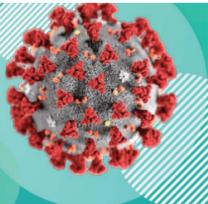


**DEXTER DISTRICT LIBRARY** **Coronavirus Closure Library Fully Closed Through May 15**  
See page 3



May 8, 2020

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# Dexter Guardian

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## Dexter Resident Is Evacuated From the Peace Corps



Brandon Pope teaching in Benin Africa.

Photo Courtesy of Aimee Bingham Osinski



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## Staying Civically Active While Social Distancing

By Aimee Bingham Osinski  
anbingham@gmail.com

At this phase of shelter in place, we know that life goes on and is supported by technology. Last month, I received an email that made me smile, The Dexter Forum was moving to Zoom. I was, at the time, out of work, but I decided to attend anyway. I knew I was not there to work, but to witness the people of the community I've grown to love participate from their homes. I was slightly worried about people getting the hang of Zoom. Though it's not a new technology to me, I know a lot of the people in the meeting

might be using it for the first time.

As the meeting started, I felt an immense sense of relief. Although I don't work in an office next to the attendees, this group, in a sense, have become my coworkers. It was so good to see people there and healthy on the call. It was nice to hear the familiar banter of a Saturday morning at the forum. We are all floating on in spite of the chaos of Covid-19. It sometimes feels as though the world has stopped spinning, but on the Zoom call, I found it to be exactly as I left it and that gave me a great sense of comfort and hope for normalcy in the future.

I've missed subsequent meetings due to not feeling well. No, it's not Covid-19, I'm okay, just needing more sleep than usual. Thankfully, John Hansen sends out an email to recap the Forum for anyone that missed. According to John's email for the previous meeting, the agenda was focused on Covid-19. Senator Theis and Representative Lasinski discussed the challenge of balancing public health and economic concerns. Both expressed unhappiness with the armed protestors in the Capitol Building. Commissioner Sue Shino discussed trying to serve those in most

for 2 weeks. Full disclosure: Brandon is my oldest son and had to quarantine at his father's house due to my high risk status. Not being able to see him after he safely landed was particularly tough on this mom's heart. But I knew once he was symptom free for two

Brandon Pope, Manchester and University of Michigan graduate, was one of the thousands of Peace Corp volunteers evacuated from service due to Covid-19. He returned to his father's home in Dexter to quarantine

weeks he'd be able to be with me. I was just glad he had a place to go for his two week quarantine. Many volunteers were brought home and left searching for a safe place to quarantine due to high risk members of their family.

I wanted to inter-

**continued on page 8**

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## More Community Events Coming Soon

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## Amid COVID-19 response, St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea receives "A" grade for patient safety



ST. JOSEPH MERCY  
CHELSEA

From Bobby Maldonado

Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grades, which assigns A, B, C, D and F letter grades to hospitals nationally for patient safety, announced that St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea has received an "A" ranking on its Spring 2020 scorecard. Amid its response to COVID-19, St. Joe's Chelsea was awarded an "A" for its commitment to keeping patients safe and meeting the highest safety standards in the United States.

Safety is a core value and a top priority for St. Joe's Chelsea. As part of its COVID-19 response, the hospital has a vigorous screening process in place at all points of entry. All colleagues and visitors are also required to wear face masks while inside the facility. These safeguards ensure that all patients can safely seek medical care within the facility, including for any urgent and emergent needs within the Emergency Department.

"As our clinical teams respond to new challenges presented by COVID-19, they have remained focused on their jobs and doing all the little things necessary to deliver the safest, highest quality care possible for patients," said Nancy Graebner, president and CEO of St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea. "While

we know COVID-19 concerns are high, the community should rest assured that our hospital is among the safest in the nation for anyone requiring care."

Developed under the guidance of a national Expert Panel, the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade uses 28 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to assign grades to more than 2,600 U.S. acute-care hospitals twice per year. The Hospital Safety Grade's methodology is peer-reviewed and fully transparent, and the results are free to the public.

