On the Front Lines

13 Memphians who are working while the city hunkers down.
MEMPHIS FLYER

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THOSE WHO HAVE STEPPED UP TO SUPPORT THE FLYER’S INDEPENDENT, LOCAL JOURNALISM, ESPECIALLY IN THIS DIFFICULT TIME.

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ด้วยการ
OUR 1623RD ISSUE 04.02.20

I’ve got an announcement: The Memphis Flyer will temporarily be going to an every-other-week print schedule. Next week’s issue — April 9th — will be digital-only, available for free, of course, on memphisflyer.com. We’ll still have a “cover story,” plus all of our regular columns and features — maybe even a few more, since we won’t be constrained by a page limit. You’ll just have to read us on your computer or hand-held device. There is also a handy map on the website that tells you where you can get a copy of the paper on the weeks we do publish in print.

As I mentioned in this space last week, the current health crisis has put a dent in the Flyer’s revenue, as it has for most of our regular advertisers. Cutting back on print costs is one way we hope to be able to weather the storm until this horrific disease gets put back into its box.

How long will that be? Nobody really knows. But what we do know for certain is that the more aggressively all of us socially isolate, the sooner all of us will be able to get back to some sort of normal life. I want you to read the opening paragraph of a Washington Post story that came out Saturday: “When historians tally up the many missteps policymakers have made in response to the coronavirus pandemic, the senseless and unscientific push for the general public to avoid wearing masks should be near the top. The evidence not only fails to support the push, it also contradicts it.”

I urge you to read the rest of it, if you can. The bottom line of the story is that all of us should be wearing masks when we go out into public spaces. Not so much because masks will protect us (though they do at some level), but because wearing masks protects others. This disease, COVID-19, has a particularly devious design. Up to 80 percent of those who get it won’t show symptoms. Meaning, you might have it. I might have it. And we will never know it unless we’re tested. Since testing is still not easily available or simple, millions of us could (and do) have it and never know. Meaning many of us are walking around unknowingly infecting others. To put it more bluntly: Many of us are potential killers.

If we wear masks, we’re protecting others — and ourselves. We’re aggressively slowing the spread. The more of us who wear masks, the more acceptable the practice will become. And, as the article points out, wearing masks doesn’t mean using personal protective equipment that should be saved for medical personnel. The latest thinking is that anything that covers your nose and mouth will help — a scarf, a bandana, a cut-up T-shirt, a bra cup, a homemade mask with Tony Allen’s face on it.

So let’s do it, Memphis. We’re the city of innovators and inventors and one-of-a-kind artists and iconoclasts and weirdos. Let’s be the city that stops this evil crud faster than any other.

We’re the city of innovators and inventors and and iconoclasts and weirdos. Let’s be the city that stops this evil crud faster than any other.

Stay home as much as possible. Encourage people to take measures to cover their faces, so let’s get ahead of that curve. If we wait for the president or our governor to lead us, we’ll never catch it. As I mentioned in this space last week, the current health crisis has put a dent in the Flyer’s revenue, as it has for most of our regular advertisers. Cutting back on print costs is one way we hope to be able to weather the storm until this horrific disease gets put back into its box.

And lest you think this is just cranky Bruce going stir-crazy (which is certainly possible), you should know that officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are right now considering altering their official guidance to encourage people to take measures to cover their faces, so let’s get ahead of that curve. If we wait for the president or our governor to lead us, we’ll never catch it. It’s DIY Memphis.

And, another thing: This “six feet apart” social distancing thing? It’s meant to apply for when we go out into the aforementioned public spaces. It’s not a guideline for backyard gatherings or pandemic porch parties or corona cocktail hours. This is serious stuff, and we’ll all have to restrain our impulses for instant gratification for a while. I know it’s hard, but we can do it. It’s not like you’re being sent to ‘Nam for a year to fight the ‘Cong. If we don’t do it, we’ll be stuck in our houses for a lot longer — and you’ll know more people who get sick. You’ll know more people who will die.

