

SOUTH HOLLAND

Living

May | June 2020



Virtual MAYOR'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

Covering Our Community in Prayer

THURSDAY, MAY 7 • 8:00 AM

Online at:

Facebook Live (Village of South Holland page),
the Livestream app, and covucc.org

Join South Holland pastors and Mayor Don De Graff virtually as they pray
for our Village, State, Nation and World in this time of upheaval.

• BREAKFAST SPECIAL •

Order breakfast from one of these local restaurants via carryout
for just \$5 and then watch the event with us online!

When ordering, ask for the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast Special.

ANDY'S GRILLE

16973 Vincennes Ave
708.596.9108

Meal Options:

Eggs, bacon or sausage, potatoes
or grits, toast or pancakes

BLUEBERRY FIELD

558 E 162nd St
708.225.1982

Meal Options:

Pancakes or French toast,
sausage, bacon, eggs and juice



Hosted by the South Holland Ministerial Association

SPECIAL THANKS:



FROM YOUR MAYOR



Dear South Holland Residents and Friends,

These past couple of months have been surreal. Who could ever imagine we would see the day when our entire country would be shut down and citizens would stay home for weeks on end. It has been an unusual time brought about by unfortunate and concerning circumstances, but even so, our residents have come together to support each other in true South Holland fashion. We have all been encouraged by the messages of hope and positivity in our community, and that's why this digital issue of *South Holland Living* is dedicated to the good news stories that have come from this pandemic.

Please allow me to express my sincerest condolences to anyone who has lost a family member to COVID-19, as well as those who are afflicted from the virus right now. While the following pages feature positive news, that in no way lessens the grief of those who are suffering, and I would ask that we all continue to pray daily for those affected by this terrible virus. Let us not grow complacent about the guidelines to stay home, to practice social distancing, and to wear face coverings so we can flatten the curve and get back to life as we know it.

We all look forward to the return of some normalcy as well as the return of business. Although things have been stalled because of COVID-19, South Holland does continue to see economic development growth! Evidence of this exists in the now demolished Perruso Cleaners Shopping Center to make way for our brand new standalone Starbucks with full drive-thru service! This is a great indicator of our bright future, which will be here before we know it.

In the meantime, stay safe, and keep supporting and encouraging each other.

Don A. De Graff
Mayor

VILLAGE BOARD

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VILLAGE UPDATES

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND SOUTH HOLLAND



VEHICLE STICKER EXTENSION

To help our residents during this time, we are adjusting the due dates for the purchase of vehicle stickers. The new stickers will go on sale July 1, and will not be required to be affixed to vehicle windshields until September 1, instead of June 1. Stickers can be purchased at the Customer Service Center on the Village Hall campus, 16220 Wausau Drive, Building A, beginning July 1.



LOOKING FOR WORK?

We know there is a lot of uncertainty right now regarding jobs and the economy. The Village has seasonal jobs available in our Public Works, Code Enforcement and Recreational Services departments. We hope this will provide hope for anyone out of work right now. If you or someone you know is looking for employment, visit our job page at southholland.org.



WEEKLY EMAILS FROM THE MAYOR

Every week during the COVID-19 shutdown, Mayor De Graff is sending an email containing news regarding COVID-19 as well as other Village updates. We will also share any pressing breaking news via email if needed. If you are not on our mailing list, text SOUTHOLLAND to 22828. You will then be prompted to enter your email address.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND SOUTH HOLLAND



VIRTUAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

While we are unable to currently gather physically, we still want to connect our community in any way we can! So our Special Events team has planned the following virtual events and activities:

Trivia Nights, May 7-9: Gather the family around the table and play trivia with your fellow South Holland neighbors! You'll simply log in to a website specific to South Holland, play a game, and see how you and other South Holland residents fare on the leaderboard. You can play any time within the May 7-9 time frame. The winner will receive an Amazon Echo! View details at southholland.org.