In addition to St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea,

the following Trinity Health Michigan hospitals also received "A" rankings on their Spring 2020 scorecards: St. Joseph Mercy Livingston, St. Joseph Mercy Oakland, Mercy Health Saint Mary's, and Mercy Health Hackley Campus. Michigan Medicine, a joint venture partner of St. Joe's Chelsea, also received an "A" ranking.

To see St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea's full grade details, learn how employers can help, and access patient tips for staying safe in the hospital, please visit [hospital-safetygrade.org](http://hospital-safetygrade.org)

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[LittleLeague.org/Coronavirus](http://LittleLeague.org/Coronavirus)



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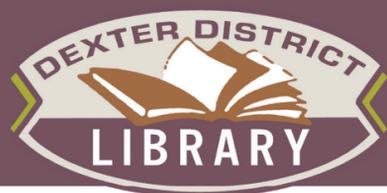
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# Dexter District Library 2020 Spring Events for Kids, Tweens and Teens

## COVID-19 Closure FAQ & Resources

### Library Closure FAQ

- On April 24, Governor Whitmer extended the 'Stay Home' order with Executive Order 2020-59, which allowed some restoration of business activities. While there was a curbside service caveat for some businesses, the order was reviewed by the Library's attorney along with the Library of Michigan legal staff. Their interpretation of the order was that Section 6, outlining limitations on governmental activities, precluded resumption of any in-person service by public libraries to the general public. This requires our current posture of being closed to the public and relying on digital services to continue through May 15. We continue to prepare for the time when we can resume services. While we do not know for certain what form that will take, the Library is developing several scenarios to adapt to environmental conditions and provide a safe experience for the public as well as safe working conditions for our staff. Please continue to monitor our website for new information as it becomes available.
- If you returned any Library items between Friday, 3/13/2020 and early Wednesday AM, 3/18/2020 – those items have been placed in a quarantine and will continue to show on your account until they've been checked back in.
  - These same items may be showing as overdue, lost or as fines on your account. You will not be fined for any items returned during this period. All of the fines will be erased when the items get checked in.
- Our outdoor return boxes are now locked. Please keep all materials at home for the time being. No overdue fines will be assessed during this period.
- All library cards that had recently expired or were going to expire soon have had expiration dates extended.
- Don't have a library card? Click here to apply for one.
  - Online registration is only available to residents of the Dexter School District. If you reside outside our service area, please check with your home library about getting a card.
- The Wi-Fi signal at the Library is available 24/7. Most devices get a strong signal in our parking lot and (when the weather is nice) for the benches along Alpine Street as well as the terrace area in Mill Creek Park North.

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## COVID-19 Health & Informational Resources

University of Michigan's COVID-19 Information Page  
<http://careguides.med.umich.edu/coronavirus>

Non-partisan news and information resource with Michigan focused information, including COVID-19 impact articles  
<https://www.bridgemi.com>

Dexter Wellness Center page on Group Exercises  
<https://www.dexterwellness.org/services/group-exercise/>

Directory of Online Tools that have been made available for free  
<https://dexter.lib.mi.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID-19-Partner-Content.pdf>

Washtenaw County's Health Department page on COVID-19  
<https://www.washtenaw.org/3095/COVID-19>

State of Michigan's Page on COVID-19  
<https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus>

U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow  
<https://www.stabenow.senate.gov/coronavirus>

U.S. Senator Gary Peters  
<https://www.peters.senate.gov/coronavirus>

U.S. Representative Tim Walberg  
<https://walberg.house.gov/coronavirus>

CDC Covid site  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

# The Real Estate Corner

By: Michelle Elie, Realtor, GRI  
Charles Reinhart Realtors  
734-637-6376  
michelleelie912@gmail.com

## April Summary

Here's the 2020 April Dexter Real Estate recap:

	2020
Number of new listings	19
Average list price	435,039
Number of homes sold	22
Average sale price	348,257

	2019
Number of new listings	37
Average list price	515,318
Number of homes sold	15
Average sale price	471,333

Kind of a crazy month, huh? As I write this, the COVID numbers are on the decline, and the "new normal" is on the horizon. Real Estate has been given the green light to start back effective 5/9, and we are ready to list and sell! All buyers and agents will be required to wear a mask when entering any home for sale, and sellers will be instructed to leave all the lights on and doors open so no one needs to touch anything during the showings. I'll be providing hand sanitizer at all my listings, and I'm sure most agents will do the same. Every action will be taken to insure safety as we start back to work.

