

Covid Diary

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

I just spent most of an hour looking for my granddaughter's college address. Then I called her mother for it and found her letter as soon as I had put the address into my phone.

I miss my brain.

I am constantly bargaining with myself. How about I get my mask and gloves and go to the post office and mail my granddaughter the carefully wrapped and boxed persimmons we picked yesterday at my daughter's house. Not her mother. In fact, of my three daughters and two granddaughters, only one of them is related to me by blood. Not telling which one.

And while I'm out, how about I stop off at the variety store to get some stickers to send to my grandnephews and the pet store for treats for my granddogs?

What am I thinking? I can't go to places unless absolutely necessary.

At least we live in a small town on a hill, so I can take a walk seeing hardly anyone. Good enough for now.

Thursday, December 3, 2020

Today I was going to go to the farmers' market, but we have enough food to last until Sunday's market.

Friday, December 4, 2020

Already I am neglecting my journal. All is forgiven, though.

Sunday, December 6, 2020

Slipping along - slow minutes, fast weeks. Wearing a bra and real clothes almost every day to take a walk or go to an appointment that must be in person. Finding Zoom very tiring. After one, I want to lie down and play games or read on the iPad.

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

The days do zip past, when they're over; each day dwindles slowly while it's happening.

Tuesday, December 15, 2020

Postcards to voters in Georgia are finished. I have to hope this runoff election will result in Democratic control of the senate.

I had to force myself to take my walk today, as usual. It's beautiful outside. The TV and computer games will still be here when you come back. Always bargaining. Can't can't can't can't. Well, maybe.

I'm feeling affected by last Sunday's Zoom call with my high school class. I went to an all-girl, academic track, all-city high school in Philadelphia that we all call Girls' High.

The women who I see on Zoom are real in every way. Being who they are, and being responsible and beautiful and smart and creative.

I didn't go to the 40th or 45th or 50th reunions. Wish I'd been there, but I couldn't justify the expense, spending all our money on a short trip like that.

The Zooms are a lot like the reunions, except that you can't really have separate conversations. Those are blooming, though, and emails and phone calls are beginning and are welcomed.

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

I can't believe that my nails are so long already, and my pillboxes have only three days left. Including today! I'm taking this personally.

What about saying "Each and every"? Aren't they interchangeable? Whenever I hear someone use that expression, I lose everything they say after that, trying in my mind to use only one or the other to see if it changes the meaning.

I realized I wished I had thought of keeping a shelter-in-place Covid19 journal. Then my high school classmates suggested we do it together as a project, each one adding

her experiences to the rest. I wanted to write my own, not influenced by what others were saying.

I started. I didn't want to read the rest. I didn't want to read them. Then I read them. Whoa! My women are such an awesome group of creative survivors, smart and beautiful and genuine.

I trust them. I admire them, every one.

Now I'm stuck. The last three nights, I have woken at 4:30 AM, and immediately am filled with memories, wishes, love and hope for my classmates. I don't have a choice; I need to write more. It needs to be more Girls' High oriented. Okay, for now. Can you tell I have fear of commitment? Back in the before time, I never wanted to take a plate at a party. Just carry a bit of food around eating it.

Not going to Girls' High was never a choice for me. In our family, you went to GHS or Central, and then to college, although my father didn't finish high school and neither of my parents went to college.

As a child, the library was my haven, and I asked the librarians if one could go to college to be a librarian. Because if not, well, that wasn't going to be a choice for me.

I don't remember my early impressions of the school, only that I hated the hypocrisy of the administration, and was puzzled by the snootiness of many of my fellow students.

I made friends, was thrilled to be going to school with my third cousin, Beverly, and tried to carry my books in a way that didn't injure me.

I shared a locker with Octavia. She was so tolerant of my being organizationally impaired, always had a bright smile and she was a high spot in my day. She told me the name her family called her. I understand about people sometimes having a true name that they don't reveal casually, and it was with respect and gratitude that I received the gift of hers.

Over the course of my student life, I cannot count the number of times different groups of us heard the phrase, “There are Girls’ High girls, and there are girls who go to Girls’ High.

I fell into the latter category. Perhaps I dove in face first.

Also, Dr Thompson showed us how to sit down in front of the mirror to make sure our skirts didn’t ride up too high. Perhaps a foreshadowing of Sharon Stone in *Basic Instinct*?

“Most of the girls at Girls’ High are well-behaved. There are a few who spoil it for the others.” Heard that often. We became “The Spoilers”, an open group who met outside on the grass above the corner of Broad and Olney. We thought we were so bad, throwing down a quarter to the soft pretzel guy on the corner who would throw us back five pretzels, spread with mustard. We thought we were so bad, running away at lunch to drink sodas at the luncheonette and running back so as not to get caught. We thought we were so bad, hanging at Rittenhouse Square. I was one of the few who didn’t smoke, so when a teacher came around the corner and everyone ran, I stayed put and refused to name names.

Remember when we refused to participate in air raid drills? They put us dissidents deep in the office, farther away from windows and outside walls and pissed us off even more.

I loved my friends at Girls’ High. No, no list. Lists always leave somebody out. What should I do? I made a partial list that calls to me. Delete me; don’t delete me. People have feelings whether we want to or not. Suffice it to say there were people at that school who made my life worth living.