Digital "Potluck" Cookbook: We're all cooking a lot more these days, due to our extended time at home. Share your favorite dinner recipe with us and we will compile all recipes into a digital cookbook, available on our website, southholland.org. Dinner recipes should be sent to cookbook@southholland.org by May 15.



Virtual Mayor's Prayer Breakfast, May 7, 8am: Every year, the South Holland Ministerial Association hosts a Mayor's Prayer Breakfast. This year, we are still having the breakfast but virtually! It's Thursday, May 7 at 8am and can be viewed on Facebook Live (the Village of South Holland page) or the Livestream app. And to keep it a breakfast, we've partnered with Blueberry Field and Andy's Grille who are offering a Mayor's Prayer Breakfast special (carryout) for just \$5. Please plan to join us as we pray for our community during this difficult time.

Congratulations
to all
graduates!

WE WISH ALL KIDS A
SAFE AND HAPPY SUMMER!



FAITH IN

Motion

LORD, HEAL OUR LAND!

By Pastor Alfonzo King Surret, Jr. of Calvary Community Church

The prayer of my heart in the time in which we are living is, Lord Heal Our Land.

We all need to increase our prayer, praise, worship and service to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in times like these. We are living in perilous times due to the Coronavirus and many other physical and spiritual issues that have a negative effect on the world in which we live. Prayer is taken out of many schools, there are groups trying to take "In God We Trust" off of our currency and "One Nation Under God" out of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Immoral and pornographic images and messages are increasing on television, radio, lyrics, movies, magazines, the Internet, and the list goes on. Our land is suffering as a result of the sinfulness of mankind. The nations of our world are turning further and further away from Jesus Christ our Savior, and we all could possibly enter into another world war.

We are citizens of the richest nation in the world, yet there are millions of our citizens who are living in poverty. Many homes, marriages, families, and communities are going through trying times. Even within ourselves individually there are battles, our flesh warring against our spirit.

God knew in advance that at times we would disobey Him, but God loves us so much that He has made available to us inspiration and information of how to obey His word, end His wrath and experience His everlasting love. I'm so glad that God's wrath is temporary, but His love is everlasting. His mercy endures forever and His grace is sufficient. Jesus loves us so much that He paid the penalty of our sins before He created our land.

Scripture tells us that "The Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). Romans 5:8 says, "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Christ knows how weak we really are, and He knows how wicked Satan really is. Therefore, He has made available to us His Holy Spirit to empower, equip and enables us to overcome every problem that we face. God is so faithful and He loves us so much that even when we fall, He provides a way for us to get back up again.

The Lord tells us in 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

Each of us must be real with ourselves about ourselves, and confess our sins to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If we do this, He will forgive us, cleanse us, deliver us, empower us, and the Lord will heal our land.



Pastor Alfonzo King Surret, Jr

SOUTH HOLLAND PASTORS OFFER WORDS OF *Hope AND Encouragement* DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME.

■ PASTOR PHIL TARVER UNITED FAITH CENTER MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted on the earth." (Psalm 46:10)

In these times of sweeping change and unprecedented shifts, one thing we can be sure of is the Lord, our Creator and our Heavenly Father, remains the same. The future may be uncertain but what is certain is that He holds the future.

Whether you're home or going to work, be still, trust God, and know that we will make it through. Better days are ahead.

■ EVANGELIST BETTY WILSON BREAKING OF BREAD FELLOWSHIP MINISTRIES

My words of encouragement for those who may be feeling fearful during this time of pandemic would include Isaiah 41:10 where the Lord tells us, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yes, I will help thee; yes, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

■ PASTOR RICHARD ZEKVELD COVENANT FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

The Lord who calmed a raging sea with a word is Lord over COVID-19 and its collateral damage. When in the boat with Jesus, we discover that the fear of the Lord frees us from our fear of the storm (Mark 4:35-41). 🔥



Stepping Up

LOCAL BUSINESSES AID IN FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

By Bob Bong

South Holland's Gurtler Industries is playing an active and pivotal role in the fight against COVID-19.

The company at 15475 La Salle St. makes cleaning products primarily for healthcare laundries. Their products are generally used to clean the soiled bed linens, pillow cases, towels and other reusable cloth items.