Not surprising that the numbers for April

are way out of whack compared to last year. Typically April is one of the busiest months for listings, with those closings happening in May and June. All things considered, April was a decent month. Here's the numbers;

What is most striking to me is the number of sales were higher in 2020 compared to 2019. That speaks for the strength of the market coming in to the pandemic. Many buyers are

writing offers on homes sight unseen, basing their decisions upon the video walk throughs and pictures on the listings. Again, this indicates a very strong market.

In summary, get out there and look at houses. Be safe, use appropriate precautions, and take advantage of the growing inventory. Sellers, get your house on the market- there's so much pent up activity getting ready to burst!

# Reinhart

REALTORS

The data used in these articles is obtained from the Ann Arbor Area Board of Realtors MLS

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To our very Dear Encore Friends, Family and Supporters,  
As we continue to closely monitor updates regarding the ongoing efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19, it is at this time that The Encore Musical Theatre Company has to make some difficult decisions. Out of concern for the health, safety and well-being of our actors, staff and our community, The Encore Musical Theatre Company is shutting down until further notice. This means that all Encore rehearsals, productions and public event are currently suspended.  
We will, of course, notify you as soon as possible of any changes as they become available, and will update as soon as possible regarding our current schedule and upcoming events. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this challenging and unpredictable time, when your commitment to The Encore is especially meaningful.  
We look forward to seeing you back at The Encore Musical Theatre soon! In the meantime, please take good care of yourself, your family and your friends.  
Dan, Paul and Anne  
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# DEXTER ATHLETICS



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ALL SPRING SPORTS ARE CANCELLED AT THIS TIME

## ON THE SIDELINE: MOMENT OF ZEN, GAS PRICES, MCDONALD'S AND MURDER HORNETS



By Don Richter  
drichter101@comcast.net

Day 53 of quarantine.

Or so, I think it is. Everything is a bit of a blur right now.

I'm starting to hallucinate -- I'm seeing things that can't be true.

Take for instance my late night trip to the Speedway gas station in Chelsea last week.

When I'm not carousing around as "column-writer-extraordinaire," I actually have what the government and the powers-that-be consider an "essential" job. I've always thought my late night job was important, but to be called "essential," well, I think I now need a raise.

Anyway, as part of my "essential" job I have to drive all over Washtenaw County and the surrounding area each and every night. So, as one might expect, I spend a lot of time in area gas stations -- and in late night McDonald's. It's pretty sad when I can tell anyone who's interested which area 24-hour/late night McDonald's consistently has the best service, the quickest preparation, the most polite workers and the freshest food. I can also tell anyone who's interested, which all-night McDonald's has the most unprofessional staff, the rudest employees, the longest wait and the coldest french fries. My fellow



The brightly lit golden arches of area McDonald's are a constant beacon for this columnist during his late night job.

late night colleagues and I could write a book, like a Triple A four-diamond-type pamphlet, about each McDonald's throughout the county.

It's also really depressing (or is it a good thing?), that I know the personal history and stories for a lot of the longtime workers at area McDonald's. When you see the same late night managers as they rotate around to area restaurants and they greet you like a long lost friend or you are truly concerned for "Linda's" son and if he was able to get into his first choice for college or if the drama of "Cynthia's" divorce is finally coming to a close or if "Brandon" decided to take your advice and just save and get four new tires, instead of buying cheap, bald tires, you know you're spending way too many nights in McDonald's drive-thru lanes. Instead of the "Real Housewives of Orange County," I could develop a better show about the "Real Drive-Thru Workers of Washtenaw County." Mmmm... let me call my agent.