Wear a mask if you go out into public gathering spaces. See you next week at memphisflyer.com.
Virus, Parks, Jails, MATA, and Memphis in May

Mayor threatens a parks shutdown, some inmates to be released, new bus rules, and the festival rescheduled.

**MONDAY**

The number of COVID-19 cases was 84 in Shelby County and 505 across Tennessee.

The Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA) rolled out social distancing measures on all of its buses and facilities. For example, customers were encouraged to use every other seat on fixed-route buses.

Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland announced his Safer at Home Initiative that ordered Memphians to stay home unless they had urgent health-care or business needs. He said we “are in serious, unprecedented times which call for decisive actions to keep everyone safe.” Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris said the county’s seven cities would announce similar orders.

The U.S. Attorney’s office for the Western District of Tennessee urged the public to report fraud schemes related to the coronavirus, like fake cures, phishing emails, and more.

**TUESDAY**

MATA rolled out a tighter set of guidelines for riders.

We pondered and unmasked “Sparkly Phone Case Girl,” a reporter present at the daily Shelby County Health Department briefings.

**WEDNESDAY**

Room In The Inn, one of the few shelters for homeless women in Memphis, had to shutter its doors because of coronavirus fears. First Presbyterian Church opened its doors the day after to operate a temporary emergency shelter for women at the request of the Hospitality Hub.

Nearly 40 groups asked the Tennessee Supreme Court to release some of those in jails and prisons across the state — like those serving time on misdemeanor charges and those who are pregnant — to stop the spread of coronavirus. The petition said such spaces become “breeding grounds” and “ticking time bombs” during pandemics.

Martha McKay was stabbed to death Wednesday in her Horseshoe Lake home by Travis Lewis, the same man who murdered McKay’s mother, Sally McKay, and Memphis musician Lee Baker in 1996.

**THURSDAY**

The Tennessee Supreme Court directed judges to submit a plan to reduce jail populations as a way to stop the spread of coronavirus. “There are low-risk, nonviolent offenders who can safely be released and supervised by other means to reduce local jail populations,” Chief Justice Jeff Bivins said.

MATA reduced service to stop the spread.

The Flyer published a new map of where you can now (because of coronavirus distribution disruptions) pick up physical copies of your favorite Memphis alt-weekly.

**FRIDAY**

Strickland threatened to close some public parks as many flooded to them but were not practicing social distancing. “Shelby Farms packed like a music fest,” Jay P Memphis wrote on Twitter. “SMDH.”

On coronavirus fears, state officials sought to rekindle a dismissed lawsuit that would challenge refugee resettlement in Tennessee.

Shelby County District Attorney General Amy Weirich said her office is working to release some incarcerated at the Shelby County Jail and has dismissed “hundreds” of cases of those recently charged.

**THE WEEKEND**

Memphis in May International Festival announced new dates for its events: World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest — September 30th-October 3rd; Beale Street Music Festival — October 16th-18th; Great American River Run — TBA.

Shelby County had 379 confirmed COVID-19 cases. That figure included one death. The state had 1,537 positive coronavirus cases and 10 deaths.

Visit the News Blog at memphisflyer.com for fuller versions of these stories and more local news.
Viral Strain

Social distancing beats coronavirus, but can stress mental health.

While people have been directed to stay at home and practice social distancing, mental health issues such as anxiety or depression can be exacerbated, experts say.

Veronique Black of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Memphis said this is a critical time for people with mental health diagnoses.

Black adds that even those who have not struggled with mental health issues in the past might start to see issues such as anxiety manifesting.

Tom Starling, president of Mental Health America of the Mid-South, a nonprofit that provides free resources, education, and screening related to mental health, said the organization has begun to see an uptick in the number of anxiety and trauma screenings.

“Many Tennesseans are questioning if they are worried or if they actually have clinical anxiety from COVID-19,” Starling said. “Mental health concerns will persist after COVID-19 is eradicated and after the physical crisis ends.”

