



PMMA

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TO: PMMA Residents, Family Members and Visitors
FROM: Bruce H. Shogren, President/CEO
CC: PMMA Board of Trustees, PMMA Senior Leadership
RE: COVID-19 Update – “**STAY THE COURSE**” – *Doing Our Part*
DATE: August 17, 2020

In stressful times like these, I think back to growing up in a family that looked to its elders for sound advice and direction. With family members who lived through tough times during World War II, we all knew their advice was based on years of experience sacrificing for the good of the cause – those serving their country fighting on the front lines. This special generation – known as the *Greatest Generation* - understood that if the greater good was to prevail, it would take everyone doing their part.

Today, we have the honor of being home to some of the children of the *Greatest Generation*. This generation - known as the *Silent Generation* - grew up watching their parents navigate a war and a depression. They are now the ones who we now depend on their wisdom to help navigate us through this war against the Coronavirus. And in doing so, they want to contribute in making things better, in other words -

“They want to do their part“

Listen carefully and you can hear their guidance and advice when it comes to living in this time of the COVID-19 virus. One such example is a letter I read from a resident at one of our communities, Aberdeen Heights in Kirkwood, MO. The letter was written as a journal entry titled “*Martha’s Journal 2020: Memories Inspired by the COVID-19 Pandemic.*” Martha has graciously allowed me to share some of her insights with all our residents and family members. Here are **excerpts from Martha’s Journal** and attached to this letter is the full version of Martha’s Journal entry:

*As I hear more and more plans to “fight this war” with the Coronavirus, memories come to mind of phrases used during war time of the Second World War when I was a grade school girl growing up. We did things for the “**War Effort**”; we endured things for the duration; we experienced shortages of everyday things. Shoes were **rationed**, even meat. **Trips were curtailed** because gasoline was rationed.*

*There were **shortages of doctors and nurses** because they were needed in the armed services. My mother learned to be a Red Cross Nurse Aide and worked at the hospital, emptying bedpans and more. Now there are shortages, doctors and nurses getting sick or are in quarantine. In those days, ordinary citizens folded bandages! **Now we make masks.***

*If we only could buy savings stamps or buy war bonds, and **do our part** in this war against the coronavirus; but we can do something to help, we are told. We can start by helping ourselves, by being calmer, taking walks, praying, reading something devotional, meditating. We can **do our part** by helping comfort each other, either from a safe distance or by phone. We can check on friends, especially the ones who can’t get out. Some of us can help provide entertainment, or pass along jokes, and we all can express thanks to our workers.*

I share her words to provide hope that **we can make a difference** in this “war” against the coronavirus **by doing our part**. If we fail to come together for the sake of others – such as our seniors, we lose the war. As prior generations knew: All of us have to **do our part** in doing what is right for the sake of the cause – eliminating the COVID-19 virus.

As I watch the number of COVID-19 virus cases continue to rise across our nation, I become more and more concerned about how our nation will get its arms around this pandemic. The US is **nearing five million positive COVID-19 cases**, with Kansas and Missouri doing their parts to contribute **nearly 80,000 cases to that total**. As Kansas and Missouri continues their attempts **at reopening their** states, one thing becomes very clear – today the coronavirus remains the most significant threat affecting all our lives today especially our seniors.

PMMA is doing its part in moving cautiously through its reopening plans and its three phases. Even though we are being cautious, we are experiencing a slight increase in our positive cases especially within our staff members. I would like to again remind you of **the four factors that most likely play a role in contracting COVID-19:**

- How close you get to an infected person – *at least six feet apart*;
- How long you are near that person – 10 minutes or longer;
- Whether that person expels viral droplets on or near you; and,
- How much you touch your face afterwards.

You can help reduce your risk and do your part to protect others by following these basic steps:

- Keep your distance from others. Stay at least six feet away from people outside your household. Limit physical contact by social distancing making sure to not hug, kiss or hand-shake;
- Wash your hands often. Anytime you come in contact with a surface outside your home, scrub with soap for at least 20 seconds, rinse and then dry your hands with a clean towel.
- Avoid touching your face. The virus primarily spreads when contaminated hands touch our nose, mouth, or eyes. Try to keep your hands away from your face unless you have just recently washed them.
- Wear a mask outside your home. A mask protects others from any potential infection from you. The more people who wear masks, the more we all stay safer.