I must say, though, and I'm not being biased, but Chelsea's 24-hour/late night McDonald's is truly consistently one of the best in the area when it comes to politeness, service and food quality. And believe me, I've been there at every imaginable hour of the night and in the early mornings. Those Golden Arches are a wonderful site and a beacon of good-tidings at 3 or 4 in the morning after a long, difficult "essential" shift.

Wow, did I ever get off topic. Anyhow, back to area gas stations, more specifically 24-hour Speedway stations. Like the late

night McDonald's, my colleagues and I know where all the late-night gas stations are located throughout Washtenaw County, as well. And last week at Chelsea's 24-hour Speedway station, I had a moment of zen experience.

I don't know what a "zen experience" really means, but it sounded cool, so I went with it. I consider a zen moment as an aha experience or an amazing incident that gives you a whole new perspective of life.

I had my "moment of zen" last week at Chelsea's Speedway (hey, "Adam" -- yes I know all of the late night crew at Chelsea's

Speedway) when I pulled into the station with my gas gauge on "E." And not just on "E" but on "E" where I could actually see the orange bar the "E" sits on "E." Anyhow, I gave "Adam" a twenty-dollar bill and went back out to pump my gas. To my surprise, and my "moment of zen," my twenty bucks filled up my tank. Normally, my twenty bucks would get me to a little past half on an empty tank. Gas prices at \$1.50 or so is such a "zen experience" for a late-night worker/driver like myself. Seriously, why can't gas prices always be this affordable? Last week, I finally felt like my twenty bucks had value. My twenty bucks that night at Speedway had value equal to the effort and hard work I put in each and every night at my job. It was an odd feeling. I was pleased, but also a bit angry and annoyed. My twenty bucks should ALWAYS have that type of value. Something's wrong when handing over a twenty dollar bill feels like a value of five bucks.

Anyhow, financial knowledge and how the all mighty dollar works in our economy is way above my **continued on page 7**



The "Murder Hornet" has recently been spotted in the Pacific Northwest.

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By: Erin Spanier

## CARES ACCESS NUMBER FOR MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE, AND TREATMENT SERVICES

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.....  
Millage-funded staff are being placed throughout the county to support residents. Current placements and those in advanced stages of development are listed below." SIDE NOTE: We are confirming if Manchester has approved this so may be able to add location and hours. More info soon.

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One number, 734-544-3050, should be added to address books all across the county. It's the CARES access number for mental health and substance use treatment services offered by Washtenaw County Community Mental Health.

The number may be needed at 3:00 a.m. on a Monday, during kickoff on Homecoming weekend, or 6:00 p.m. on a Sunday. In fact, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year--the phones at Washtenaw County Community Mental Health are staffed and CARES social workers, therapists, peer-specialists, and psychiatrists are on standby to offer Crisis response services, Access to mental health services, Resource connections, Engagement with community partners, and Support for individual needs.

Middle and high school teachers should have kids take out their phones and program it in during math class. Anyone who's lost a loved one, struggled with addiction, or experienced mental health challenges and had difficulty finding help should post it on the fridge right now.

These staff aren't exclusively for residents with severe needs or critical emergencies; they're for everyone, in every one of the county's townships. That wasn't always the case.

Washtenaw County Community Mental Health, like community mental health agencies all across the state, has been contending with major state funding reductions that don't even come close to covering the cost of mandated services.

**On the Cover: Jenn Fenn and Leslie Turner, clinical case workers at Washtenaw County Community Mental Health, are two of the CARES team members who support residents in Chelsea, Dexter, and Manchester.**

**Jackson County passed a similar millage in the spring of 2017 and opened a Crisis R&R facility just 15 months later. The living room-style facility is open five days a week for anyone in crisis and staff are there to welcome guests on arrival and connect them to a broad range of resources including counseling, housing, food, and more"**

For several years, those cuts led to diminished services, but, thanks to the eight-year Public Safety and Mental Health Millage which was passed by Washtenaw County voters last fall by a two to one margin, Washtenaw County Community Mental Health administrators began to extend services to more residents, all across the county.