In 2018, 20 percent of adults in Tennessee had some sort of mental illness and 4.4 percent had a serious mental illness, based on numbers from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

There are more than 200 classified forms of mental illness that range from mild to severe. The most common are depression, bipolar depression, anxiety disorder, and schizophrenia.

Black says many times mental illnesses, especially depression, are isolating by nature, and the current restrictions on social interactions can compounding loneliness.

“Social interactions are important to us as human beings,” she says. “Maybe we don’t always want to be around people, but we definitely need that. Once you’re in a situation like this where that’s restricted, you start to realize that. Social media can only go so far. We are missing that physical interaction with people that helps us maintain good mental health.”

However, Black says connecting through social media, video apps like Zoom, and other virtual platforms is “good to be able to fall back on.”

“Is it the same?” she asked. “No, but at least we do have that outlet to feel less alone. This would be much, much worse without those options. The downside to increased social media use is all of the negative news. So I’d avoid that if you can, and don’t believe everything you see and hear.”

Black said it’s important for people to try to keep their daily routines — sleep, meal times, exercise habits — as normal as possible, although “it’s very much interrupted right now.”

“People have to try to stay focused on what’s in front of them moment by moment,” she said. “Redirecting the mind, refocusing on the positives, fall back on a higher power if you believe in that.”

If someone is experiencing a mental health crisis, Black advises they call the NAMI hotline at 1-800-950-6264 or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-8255. National Suicide Prevention Hotline counselors can also be reached by texting 741741.

“You don’t have to be suicidal to call these numbers,” Blacks says. “People are just there and available to talk through any issues you might be having.”

Mental health concerns will persist after COVID-19 is eradicated.
Voting Machines Discord

GOP's Taylor agrees with protesting activists regarding selection process.

Among the potential local casualties of the coronavirus epidemic, there is an unexpected one — the democratic process itself. At this week's scheduled virtual meeting of the Shelby County Election Commission, the five commissioners — three Republicans and two Democrats, in conformity with state regulations regarding majority party/minority party ratios — are primed to vote on Election Administrator Linda Phillips' recommendations for new voting machines.

Phillips has declared that the members of the Election Commission must take a definitive up-or-down vote on the vendor, whom she will recommend from among those manufacturers who responded to an RFP (request for proposal) issued earlier by the SCEC. She has declared that the decision must come now so that the machines can be in use for August voting in the county.

For years, and for the last several months in particular, controversy has raged between activists who insist on voting machines that permit voter-marked ballots and advocates of machine-marked ballots. Phillips herself has expressed a preference for the latter type, equipped with paper-trail capability. The majority-Democratic Shelby County Commission, which must approve funding for the purchase, has expressed its own preference for hand-marked ballots.

Given the fact that Phillips' choice of machine type is more or less predictable and that the cost factor will be built into the selection of vendor, that will put the county commissioners in an awkward position of having to rubber-stamp whatever choice the SCEC passes on to them.

"The process is backwards," says GOP Election Commissioner Brent Taylor. "The Election Commission should not have initiated the RFP and passed the decision about funding on to the county commission. What we [the Election Commission members] should have done is come to some broad general decision about the kind of machines we wanted and then let the county commission issue an RFP, make the choice, and then vote on the funding."

In that regard, he agrees with former County Commissioner Steve Mulroy, an exponent of voter-marked paper ballots, who points out further that what got skipped in the process was a promised public meeting of the Election Commission at which the public could offer input. Such a meeting was to have taken place in the last month or so, before a vote on the vendor would be taken by the Election Commission. What intervened — and ended up scotching the meeting — was the coronavirus epidemic.

So there will be no opportunity for direct public input concerning Phillips' recommended purchase, a fact complicated by the virtual telemeeting process planned for Wednesday, which, in conformity with cautionary official rules against public assemblies, precludes a gathering with the opportunity for interaction between Election Commissioners and the public.

And it seemingly assures that something of a showdown will ensue at the subsequent commission meeting, also to be convened as a telemeeting, at which funding for the ultimately selected voting machines will be on the agenda. Back when the commission voted a preference for hand-marked paper ballots, Commissioner Van Turner told Phillips, who was in attendance, that the commission had ways of exercising its potential disapproval of a choice. That memorable and perhaps prophetic exchange went this way: "We can deny the funding," said Turner. "We can sue you," Phillips said in response.