One of their products—Mint Disinfectant Plus—turns out to be a weapon in the war on the COVID-19 virus. It comes in a concentrate that make gallons of highly effective, heavy-duty disinfectant that has a hint of mint.

Mint Disinfectant Plus is effective against a broad spectrum of bacteria, according to the company. Mint Disinfectant Plus is virucidal (effective against HIV-1, the AIDS virus, Hepatitis B virus, and Hepatitis C virus), fungicidal, and inhibits the growth of mold and mildew and their odors. It comes as a clear green liquid with a hint of mint.

"It's a disinfectant cleaner," says Les Gurtler, vice president of operations. "It kills similar viruses so it's been



Gurtler Industries owner Greg Gurtler and son Jake present their Mint Disinfectant Plus product.



approved by the CDC for use against COVID-19. Demand has tripled since the pandemic started."

Healthcare facilities don't use it on medical devices, but they use it to clean any washable, hard, non-porous surfaces. "It can even be used for food contact tables," Gurtler says. "We use it here at our South Holland plant. We spray the plant down three times a day."

"Hospitals and other healthcare facilities put it in sprayers and [use it to] wipe down doorknobs and other commonly touched items and areas," he says. "Some facilities even use it to wipe down the metal parts of the carts that carry hospital linens and gowns to and from the laundry. Some healthcare workers have told me they even use it as an aerosol to spray the air to kill the virus before it lands."

He says a little bit of Mint Disinfectant Plus goes a long way. "Depending on the concentration, one bottle can make from 8 to 64 gallons of cleaner," he says.

Another village business, the food company Ed Miniati, donated gowns to help protect South Holland first responders.

The company is also working with those same first responders to safeguard its employees at its meat plant and headquarters at 16250 S. Vincennes Ave. "We are using South Holland EMTs, paramedics and police with paramedic training to check the temperatures of our workers before they enter the plant," says Rachel Allen, company spokeswoman. "If their temperature is too high, they are not allowed in the plant. We've had some employees sent home."

A handful of other businesses in town have also stepped up and donated equipment and food to first responders, says Fire Chief Brian Kolosh, from N95 masks and hand sanitizer to meals and balloons. 🔥

Thank You!

The Village of South Holland offers our warmest thanks to the following local businesses who have delivered supplies, food and cheer to our first responders and essential employees!

- ACCURATE COATINGS – Safety Glasses
- ASHLAND (CALUMET CITY) – Hand Sanitizer
- BLUEBERRY FIELD – Food for Employees
- BP – N95 Masks
- CASA DE GRACIA – Food for Employees
- CARL BUDDIG – Safety Glasses/Gowns
- GRIER ABRASIVES – N95 Masks/Safety Glasses
- JASON BARNES STATE FARM – Food
- MINIAT – Gowns
- REIF'S AUTO BODY AND REPAIR – Disinfectant
- THE WELL (THORNTON) – Hand Sanitizer

UNSUNG HEROES

ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEES SERVE THE PUBLIC AMID A PANDEMIC

Story and photos by Josh Bootsma



Ileana Garcia often works at the drive-thru window at Andy's Grille, a job that became more important when the dining room was forced to close.

It's 11 a.m. and already the lunch rush is starting at Andy's Grille along South Holland's southern border. Veteran employee Ileana Garcia reaches for a pen to take down the next drive-thru order. She takes a credit card from the customer, swipes it, and hands it

back to him, wiping her hands on a towel wet with a bleach mixture after she does so.

This is the new normal for Andy's Grille and restaurants throughout the Village as dining rooms have been shut down statewide. Though many employees of these restaurants are still coming in to work, having been named "essential employees" by the Governor, they've all—like Garcia—been forced to adjust to new working norms because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"You're used to it being loud," says Garcia of the usual lunch rush, "You've got the grills going, you've got everything going, you've got people yelling out orders over here and over there, and now it kind of just dies down." The main lunch rush now comes in the form of a line of cars in the drive-thru. Customers are still allowed to enter the restaurant to place to-go orders but are not allowed to stay to eat.