I didn’t get to hang out after school because I always had an after-school job. When did I do my homework, you ask?

Generally, I didn’t.

I liked learning, and I liked expanding my horizons racially and culturally. I didn’t like being chastised for failing to strive for standards that were old, outdated and arbitrary.

Hope I can fall asleep and stay asleep tonight. Good night. Sweet dreams.

Thursday, December 17, 2020

Took a walk, did all my physical therapy exercises. Still haven't cut my nails. Made a bean stew in the oven. Supposed to be cassoulet. Except it's a hippie form of cassoulet.

Everything I make is a hippie version. Can't do it any other way.

It rained last night and so I need to scatter some seeds in the backyard.

I live in a small town, a little north of San Francisco. I love it here. There are things I miss about San Francisco, where I lived most of my adult life. A lot of those things aren't there anymore. I am happy here. Didn't feature myself for small town life, but it's good for an old woman who is shrinking and becoming more and more invisible. It's full of nature and beauty here, and that fills me with joy.

Friday, December 18, 2020

I believe that there are people who get dressed in real clothes with real underwear every day. I believe there are people who have so many pairs of loose, stretchy pants that they change into new ones every day. I believe there are people who don't turn on their televisions until the evening, or not at all. I believe there are people who shower daily, pick up books and read them with comprehension, organize the piles of papers into an order that makes sense.

I have been most of those people in my past lives, and I know some of them, but I am not one of them now.

I moved to San Francisco to visit Rachel, and lived in her house with her and her family in their commune for about six months. I was and am grateful to Rachel for her hospitality and for getting me to the place that immediately felt like home.

Monday, December 21, 2020

Half my exercises are done. Loving the cold weather, but only two days of rain so far this month. That's not good news. Hoping for no drought.

Finished my daily Portuguese lesson on duolingo.com. Studying a language that I can use with my Brazilian daughter whom I adopted as an adult. She is happy that I'm learning her language; she's completely fluent in mine.

Happy Solstice!

Sunday, December 27th, 2020

Just got back from the farmers' market. Enjoying my morning lemon water with ... LISBON LEMONS! My favorite. And, yes, they do deserve all that yelling.

Not many farmers there; only about half the usual booths. They deserve a week off from their grueling, physically and emotionally demanding work schedules. I wouldn't want to have to deal with these entitled people.

Monday, December 28, 2020

How are people so excited for a new year, like it will end racism and COVID?

Wednesday, December 30, 2020

So many people I know are single, which means they are alone. Some of them get groceries delivered, so they don't even see people at the market.

I have a partner, and we are very compatible, and it's more than lucky for both of us. Our bubble is the two of us, two of our daughters. The father of my daughter, and her housemate are also in our bubble by default. Our bubbles are the same.

Thursday, December 31, 2020

Last day of 2020. Not much change expected, except on letters and checks, neither of which we use much anymore.

Saturday, January 2, 2021

Happy New Year!

Thursday, January 7, 2021

Yesterday, the orange guy ranted and raged and fomented an insurrection. Redcaps with white skin broke down barriers, broke into the capitol in D.C., damaged the

building and delayed the counting of the electoral ballots. Late at night there, the counting went on. The dicknose lost.

I was busy doing things all morning and didn't have any media input until about 1PM. I saw young white men inside and outside the building, and several kinds of law enforcement treating them gently. Nothing like the gassing when the protesters were protesters and peaceful.

Then I heard that a woman was shot. Still don't know anything about that. I drank my smoothie and went to the post office to mail my sister a birthday package. I was so upset that I mentioned it to the post office employee who helped me. She told me not to turn on the television any more.

This is part of why I wanted to keep a COVID diary.

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Yesterday, Kamala Harris and Joe Biden were inaugurated! I am hopeful and a great weight is lifting off of my spirit.

Already, positive changes are being made. The Muslim ban is lifted. The country is rejoining the Paris agreement and the Keystone pipeline has been stopped. More vaccines have been ordered, deportations stopped.

This old normal cheers me and I'm ready to hear more positive news.

Monday, January 25, 2021

Feels as though it's been a while. My partner has an appointment on Friday for the vaccine. Because they're giving them to people over 75 now.

Had two daughters here for three nights. They were going to sleep over, then another and another. I was thrilled, and had a lot of fun with my bubble. After they left, though, I was very tired.

I have some delicious flannel pajamas that I was keeping to give for a present if someone came over and needed something warm and cozy. Hah! I kept them for

myself and I wish I had done that a long time ago. Nothing like a shower and those pajamas on a cold, rainy day. They're pink with black polka dots.

Friday, January 29, 2021

The feeling of being a little more relaxed is lasting. I'll believe it when I see it, though. The personal is, as it always has been, political. Black lives matter. "No justice, no peace" has replaced, "What do we want? (_____); when do we want it? Now!", and the ever popular. "El pueblo unido jamás será vencido", which can be translated as, "The women, united, will always be delighted". Joking, joking. I have chanted that latter one as well, though.

But, really, what do I know? I haven't marched in protest in two years, and then it was just here in my little town.

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

Then I woke up, and it was all a dream...

No self-respecting author would say that. Certainly no one who went to Girls' High. It worked in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, and never again since.

Fairfax, CA

December 2020-February 2021