The progress toward a new voting system has encountered other obstacles. One was a bombshell ruling by the county commission legal staff in mid-February that state law — to wit, TCA 29-111 — forbade the intended use of general obligation bonds to buy new voting technology without a prior voter referendum. As County Commissioner Mick Wright noted at the time: "It's disappointing that the state has this rule in place, that the voters would have to vote using the system we want to replace in order to have the system that we want to replace be replaced."

Mulroy, however, spurred further research that eventually led the county commission to create a capital source from existing contingency funds that could bypass the need for a referendum (and buttress the county commission's proprietary sense of the matter).

Another late snag, with partisan overtones, developed from a letter sent to the three GOP election commissioners from state Senator Byron Kelsey and other Republican legislators calling for the new voting machines to involve machine-marked ballots.

Brent Taylor

POLITICS By Jackson Baker
CROSSTOWN CONCOURSE is launching a new local food delivery option for midtown and downtown Memphis. Concourse now offers free food delivery to your doorstep from the Concourse restaurants that remain open for delivery and pick-up — Curb Market (including groceries and prepared meals), Global Café, and Saucy Chicken. For now, delivery is offered within a 4-mile radius of Concourse between the hours of 11:30–7:30.

To order, simply contact the restaurants or market directly, order and pay (via phone for Curb; online for Global and Saucy), and our staff will deliver your order as soon as it’s ready.

RESTAURANT CONTACT INFO:

CURB MARKET: 901-543-6880
GLOBAL CAFÉ: globalcafe memphis.com/onlineorders or 901-512-6890
SAUCY CHICKEN: saucychickenmemphis.com/s/order or 901-203-3838

Even if we can’t gather together in our communal spaces right now, Crosstown Concourse is still a hub for connections, support, and community. Make sure to stay connected by following us online @crosstownconcourse and subscribing to the newsletter at crosstownconcourse.com!
“Cover your face.” — Physician

Physician and Memphis city councilman Jeff Warren has dual perspectives on the coronavirus crisis. As a doctor, he says his practice has transformed. “We have completely closed out all regular appointments. ... We're doing telemedicine for people to make sure they're okay, and we're also doing triage for flu-like illnesses (FLI) — cough, fever, flu-like symptoms.

A few weeks back, we were seeing influenza; now the FLIs are mostly COVID-19.”

Testing availability is still an issue. “If we only test people who are sick, we don't know the prevalence of the disease in the city. People can't get tested unless they have fever, cough, shortness of breath. We need more tests and more testing.”

A lack of ventilators has been an issue in other areas struck hard by the virus. Warren says, “If people socially isolate aggressively over the next couple weeks, we could have enough ventilators. If we don't, then we probably won't have enough.”

Warren is concerned that too many Memphians aren't taking the virus seriously and aren't socially distancing or isolating, citing churches that are still holding services and people gathering in parks in groups. “We're not where we need to be,” he says.

Donning his city councilman hat for a moment, Warren adds: “If Memphis goes down with this, America's in big trouble. If we keep running, we save lives. We'll be shipping medical supplies, PPEs, and tests to the rest of the country. By shutting down the city, Mayors Harris and Strickland may have bought us a few weeks. Time will tell.”

And regarding the public wearing masks? Just do it, Warren says. “Countries that have the virus under control, their citizens have aggressively covered their faces in public. Since 80 percent of people who have the virus may not show evidence of infection, covering faces will make a big difference.”

In his practice, Warren says, “We're wearing masks till they fall apart — sterilizing them and keeping and reusing them until they fall apart.” As for the public, he doesn't mince words: “People can use scarves, T-shirts, paper or cloth masks — whatever. Put something over your face. Cover your face.” — Bruce VanWyngarden

...“We're scared.” — Nurses

Nurses in hospitals and medical clinics encounter hundreds of patients each week. Under normal circumstances, it’s a trying job, but as COVID-19 spreads rapidly, they're under more stress than ever.