As we write this, only eight months since Washtenaw County millage dollars first became available, the list of services is long and growing. And, the list of success stories is following suit.

Residents have been referred to community psychologists for short-term counseling to contend with a loss. They've been able to access enough prescribed medicines to cover until they could get to see their doctors. They've gotten same-day appointments with behavioral health specialists and primary care providers; help filling out insurance, housing, and food applications; advice from peers with lived experience; and rides to necessary appointments. In sum, we provide dozens of different support services at little or no cost to clients.

"Millage-funded staff expansions have allowed Washtenaw County Community Mental Health to respond to 800 more crisis service requests in the first six months of 2019--from January to June--than the agency did during the same time frame last year, and we've received 250 referrals in a two month period for other services," says Program Administrator Melisa Tasker. "It's been such an honor to speak with and serve residents all across the county and we're looking forward to announcing many more program and system improvements in the years ahead."

Where do Washtenaw County residents go to get these services? To Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor, of course, but also to rural sites across the county.

Through agreements with local organizations Washtenaw County Community Mental Health administrators are placing staff at external facilities with no cost to taxpayers. Residents are now getting free and low-cost assistance for mental health and substance use needs in Chelsea and Dexter. Soon, residents will be able to meet with community mental health staff in Manchester and Whitmore Lake as well.

According to Chelsea Police Chief Ed Toth, "Thirty years ago, you might deal with a mental health crisis a few times a year. Now it's a weekly situation. We're a small agency here, usually a couple of people covering a shift and that's all. But every time I've called the CARES hotline, the response team has been super for us."

To learn more about current and planned millage-funded public safety and mental health services for Washtenaw County residents, visit [Washtenaw.org/2806/Public-Safety-and-Mental-Health-Millage](http://Washtenaw.org/2806/Public-Safety-and-Mental-Health-Millage).



Deborah Lawson



Jill Anderson



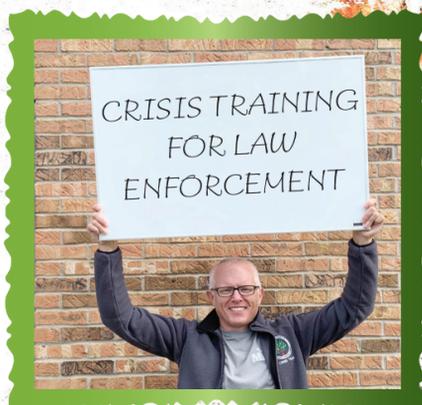
Valerie Bass



Nikki Muraca



Karen Halman



Shad Jordan



Meredith Perry

# Washtenaw County Expands Community COVID-19 Testing

Saint Joseph Mercy Health System and Packard Health providing testing at community locations:

Washtenaw County Health Department is announcing plans with local health care providers and community partners to provide COVID-19 testing where it is most needed in our community. Testing has remained a huge challenge locally and across the state and country. With support and resources from both Saint Joseph Mercy Health System and Packard Health, testing will now be offered at two upcoming pop-up sites and ongoing testing sites in the 48197 and 48198 areas.

"We, like everyone, are frustrated with the lack of available testing," says Jimena Loveluck, MSW, Washtenaw County Health Officer. "It has taken longer than any of us likes to bring more accessible testing to our community. We're still not there. But we are grateful for our health care and community partners who have been working with us for weeks to get testing where most needed as fast as possible."

St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor hospital is directing its resources to address the social determinants of health that can affect COVID care, as part of its mission to be a transforming healing presence within the community.

"This health crisis has shone an even brighter light on the health inequities in our Ypsilanti community," said Alonzo Lewis, president, St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor and Livingston hospitals. "In listening to our community and reflecting on the data the health department is charting on who was most at risk of getting COVID, we recognized that those coming to our Ann Arbor hospital site did not mirror those hardest hit by this pandemic. Through close collaboration with the health department, we have been able to bring our trained staff and testing supplies to areas most in need in the community as identified by the health department."