Garcia is married to a police officer and has kids, making home life during COVID-19 different as well. For example, her family was unable to celebrate her son's recent birthday. "Outside of work, [family time] is really all that I have. So I miss it," she says.

Having worked at Andy's for 12 years, Garcia has regular customers that she has a good relationship with who still place orders and give her encouragement. She was especially grateful for a long-time customer who came to the drive-thru and didn't order food but instead paid for the car behind him and told Garcia to take a tip off his card. "He's super sweet," she says. "He'll buy a shake sometimes and say, 'I just needed to come out and see you.' It makes you feel good."

About a mile north at Walt's Food Center, Ceal Lundstrom has also enjoyed the positive interactions with customers. Serving people at the customer service booth and occasionally as cashier, she interacts with plenty of people throughout her day and calls the experience "heartwarming." "It almost feels like you're in the military," she says. "There are people [that say] 'thank you for working' and it makes you feel pretty special."

Lundstrom works in the mornings and into the mid-afternoon, which means she gets to witness the daily "senior hour" that Walt's has put in place from 7 a.m. until 8 a.m. when only individuals sixty years and older are permitted to shop. "It's busy," she says. "I think they like it, I'm glad we did it."

Walt's has placed markers on the floors to indicate one-way aisles as well as to mark six-foot increments near the cashiers. Transparent shields have been placed in front of the cash registers and employees are wearing gloves and some have masks. "My hands are so dry from constantly sanitizing," Lundstrom says. "You touch something and you're immediately like, 'Oh, I better wash my hands.'"

She was also working when the demand for toilet paper and bottled water shot up. "We had to put a limit [on the amount of items people could buy at one time]," she says. "In the very beginning we didn't have a limit, but we had to [make one] because you've got to give everybody a chance to get something." Other buying habits have changed too, Lundstrom says, as she's noticed canned goods and flour have been in high demand.

At home, she and her husband have enjoyed cooking more and taking their dog for walks, but are saddened by the lack of in-person time with their family. On Easter, they visited their one-year old grandson but stayed out of the house and waved through the window. "He's getting teeth and everything and just looking at him through the window, that's the part I hate," Lundstrom says.



At Walt's, Ceal Lundstrom serves dozens of customers every day and says that many of her interactions are heartwarming.

Another essential employee just a stone's throw from Walt's deals with car parts instead of food items. Mark Matthews, the "M" of M & D Auto Repair and Transmission, has continued to serve his customers during the pandemic, though he's noticed that business is slowing down.

"I think people are afraid to come out," says Matthews. "We had worked stacked up for a couple weeks but we're starting to get caught up."

A full-service mechanic, Matthews and his crew are washing their hands frequently under normal circumstances, but are doing so even more during the pandemic. Matthews is also doing his best to disinfect the common areas in the shop, like doorknobs and chairs in his office.

Although he's not nervous about COVID-19 currently, he was when he had to visit the hospital in March. While doing work on his house in early March, Matthews fell off his roof and landed on his head, fracturing both his neck and back. Because he didn't know the seriousness of his

injuries at first, Matthews waited a few days before getting medical attention and was then put, due to a lack of space in the hospital, in a bed in the hallway. "They put me out in the hallway in front of the nurse's station where I've got two nurses in front of me, on the other side of the counter" he says. "One of them is coughing, sneezing, blowing her nose, and the first thing that went through my mind: 'Does she have corona?'" Luckily, there were no cases in that hospital yet at the time and Matthews returned home with a back brace that he wears regularly.

Despite his injury, Matthews has enjoyed spending time with his wife and daughter, who is a student at Illinois Wesleyan University and was doing an internship at a hospital that has been cancelled. "I like having her around," says Matthews, who works with his son at the shop.

Matthews says that some customers have made appointments but have decided to stay home instead.