“Trudy and Lizzy are local nurses, both with ICU backgrounds, who, for fear of losing their jobs, wish to remain anonymous. Working in direct patient care, both are concerned about the lack of PPE (personal protective equipment) supplied by their workplaces due to global shortages.

Trudy believes that any nurse working in direct patient care during this crisis should have access to proper PPE to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus. “We should be wearing particulate masks [N95 masks], goggles, a full suit, and we are not provided that. Supplies are running out, and the CDC bent their guidelines to accommodate that, saying basically, ‘If you get in a pinch, we recommend using a bandana or a scarf over your face.’ That's not going to do anything. I think a lot of nurses are really pissed off all over the country because how did we get to this point? We have the most expensive health-care system in
the world, and we don’t have protective equipment. It’s like sending a nurse into battle with a toothpick, like ‘Good luck. Hope you don’t get sick and die.’ We’re scared. Everybody is scared. We didn’t sign up for this.”

Last week, Trudy saw more than 100 patients. “I wore the same [surgical] mask all week because we only have about half a box for our entire staff.”

Lizzy works at a local hospital, and while she’s not currently working directly with COVID-19 patients, she knows they’re there — and she knows the risks. “I feel like we’re two weeks behind everything as far as nurses being able to wear masks, the types of masks we’re able to wear, visitors coming in and out, still allowing outpatient procedures to be done — these things should have already been hashed out. And every day, multiple times a day, the rules are changing, and that uncertainty is unnerving.”

The hospital is providing those caring directly for COVID-19 patients N95 masks, but others are only allowed regular surgical masks. “I know it’s in the atmosphere. I know it’s in our environment,” Lizzy says. “It’s like being stuck on the train tracks, and you know the train is coming and there’s nothing you can do. You might survive it, and you might not.” — Shara Clark

Due to new protocols surrounding COVID-19, Jacob says, “I have gotten several questions every day about the use of ibuprofen versus Tylenol for treating the fever and body ache symptoms of COVID-19. A lot of people have been skimming what they find on the internet, then I get phone calls saying ‘I heard ibuprofen causes COVID-19.’ No, it doesn’t cause it! They saw in the treatment of COVID-19 that people just responded better to Tylenol versus ibuprofen. If you’re on ibuprofen for your arthritis, you don’t have to worry about developing coronavirus because of your medicine.”
ORDER OF PUBLICATION
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF
SHELBY COUNTY, TENNESSEE
No. CT-2905-19
State Farm Fire and Casualty Company, Plaintiff vs. Breane N. Hess a/k/a Breane N. Hight, et al. Defendants

It appearing from the record in this cause that the whereabouts of the Defendant Breane N. Hess a/k/a Breane N. Hight is unknown and cannot be ascertained upon diligent inquiry. It further appearing that Defendant Breane N. Hess a/k/a Breane N. Hight is a resident of Shelby County, Tennessee. It is therefore ordered that Breane N. Hess a/k/a Breane N. Hight be served with process via publication in four consecutive weeks in the Memphis Flyer and that she make her appearance in the Circuit Court of Shelby County, Tennessee and answer Plaintiff’s Petition for Interpleader or the same will be taken for confessed as to Defendant and this cause proceeded with ex parte.

This the ___ day of February, 2020.
CIRCUIT COURT OF SHELBY COUNTY, TENNESSEE
By: Jonathan D. Stewart, Attorney for Plaintiff
BPR No. 023039
Address: 209 East Main Street
City, State, Zip: Jackson, TN 38301
Phone: 731-423-2414
Publication dates:
3/26, 4/2, 4/9 & 4/16.

continued from page 9

Kaitlyn Krug

There are so many risks for cardiac side effects that personally I don’t feel comfortable filling it at this time.”