Through this screening process, health care workers

are able to conduct a needs assessment to ensure that participants have appropriate hand hygiene and cleaning supplies, the ability to self-isolate if needed, and be connected to further community resources to address specific needs such as access to food or transportation.

## Community Testing in 48197/48198

With our partners, we are announcing both pop-up and ongoing testing opportunities in the 48197 and 48198 area. No appointments, insurance, or prescriptions needed. Walk-up or drive-up. Bring your insurance card, if you have one. Flyer attached.

## Pop-up Testing

With support from Saint Joseph Mercy Health System and partnerships with Ypsilanti Township and the Community Family Life Center in the Sugarbrook Neighborhood, testing will be provided on:

Saturday, May 9 at Ypsilanti Township Community Center, 2025 E. Clark Rd., Ypsilanti from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 16 at the Community Family Life Center (CFLC), 1375 S. Harris Rd., Ypsilanti from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

## Ongoing Testing

With support from Packard Health and a partnership with Ypsilanti Community Schools, ongoing testing is planned at Perry Early Learning Center, located at 550 Perry Street, Ypsilanti. The start date is Thursday, May 7. Testing will be offered Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Hours may be adjusted, depending on demand.

Ongoing, curbside testing is also available daily at the north entrance of St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor hospital, located at 5301 McAuley Drive, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Call 1-833-247-1258 with questions.

## Who Can Get Tested?

At both locations, COVID-19 screening is offered to anyone with at least one symptom, including: fever higher than 100 degrees, cough, shortness of breath, severe tiredness/fatigue, sore throat, muscle aches, diarrhea, loss of taste or smell, run-

ny nose/congestion, or decreased appetite.

If you have health insurance, please bring your card. Insurance is not required for testing. There should be no out-of-pocket fees for individuals needing testing. Many insurance providers have already waived co-pays for COVID-19 testing.

## Disproportionate Impacts of COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 in 48197 and 48198, among Black or African American community members, and in group settings like nursing homes, assisted living facilities, homeless shelters, and jails has been disproportionate and devastating. Since the beginning of April, new COVID-19 cases in Washtenaw County have been related to three primary risks: household contact with a confirmed case; exposure at a group setting; or employment as a health care worker.

Along with prioritizing testing in zip codes with the highest rates of infection, the Health Department has been working with partners to facilitate testing in high-risk, group settings in response to COVID-19 cases and outbreaks. Testing collaboration with Saint Joseph Mercy Health System and the Health Department began at several skilled nursing facilities and Delonis Shelter locations throughout the county and continues with the announcement of larger, community testing opportunities in the Ypsilanti area.

The Washtenaw County Health Department provides data on cases by zip code, as well as cases, hospitalizations, and deaths by race, sex, and age on its website. The data show disproportionate impact among our Black or African American community members, who have comprised 35 percent of cases, 43 percent of hospitalizations, and 27 percent of deaths due to COVID-19 as of April 29. Only 12 percent of Washtenaw County residents identify as Black or African American. Nearly half of all cases in Washtenaw reside in the 48197 and 48198 zip codes. Twenty-nine percent

of Washtenaw County's population lives in these zip codes. More information about the roots of these disparities can be found here.

REMEMBER: Discrimination harms public health. We know viruses do not discriminate based on location, race, ethnicity, or national origin. However, viruses like COVID-19 can highlight health disparities that are deeply rooted in our society. Let's fight this public health concern with compassion and science, not fear and discrimination.

Please continue to rely on official sources of information for local ([www.washtenaw.org/covid19](http://www.washtenaw.org/covid19)), state ([www.michigan.gov/coronavirus](http://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus)), and national (<http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19>) updates.

## Resources on Cloth Face Coverings

- Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- Face Coverings: Frequently Asked Questions from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)

## Resources from Washtenaw County Health Department

- Critical Infra-

structure Business Guidance

- What to do if you are sick

- Stop the Spread: English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Arabic, Vietnamese

- Materials in English and other languages

- Washtenaw County Health Department Provides COVID-19 Data by Zip Code and Race

## Washtenaw County Health Department

The Washtenaw County Health Department promotes health and works to prevent disease and injury in our community. Our mission is to assure, in partnership with the community, the conditions necessary for people to live healthy lives through prevention and protection programs. Visit us at [washtenaw.org/health](http://washtenaw.org/health) or call 734-544-6700.