Having many long-time customers, Matthews is grateful for those that have called to ask if he's open and doing well. "I'm grateful that they think enough about me to call...These are customers I've had for twenty-plus years. They tell me they don't know where they would go if something happened to me and I pray every day that nothing does happen to me," he says.

Essential workers are all around us, braving the coronavirus to provide for their customers and their families. Consider thanking an essential worker today. 🙏



Mark Matthews has been serving customers for years at M & D Auto Repair and is grateful that many customers care about his well-being.

TO

Protect + Serve

A DAY IN THE COVID-19 LIFE OF SOUTH HOLLAND FIRST RESPONDERS

Story and photos by Josh Bootsma



Firefighter Tom Farr says, "Our world has changed," in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

"I hate to do this to you," South Holland firefighter and paramedic Tom Farr tells me in response to a chirping alarm. "It shouldn't take us too long if you want to come back." Our interview about the coronavirus was interrupted—in the beginning and at the end—by fire and paramedic calls, proving that some jobs are consumed with more than COVID-19.

A new normal has been established for most of us in response to the coronavirus pandemic, but some things haven't changed: when you pick up the phone for help, someone will be there to answer your call.

"It's our job," says Farr, who has been with the department since 2004. "It's what we signed up to do long ago."

South Holland first responders, including the Fire, Police, and Public Works departments, have all been busy serving South Holland residents during this time, just like they always do. But that's not to say things aren't different for them.

"Our world has changed," says Farr. In addition to the internal changes in the Fire Department like firefighters leaving their uniforms at the station, wearing sandals instead of their work boots in the firehouse, and cleaning the kitchen five times a day, the most significant changes are seen when the department goes out to serve the community. If there is even a hint that a paramedic call may be COVID-19-related, one of the crew responding to the call wears a one-time-use protective suit while interacting with the patient. After the patient is dropped off at the hospital, the suit is disposed of and the ambulance is disinfected before being driven back to the station. Once the paramedics return,



Firefighter Tom Farr shows the inside of the makeshift tent where firefighters take off their uniforms after a COVID-19-related call.

they enter a makeshift tent to remove their clothes and go straight to the showers before putting on a clean uniform.

Farr has personally been on calls with confirmed cases of COVID-19, and has been on others where there are suspected cases.

This makes him nervous—not to come to work—but to return home to his wife who is immunocompromised. “I’m terrified to go home and give it to my wife,” he says, “So even at home, she’s on the couch and I’m on the chair, that kind of thing. Sleeping in different bedrooms.”

But the biggest challenge for Farr is not seeing his kids. He has a good relationship with his first wife and is able to see his kids regularly under normal circumstances. Because of his exposure to COVID-19 however, he’s decided not to have contact with them, only dropping off things and saying hello from a distance.

Farr isn’t the only South Holland first responder who has been affected by the coronavirus. Tariq Abu-Romman works the overnight shift for the Police Department, patrolling the streets from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Like Farr, COVID-19 makes Abu-Romman nervous, but in a different way. Most of the issues he deals with on the night shift have to do with domestic disputes—increasingly so as a



Firefighter Vernell Johnson disinfects the firehouse kitchen, a process done five times every day.



Officer Tariq Abu-Romman works the overnight shift for the Police Department.

result of the stay-at-home order. He gets nervous when he has to enter houses and interact with people. "You don't know what you're dealing with," he says. "You don't know who's infected."

Abu-Romman has not had to ask anyone to break up their gatherings or told anyone to go home. Instead, he's noticed how few people he sees: "When I'm working, I'm used to a lot of people on the streets, especially on weekends. And it's not like that anymore. There are a lot fewer cars, call volume has decreased, and there are a lot of businesses that are closing early, and [I'm] not really used to that."

To follow social distancing guidelines, the department has foregone the typical "roll call" that precedes every shift when officers meet to discuss anything they should be aware of. Instead, officers visit their supervisor one-on-one to get their assignments and go straight to their cars. In his car, which is cleaned every day, Abu-Romman has disinfectant wipes as well as gloves and a mask for interactions with residents.