Stader says the people in her pharmacy are rising to the challenge. “We’re tired, but we’re proud. We want to be there. In the health-care profession, you want to help people. We’re not complaining that we’re on the front lines. We’re just kind of fearing for our safety because we don’t have enough face masks and shields. … I hope when it’s all said and done that we can take away how important our own health is, and that we can learn from it and start taking better care of ourselves before another pandemic happens.” — Chris McCoy

“Subtle fears.” — Grocery Store Workers

Health-care workers are rightly venerated now, battling on the front lines to heal the sick. Grocery store workers toil in the background; but they also deserve a full pallet of respect. They keep the vital food-supply lines open for the rest of us.

But for grocery store workers, those well-lit aisles may hide a deadly foe. Imagine you’re stocking onions and a stranger sidles up next to you to squeeze a few avocados and ask a question. It is your job to be there and to be nice to customers. What do you do? The short answer to working grocery retail on the coronavirus front lines is: It ain’t easy.

“Robert is — first and foremost — grateful. He still has a job; many he knows in the service industry do not.

“I’m also a little anxious every time I go into work,” he says. “During the past few weeks, my store has seen an insane surge in clientele and sales, so part of me always wonders how many (if any at all, of course) of these customers might be carrying the virus and don’t know it yet.”

A second worker, “Sharon, notes some ‘subtle fears’ of the virus, again because “anybody can come in and you don’t really know if they are ill or not.” But she says her store has implemented new sanitation and social distance policies. “We have signs on the floors guiding customers where to stand. We also have a person at the front door cleaning cart and basket handles for each customer.”

Stores were tense in the first days of the virus, both workers say. Now that things have calmed somewhat, both say they are getting respect and appreciation from customers more than ever.

“I think it started to hit home to some people that we are all in this together,” Robert says. “My co-workers — retail brothers and sisters — we were all doing our best to make sure we had everything someone coming into our stores would need, but there were so many factors outside of our control. I think more people understand that now; everyone seems so much more gracious and polite.”
Outside a Raleigh church, volunteers with protective face masks and rubber gloves place boxes of food in cars queuing in the parking lot.

Inside the boxes are about 40 pounds of food — frozen meat, fresh produce, bread, and other staples. It’s meant to supplement a family for about a week, depending on the size of the family.

This was the site of one of the Mid-South Food Bank’s (MSFB) mobile food pantries last Saturday. The pantries rotate locations across the city, setting up in parking lots of churches, schools, and community centers.

Cathy Pope, CEO and president of MSFB, says the food bank ran mobile pantries prior to COVID-19, but as schools closed the organization “ramped up” that effort.

Pope says when Shelby County Schools initially announced that schools would be closing, the food bank immediately mobilized to put together boxes for SCS students and their families. So far, about 2,000 boxes have been distributed across the city at close to 40 sites.

“My team met to discuss what the needs are going to be in the community and where we can plug in really quickly,” Pope says. “When schools closed, we knew that the need was going to increase because students aren’t able to get meals at school.”

Pope says Shelby County already has heightened statistics for food insecurity and “a lot of that is because 44 percent of our children live in poverty. That’s not okay for our community, so I want to make sure that we are providing the food people need, especially to children and seniors. That was true before the virus and even more now. With layoffs, now we are shifting to also serving working families that are no longer working.”

Pope says without volunteers, the distribution of food at the mobile pantries wouldn’t be possible: “We depend on volunteers every day, pre-COVID-19, but now they are more important than ever. Funding is going to be crucial for us,” Pope says, encouraging the public to donate to the food bank if they can. “It’s the most

continued on page 14
Important Facts About DOVATO
This is only a brief summary of important information about DOVATO and does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your condition and treatment.

What is the Most Important Information I Should Know about DOVATO? If you have both human immunodeficiency virus-1 (HIV-1) and hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection, DOVATO can cause serious side effects, including:

- Resistant HBV infection. Your healthcare provider will test you for HBV infection before you start treatment with DOVATO. If you have HIV-1 and hepatitis B, the hepatitis B virus can change (mutate) during your treatment with DOVATO and become harder to treat (resistant). It is not known if DOVATO is safe and effective in people who have HIV-1 and HBV infection.
- Worsening of HBV infection. If you have HIV-1 and HBV infection, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking DOVATO. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before. Worsening liver disease can be serious and may lead to death.
  - Do not run out of DOVATO. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your DOVATO is all gone.
  - Do not stop DOVATO without first talking to your healthcare provider. If you stop taking DOVATO, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your liver.