## Saint Joseph Mercy Health System

Saint Joseph Mercy Health System (SJMHS) is a health care organization serving seven counties in southeast Michigan including Livingston, Washtenaw, Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Jackson, and Lenawee. It includes 548-bed St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor, 497-bed St. Joseph Mercy Oakland in Pontiac, 304-bed St. Mary Mercy Liv-

onia, 66-bed St. Joseph Mercy Livingston in Howell, and 133-bed St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea. Combined, the five hospitals are licensed for 1,548 beds, have five outpatient health centers, six urgent care facilities, more than 25 specialty centers; employ more than 15,300 individuals and have a medical staff of nearly 2,700 physicians. SJMHS has annual operating revenues of about \$2 billion and returns about \$115 million to its communities annually through charity care and community benefit programs.

## Packard Health

Packard Health is a community health center and is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), promoting access to health and wellness for families in Washtenaw County. We provide high-quality, affordable primary care and mental health care, complemented by a broad range of fully integrated support services. We care for patients at every stage of life and believe that everyone deserves access to health care. Packard Health has been dedicated to serving the medical needs of our community's residents since 1973. See <https://packard-health.org/about/>

## ON THE SIDELINE: MOMENT OF ZEN, GAS PRICES, MCDONALD'S AND MURDER HORNETS

► continued from page 5 pay grade, but it was a good feeling pumping my gas last week and filling my tank. I felt a sense of pride I haven't felt in a long time. A sense that all the difficult, thankless work I do every night had meaning and value -- since my hard-earned cash finally, at least for one night at the gas pump, had value equal to my effort. Funny how those two things can go hand-in-hand.

Finally, on a completely different note I have two words for you -- "Murder Hornets." Say what? Yes, my worst nightmare has come true. Darn you, Asia. Don't worry Chelsea people, those nasty things won't bother anyone in this town. Why, you ask? Because I'm a "wasp/hornet" magnet. There

truly is only one thing that makes me shriek and cower like a little child in a corner and that's an aggressive, loud-buzzing, unpredictable wasp/hornet. I would leave Usain Bolt in my dust if I encountered one of those winged monsters.

So, of course, for the longest time, wasps/hornets would randomly show up unannounced in my house. Even in winter, I'd be startled awake to the deep-throated, loud, buzzing sound of an angry wasp/hornet smashing into windows and ceilings all throughout my house.

How they entered my house all those years (I changed my locks multiple times), I'll never know. So anyhow, don't worry Chelsea residents, I'm

already in the "Murder Hornets" cross hairs. They're currently all sharpening their stingers in anticipation of their arrival to my house. You're all safe from their wrath. I guarantee you, there's already a "Wanted Poster" with my ugly mug plastered across it haphazardly thumb-tacked to the walls of multiple underground lairs forming throughout the Pacific Northwest right now.

I'm building my bunker as we speak.

Wait, bunker's are normally underground, right? Don't the "Murder Hornets" nest underground?

Why did I do that? Welp, it was nice knowing y'all.

Day 53 of quarantine.

I gone...

# Dexter Resident Is Evacuated From the Peace Corps

► continued from page 1  
view Bradon about his experience as a volunteer. I've seen several articles about the trauma and uncertainty returned volunteers face. But I wanted to focus on the experience, not on how losing it has negatively impacted him. Last June, Brandon left the United States for what was supposed to be 27 months of service. He spent 3 months living with a host family while he trained and then transferred to his official site where he'd spend the duration of his service. He was welcomed with open arms. Much of the comfort and relief I felt was learning how the people of Benin receive volunteers. He would not be treated as some weird stranger, but as one of their own. Meaning the communities in which volunteers lived not only welcomed volunteers but often tried to look after them and keep them safe, like we might do with kids in our neighborhood.