Home life has changed for Abu-Romman as well, as he lives with his parents and two brothers. He tries to keep some distance between himself and his family when he's at home, and he knows that his family is concerned for his safety. "They are a little bit nervous for me, I can tell," he says. "They always say, 'We're praying for you,' and stuff like that. I feel bad for them but it is what it is. It comes with the job. They pretty much knew what I was getting into in the beginning—this job in itself is dangerous."

Family is important to another South Holland first responder too: Sean Faulkner, the Parks Superintendent and Community Beautification Coordinator. Though not always thought of as first responders, Faulkner and his Public Works crew provide support to both the police and fire departments. Additionally, problems like broken water mains and downed light poles are emergencies and Public Works is the department that addresses them.

Public Works has suspended full staff meetings and, in order to limit interactions among employees, has broken its staff into three crews instead of one. In March, only one of these crews would be working at a time but with the weather improving, all three crews are now working every day in order to keep South Holland clean, bright, and beautiful.

Faulkner says that much of their job is the same during the pandemic, though there are some changes that have come about, including a small increase in special garbage pick-ups for large items. He says this may be "attributed to people having more time to actually get stuff done." In-home water appointments have also been temporarily stopped to limit interactions with residents.

Even though the playgrounds and other park amenities are closed, Faulkner and his team are still dedicated to making the 30 parks in South Holland look beautiful as spring arrives in full. An odd effect of the baseball fields seeing disuse, he says, is that they actually require more work than before. "When a field is getting used, it's constantly getting chopped up by cleats and stuff, which helps keep the weeds from growing," he says, "but when a field sits, there's nothing to keep the weeds away."

Faulkner has felt the lack of baseball in other ways, too. His younger son is twelve and was looking forward to his travel baseball season, which is now in question. His son is now



Parks Superintendent and Community Beautification Coordinator Sean Faulkner knows that residents need first responders now just as much as ever before.



The Public Works department is still providing wood chipping services, though employees are riding in separate vehicles.

practicing his pitching with Faulkner in their back yard on a makeshift plywood pitching mound. Faulkner's older son is in eighth grade and was excited to play the role of Captain Hook in his school's musical, which has been cancelled.

Despite the unfortunate circumstances, Faulkner is grateful to have more time with his family. "When you're running around, yeah you're with your kids but you're preoccupied with their baseball, or drama, or whatever it is, but we've had time to sit down and actually be with our kids. You don't get an opportunity to do that very often."

Faulkner's thoughts on the importance of Public Works applies to the Fire and Police Departments as well: "I applaud our staff...that come in and continue to do their job to the best of their ability and to keep providing these services for our residents. They need it just as much now as they would in good times."

There are dozens of other hard-working people like Tom Farr, Tariq Abu-Romman, and Sean Faulkner who shake off their nerves and go to work every day to serve South Holland residents during this pandemic. To all of you, we say thank you. 🔥

BEHIND THE SCENES

In addition to our first responders and Public Works staff, other Village employees work in the office to ensure that the Village is running smoothly during the COVID-19 shutdown. We would like to recognize the following employees in particular:

MICHELLE LIDDELL, COLLECTOR:

Michelle oversees the Water department in the Customer Service Center, which plays a vital role in processing water and other payments, and certificate of payments even during the shutdown.

DELIA LUNA, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:

Delia runs the front desk at the Village Hall, and although it is closed to the public, she comes in to answer phone calls, help residents with any concerns, and perform vital office tasks for Village administration.

JANICE REICHERT, ACCOUNTS PAYABLE:

Janice comes into the office every single workday to ensure our vendors are paid on time, and has even hand-delivered some vendor checks.

THANK YOU TO THESE EMPLOYEES, AND ALL OF OUR SUPPORT STAFF, FOR THEIR HARD WORK AND LOYAL DEDICATION TO THE VILLAGE OF SOUTH HOLLAND!

Everyone Counts.

The more South Holland residents who complete the 2020 Census, the more funding our community receives for roads, schools, and public safety.