What is DOVATO? DOVATO is a prescription medicine that is used without other antiretroviral medicines to treat HIV-1 infection in adults who have not received antiretroviral medicines in the past, and without known resistance to the medicines dolutegravir or lamivudine. HIV-1 is the virus that causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). It is not known if DOVATO is safe and effective in children.

Who should not take DOVATO?
Do Not Take DOVATO If You:
- have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine that contains dolutegravir or lamivudine.
- take delavirdine.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using DOVATO?
Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you:
- have or have had liver problems, including hepatitis B or C infection.
- have kidney problems.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. One of the medicines in DOVATO (dolutegravir) may harm your unborn baby.
  - Your healthcare provider may prescribe a different medicine than DOVATO if you are planning to become pregnant or if pregnancy is confirmed in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.
  - If you can become pregnant, your healthcare provider will perform a pregnancy test before you start treatment with DOVATO.
  - If you can become pregnant, you should consistently use effective birth control (contraception) during treatment with DOVATO.
  - Tell your healthcare provider right away if you are planning to become pregnant, you become pregnant, or think you may be pregnant during treatment with DOVATO.

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you: (cont’d)
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take DOVATO.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
  - One of the medicines in DOVATO (lamivudine) passes into your breast milk.
  - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Some medicines interact with DOVATO. Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.
- You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of medicines that interact with DOVATO.
- Do not start taking a new medicine without telling your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider can tell you if it is safe to take DOVATO with other medicines.

What are Possible Side Effects of DOVATO? DOVATO can cause serious side effects, including:
- Those in the “What is the Most Important Information I Should Know about DOVATO?” section.
- Allergic reactions. Call your healthcare provider right away if you develop a rash with DOVATO. Stop taking DOVATO and get medical help right away if you develop a rash with any of the following signs or symptoms: fever; generally ill feeling; tiredness; muscle or joint aches; blisters or sores in mouth; blisters or peeling of the skin; redness or swelling of the eyes; swelling of the mouth, face, lips, or tongue; problems breathing.
- Liver problems. People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening changes in certain liver tests during treatment with DOVATO. Liver problems, including liver failure, have also happened in people without a history of liver disease or other risk factors. Your healthcare provider may do blood tests to check your liver.
- Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis). Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms of liver problems: your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice); dark or “tea-colored” urine; light-colored stools (bowel movements); nausea or vomiting; loss of appetite; and/or pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area.
- Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis). Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms that could be signs of lactic acidosis: feel very weak or tired; unusual (not normal) muscle pain; trouble breathing; stomach pain with nausea and vomiting; feel cold, especially in your arms and legs; feel dizzy or lightheaded; and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- Lactic acidosis can also lead to severe liver problems, which can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the signs or symptoms of liver problems which are listed above under “Liver problems.” You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female or very overweight (obese).

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DILLADVT190031 November 2019
Produced in USA.

Learn more about Kalvin and DOVATO at DOVATO.com

For information on access and coverage to help you get your prescribed ViiV Healthcare medications
Insured • Underinsured • Uninsured

1-844-388-3286 (toll free) Monday-Friday, 8am-11pm EST
www.vivconnect.com
Could DOVATO be right for you? Ask your doctor today.

### Living with HIV

**SO MUCH GOES INTO WHO I AM**

**HIV MEDICINE IS ONE PART OF IT.**

Reasons to ask your doctor about DOVATO:

- **DOVATO** can help you reach and then stay undetectable* with just 2 medicines in 1 pill. That means fewer medicines† in your body while taking DOVATO.

- **You can take it any time of day with or without food** (around the same time each day)—giving you flexibility.