I asked Brandon if our American perspective about Benin was skewed and if he'd give a more accurate representation. Brandon said,

"Benin exists. Most Americans don't know that. Beyond that, the biggest misconception is that people there aren't like me and you. They are. They're just dealing with the effects of the deeply evil side of everything many Americans benefited from." I think he's saying the major difference is they've been exploited for our ease and comfort.

I wanted to know what he will miss the most about the culture in Benin. He said the warmth and tried to explain that it's beyond Southern hospitality or Midwestern manners. He tried to describe the warmth and said, "Imagine going to DC. Everyone is really excited to learn about you and really kind." He spoke of being invited to dinner, church and different meetings in the community. He then described being invited to a family reunion. After being given food and drink and enjoying time with his new friends, everyone was asked to donate to the family education fund. This was fund for anyone in the family attending school could

use for the purchase of school supplies and books. Brandon donated some change he had with him. The people at the reunion were so thrilled he donated, they started calling him, "white or foreign member of the family." After my brother passed away, he returned to Benin to finish his service. He experienced several funerals while he was there. He was profoundly impacted by the funerals in Benin. Brandon explains, "they meet death with life." Dancing, food, a tent, and a big party is how they celebrate the life of someone who has died. He does not want to attend any more funerals. But, if he has to, he will miss the way the people of Benin say goodbye.

I asked Brandon, aside from family and friends, if there was anything he missed about being in the United States. I expected modern conveniences. Brandon did say he enjoyed getting in a hot shower. But then he described his bucket showers in Benin. Without running water, he would boil a small pot of water to add to his bucket of cold water so that it

would be warm in the evenings. And then he'd get into his shower and stare out at the night sky at the Milkyway. The sky is clear and the stars are more visible there. So, yes things are easier here but there is a trade off that comes with the ease. He elaborated about having to ride his bike rather than an air conditioned car. He said he learned to appreciate a nice tree and the shade provided. And he was grateful that he didn't have an hour

long commute in a car to work like so many Americans do. Yes he taught in a classroom without walls. But he much preferred that to a cubicle with fluorescent lights buzzing overhead. Yes, he had a goat walk in while he was teaching, but that's just one of his many incredible stories about living in rural Benin.

Brandon said it felt awful to be evacuated. He's upset that he didn't get to finish what he started, in particular the

school year. I asked him if they would send him back tomorrow, would he go, and his answer: "In a heartbeat."

He appreciates the time he did have in The Peace Corps. He said he learned what is important and what isn't. "You realize what matters. People. The moment you're in. Kindness." As his mother, I love that he's home, but I do hope he's able to go back and finish his service in the future.

## Staying Civically Active While Social Distancing

► continued from page 1  
need, particularly people with mental health issues.

School board members on the Zoom call praised the work being done by the staff to keep children fed and continue with education. Though, they discussed concern for the budget in the future.

Councilman Cousins announced that the Hilltop housing project has moved forward with council approval on the first reading of the final site plan. And, that naturally, all public events in the City are cancelled or postponed.

If you are interested in staying informed

or have questions you'd like answered, you can join the next Dexter forum meeting via zoom on Saturday May 16th at 8:30am. To receive the code to join the meeting, email John Hansen at RepHansen@aol.com and ask to be included in the Dexter Forum email list.



## Not all heroes wear capes Some wear scrubs...

Thank you for supporting our United Methodist Retirement Community Healthcare Heroes through your gifts and donations to the UMRC Foundation's COVID-19 Emergency Fund.

The dedicated team members at UMRC are going above and beyond the call of duty to protect and care for older adults during this pandemic. Your show of appreciation and support makes all the difference!

*It's not too late to help!*

**During Older Americans Month in May:**

- Visit our website at [umrc.com/umrc-foundation](http://umrc.com/umrc-foundation) to make a secure online donation or call 734.433.1000 ext. 7502.
- 'Like' UMRC on Facebook, read our blog posts, and share our stories!
- Send notes or cards to our residents and team members to show you care!

For more information, visit  
[umrc.com/umrc-foundation](http://umrc.com/umrc-foundation)



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