Completing the Census has never been easier! Respond by one of the following methods:

ONLINE: 2020census.gov

BY PHONE: 844.330.2020

BY MAIL:

U.S. Census Bureau
National Processing Center
1201 E 10th Street
Jeffersonville, IN 47132



It's easy. It's safe. It's confidential. Shape your future today.

**Shape
your future
START HERE >**

**United States®
Census
2020**

Be Well

KEEPING YOUR BODY AND MIND HEALTHY DURING THE PANDEMIC

By Carrie Steinweg



By now we're all familiar with the importance of proper hand-washing and social distancing in helping to flatten the curve of COVID-19, but we shouldn't stop there when it comes to being diligent about our health.

"Of course we've heard about the importance of reducing the chance of becoming infected through hand washing, disinfecting and social distancing, but this pandemic has had other untoward effects on our health," says Kara Davis, M.D., who is board certified in internal medicine with UChicago Medicine and has a practice in South Holland. "In the past several weeks many of us have been sitting more, eating more and worrying more. And some are drinking more alcohol than they would normally consume. Yes, we want to avoid catching this virus at all costs, but we must also be mindful to maintain a healthy lifestyle on all fronts. Monitor what you eat—both the quality and the quantity of food. Take frequent breaks to stand and move. And seek help from a mental health provider if you notice signs of anxiety or depression."

Mental health professional Cassandra Howard is clinical director of CTF-Illinois, a non-profit community service organization, and is in private practice with South Loop Counseling in South Holland. She's been working with patients as walk-ins and via telehealth during the pandemic. She notes that spending so much time at home can be challenging and that there are things that can be put into practice at home to improve your mental state.

"When you're isolated it can decrease your mood if you allow yourself to go to negative thoughts and can create anxiety for you," she says.

Howard suggests finding activities to do that are rewarding to you. "Do something you love that gives you pleasure. I like to do something for others and create care boxes for the elderly. It makes me feel great doing a gesture for someone else," she says. "Do something at home that is going to have value to you and increase your mood."

Creating a relaxing space in your home with pillows, artwork, soothing lights and other decorations that will lift your mood can go a long way in changing your focus. Use that space to retreat to so you can take time to breathe, relax and meditate. "It's all about tapping into yourself and turning negative thoughts into positive thoughts," Howard says.

For those who may be really struggling with stress and uncertainty caused by COVID-19, the Illinois governor's office created Call4Calm, a free emotional support text line. To connect with a counselor, text TALK to 552020 (or HABLAR to that same number for counseling in Spanish). You will get a call from a licensed counselor within 24 hours.

As much as we'd all like to get out and gather with friends and family, staying at home is the best course of action all around for now. "Since COVID is a respiratory virus, the closer you are to a person who has it, the more likely you are to catch it," says Davis. "Likewise, if you touch a surface that has recently been contaminated by COVID, the more likely you are to infect yourself with viable virus. This is why staying at home reduces our exposure. Granted, it is not a perfect solution, especially for those people who live with family members who might be infected. But it absolutely works to reduce the spread."



5 tips for staying healthy at home

1. Keep your appointments with your healthcare providers. Many providers are now doing telephone and even video visits.
2. Monitor what you eat and drink. Stress eaters often crave salty or sugary snacks and high calorie beverages sweetened with high fructose corn syrup. If you eat in response to boredom look for a new book, craft or activity.
3. Stay away from people who have even minor respiratory symptoms, and do the same should you develop symptoms yourself.
4. Exercise at home! YouTube is full of videos with everything from Zumba to Yoga.
5. Keep a Gratitude Journal. This pandemic can be mentally, emotionally and spiritually draining. Focusing on the positive will help to offset fear and anxiety.

Source: Kara Davis, M.D., UChicago Medicine

South Holland STRONG

A community comes together

BY JULIA PERLA HUISMAN AND JOSH BOOTSMA

In times of crisis, the best of humanity can be seen. While the COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenging time, we were encouraged by the many South Holland residents who chose the path of strength and encouragement. From chalk drawings to teacher parades to signs for healthcare workers, each small contribution added a high dose of cheer and joy in a time when it was needed most.

