday:

May 9—Spring semester ends.

May 15-17—CANCELLED -Commencement exercises.

In continuing efforts to protect the health of the Purdue community in the wake of the COVID-19 virus pandemic, spring semester classes are continuing in an online-only format. Faculty, and staff who are able to, are working from home. Campus events have been cancelled, including spring commencement exercises.

The university continues to provide updates on this dynamic situation. For current information about the virus, Purdue cancellations, and updates on Purdue's plans, please visit:

<https://www.purdue.edu/newsroom/releases/2020/Q1/need-to-know-info-about-covid-2019.html>



## Mark Your Calendars! PURA Events

In keeping with other Purdue efforts to protect the health of the Purdue community in the wake of the COVID-19 virus pandemic, PURA events are cancelled until further notice.

When activities are able to resume, PURA will update the membership via email, the newsletter, and our website: <https://www.purdue.edu/retirees/>

6 April, 2020 CANCELLED. PURA monthly meeting,

22 April, 2020 CANCELLED. PURA Purposeful Living In Retirement Conference.

## Spring Wellness Screenings CANCELLED

The Nursing Center for Family Health at Purdue had previously announced spring wellness screenings for Purdue retirees and spouses, however, they have also been cancelled.

8 April, 2020 CANCELLED--8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.,  
Lyles Porter Hall

15 April, 2020 CANCELLED--8:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.,  
University Place

PURA will provide an update when wellness screenings may again be scheduled.

In the meantime, if you have suggestions for future health-related articles for PURA News, please contact Chris Rearick, MSN, RN, Nursing Center for Family Health, at 496-0308, or email her at [crearick@purdue.edu](mailto:crearick@purdue.edu).

**So, technically,  
wearing a mask  
and gloves to  
go to the bank  
is now OK?**



## PURA News

The Purdue University Retirees Association newsletter is published for official retirees of Purdue University, and prepared by the PURA Communications Committee.

**Suggestions or ideas for PURA or the newsletter, and changes of address and email, should be referred to:**

Office of Retiree Affairs  
1281 Win Henschel Blvd., Suite 1100  
West Lafayette, IN 47906-4182  
Telephone: 765-494-7395 or (toll free) 877-725-0222  
Email: [pura@purdue.edu](mailto:pura@purdue.edu)

2019-2020 PURA Communications Committee:

Chair: Karen Lembcke

Members: Connie Bilyeu, Jim Daniel, Jo Thomas