As a reminder, the recommendations from the CDC and CMS for access to our communities will be relaxed or tightened, depending on the COVID-19 virus conditions in the greater surrounding communities that our PMMA communities are located. In addition, the detailed items listed in each Phase of our reopening plans, will not be implemented all at once but throughout each Phase to ensure resident and employee safety. Phases will last a minimum of 14 days and may last longer, for example, Missouri’s guidance for the length of a Phase 1 is for it to last 28 days. These recommendations are in place to ensure the health and safety of our residents.

I would like to note and highlight that there are differences in the reopening guidance for Kansas and Missouri senior living communities. The biggest being the following as to when each state will begin outside visits:

- **Missouri senior living communities** may allow outside visits beginning in Phase 1.
- **Kansas senior living communities** may allow outside visitation in Phase 3.
- **Both states** require strict screening requirements of visitors for fever and illness prior to admittance and adherence to wearing masks, social distancing, and hand hygiene.

I want to reiterate that our three Phase reopening process may be considered complex and cumbersome, but we believe it is necessary for keeping our residents -your loved ones and our staff members-safe from the COVID-19 virus.

We remain acutely aware of the need for residents and family members to be able to reunite. Moreover, we are working diligently with our PMMA communities' reopening plans. Please remember each community has a reopening time line that fluctuates based on their own local health department and the greater community's COVID-19 positive cases. Which means we need to be diligent and remain patient in “Staying the Course”, while **doing our part** during this COVID-19 pandemic.

I continue to ask the Lord to provide guidance and grace in the face of adversity. May he continue to bless our overburdened staff members, our weary residents, and our patient family members. As well, I ask you to join me in praying that he guide our researchers in finding a vaccine soon that will help to win the war against this coronavirus.

*Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths.
Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior,
and my hope is in you all day long.*

Psalm 25:4-5

God's Blessings,



Bruce H. Shogren
President/CEO

Martha's Journal 2020 -

Memories Inspired by events of the Covid-19 Virus Pandemic of 2020

As I hear more and more plans to "fight this war" with the Corona Virus, memories come to mind of phrases used during war time of the Second World War when I was a grade school girl growing up. We did things for the "War Effort"; we endured things "for the duration"; we experienced shortages of everyday things. Shoes were rationed, even meat. Trips were curtailed because gasoline was rationed. Some things which could not be obtained were said to be "...gone to war". Plants were converted to make things for the war. People prayed for the war to end, and now people pray that this too will end.

There were shortages of doctors and nurses because they were needed in the armed services. My mother learned to be a Red Cross Nurses Aide and worked at the hospital, emptying bed pans and more. Now there are shortages, doctors and nurses getting sick or are in quarantine. In those days, ordinary citizens folded bandages! Now we make masks.

We experienced fear when I was little, even in my Ohio town, far from the coast. We wondered if German bombers would ever come 1000 miles inland to cripple the steel company that was our main industry for the war effort. We had "Air Raid Drills", closed the drapes and turned off most of the lights", so the enemy couldn't see where to bomb. Some families even built Air Raid Shelters. Now the preparations to be safe from the virus include sheltering away from other outsiders, and staying safely away, at least six feet, while talking to our friends, trying to find some way to be safe while living in a group.

In war time, people who had family members in the service overseas, worried about their survival. Now people fear for their own lives and for the health of their families. There is fear in not knowing if a cough means you or a friend are getting the virus, or there is fear of talking to someone who carries the virus or touching something that might carry it. People fear they will run out of something that is important, even hoard things like toilet paper. Others hoard food items, buying more than they could possibly need.

If we only could buy savings stamps or buy war bonds, and do our part in this war against the corona virus; but we can do something to help, we are told. We can start by helping ourselves, by being calmer, taking walks, praying, reading something devotional, meditating. We can do our part by helping comfort each other, either from a safe distance or by phone. We can check on our friends, especially the ones who can't get out. Some of us can help provide entertainment, or pass along jokes, and we all can express thanks to our workers.

We can look for ways to entertain ourselves: read books from the library, read the schedules and sign up to attend the movies, or programs, watch TV, play games, do crafts. We can attend the prayer services that are offered. For the most part, we are not truly isolated to our rooms. The flowers are blooming outside. Those who can, should make a point to go and enjoy them. As we wait for "our war to be over", we can plan for how we can re-schedule the things we wanted to do, only at a later time.

This will come to an end, only the timing is uncertain. But nothing is certain in life, so we have to learn to live with it.