SENDING CHEER TO STUDENTS



In only its second year of operation, Unity Christian Academy in South Holland has, like all schools in Illinois, had to adapt to an e-learning format, one that allows for face-to-face interaction only by virtual means. This new type of education has left teachers and students at UCA feeling more disconnected than usual. Head of School Loukisha Smart-Pennix wanted to change that.

On Friday, April 17, the staff and many of the faculty at UCA trekked out in the freshly-fallen snow to visit all of their students who live in South Holland, 13 in total. Driving in separate cars and doing their best to practice social distancing, the group of seven made their way around town accompanied by South Holland Police Officer Megan Norris and stopped in front of students' houses with encouraging posters and smiling faces.

"We love you" shouted teachers and staff as students greeted the visitors from their front door or porch with a surprised but happy smile, "and we miss you!"

Knowing that many of their students and their families are enduring challenging times during this pandemic, the UCA team wanted to bring a little laughter, surprise, and joy to the lives of the people they're used to spending hours with. Faculty and staff wanted to show physically what they've been showing virtually—that though UCA is apart, it's still unified.

COLORING THE WALK

The Coronavirus brought back a pastime that has been lost in recent years: walks around the neighborhood. With residents being stuck at home for weeks on end, everyone treasured the days that were warm enough to head outside and get some fresh air. To make outdoor time even more enjoyable, many families drew uplifting messages and fun drawings on sidewalks and in doorways for passersby. Here are just some of the colorful chalk drawings and positive messages we spotted around town.



HONORING FIRST RESPONDERS

Many individuals, businesses and neighborhoods shared their appreciation for the first responders who are on the front lines of the Covid crisis.



Local company Balloon Queens N Things made cheerful balloon figures for our Fire Department, bringing a smile to our firefighters' faces.



On a warm spring night, homes around South Holland's Greenwood Lake held a moment of silence with lights on to honor the neighborhood's residents who work in law enforcement, fire prevention and the service industry. "It was a very sobering and appreciative time," says Joy McElrath, a Greenwood Lake neighbor. "Thanks to all who came out and participated."



Addison, Jeremiah and James Marshall visited the South Holland Police and Fire Departments to say "thank you" to the first responders with encouraging chalk drawings.



A CURBSIDE EASTER DELIVERY

Since the Village could not hold its annual Easter Egg Hunt event, the Recreational Services Department did a drive-up hand-out of Easter baskets on Easter week at the Community Center. Staff wore masks and gloves, and handed them out to smiling children in the vehicles



AMERICAN UNITY

Stevenson Crane Service displayed a large American flag from one of their cranes, visible from the I-94 expressway, to send a message of strength and solidarity to fellow Americans.



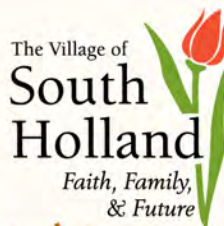


THE VILLAGE OF SOUTH HOLLAND
WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR GENEROUS
2020 *Easter* EGG HUNT SPONSORS

American Lawn
Bartkowski Life Safety Corp
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JMA Architects
Lagestee Mulder

Larry DeYoung
Loomartee Law
Martin Produce
Restoration Ministries
Sandrick Law
Smits Funeral Home
Standard Wire & Steel Works
Stepping Stone Financial
The BarTech Group of Illinois
Thornton Township
Triangle Salvage

While the 2020 Easter Egg Hunt was cancelled because of COVID-19, the children who registered still received Easter baskets, which were delivered curbside at the Community Center during Easter week.





Support South Holland Restaurants

While restaurants are closed for dine-in service during the Stay-At-Home order, many South Holland restaurants are still offering service via carryout, delivery, and drive-thru orders. Please patronize them!

Visit southholland.org for a full list of restaurants operating at this time.



Thank you

TO ALL OF THE
DOCTORS,
NURSES AND
MEDICAL
WORKERS FOR
CARING FOR THE
SICK DURING
THIS TIME.



We appreciate you!



southholland.org