**DOVATO** is a once-a-day complete treatment for adults who are new to HIV-1 medicine. Results may vary.

*Undetectable means reducing the HIV in your blood to very low levels (less than 50 copies per mL).

†As compared with 3-drug regimens.

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**Dovato**

dolutegravir 50 mg/
lamivudine 300 mg tablets

What are Possible Side Effects of DOVATO (cont’d)?

- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having new symptoms after you start taking DOVATO.

- **The most common side effects of DOVATO include:**
  - headache
  - diarrhea
  - nausea
  - trouble sleeping
  - and tiredness.

These are not all the possible side effects of DOVATO. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

**Where Can I Find More Information?**

- **Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.**
- **Go to DOVATO.com or call 1-877-844-8872,** where you can also get FDA-approved labeling.

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Under treatment with DOVATO, your immune system might grow stronger and begin to fight infections you have had for a long time. You may start having new symptoms. If you start having new symptoms, tell your healthcare provider right away.

October 2019 DVT:2PI-2PIL

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**Could DOVATO be right for you? Ask your doctor today.**
helpful thing people can do to help us right now. One dollar provides three meals.

“Normally, when there is a disaster, it’s in one location geographically and you can call in the troops from all over the country to help,” Pope says. “For the whole country to be in need at the same time is quite challenging and overwhelming. But what it’s doing is allowing for each community to hold its own. And it’s really working well for Memphis and Shelby County.” — Maya Smith

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“We’re peoples’ medication.”
— CBD Store Owner

Tanna moved to Memphis from Oregon a year ago to help open Ounce of Hope, a CBD store on Cooper Street. “It’s been pretty awesome,” she says. Ounce of Hope has remained open after the city-mandated shutdown of nonessential businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. “We were ready to be considered nonessential, but it was nice to have customers reach out to us. We’re people’s medication. We kind of realized that we have to stay open,” Tanna says. “We had a surge in business before, when there was talk about a mandate happening and people were worried [we’d be] closed down. Since then, things have been pretty calm. We still have our regulars coming in.” Tanna says the store has been taking extraordinary cautions to ensure the safety of customers and staff alike. “I wear gloves when I’m wearing anything, generally. I disinfect this place every hour, all touchable surfaces. We’ve taken away pretty much all things for customers to interact with. We’ve taken down the sensory bar, things like hand sanitizer for the public, and I’ve got some of my own in the back.”

Tanna says she has some concern about her personal safety, but it’s the health of others that worries her most. Her boyfriend is on a drug regime that suppresses his immune system. “I come home to him, so there’s a chance I would bring it with me to him,” she says. “It’s not even about being infected. I would hate to be the lynchpin in something. It’s important for me to be in good health because I am interacting in the public.” — CM

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“It’s decimated.” — Pet Care Provider

On a good day for Mr. Scruff’s Pet Care, a Midtown-based enterprise in the Cooper-Young/East Parkway area, co-owner Ricci Mundy and her partner, Eileen Castine, handle 15 to 18 customers. Mostly dogs, but also cats and “birds, fish, snakes, lizards, and ferrets,” says Mundy, whose business has been providing such services for 20 years. Depending on the species, the animals are walked, bathed, fed, and given every imaginable kind of appropriate loving care. But, though Mr. Scruff’s, like several competitive enterprises in town, is considered to
be an “allowable activity” under Mayor Strickland’s “Safer at Home” order, business is down during the coronavirus pandemic. Way down. “It’s decimated,” says Mundy. Down to an average of three pets a day needing attention.

The main problem, says Mundy, is that too many of the pet owners who usually need her services are in stay-at-home mode and trying themselves to provide the functions that have been provided by Mr. Scruff’s.

Animal care isn’t a hobby. At rates of $18 to $20 a visit, Mr. Scruff’s revenue pays the bills — especially since many of the animals are taken there for extended vacations when their owners are traveling.

It’s possible, of course, that some of the fall-off in the animal-care business might be due to pet owners’ fears that the COVID-19 virus is transmissible to or from their beloved creatures. That’s possibly because the virus, a novel one, is thought to be “zoonotic,” i.e., one that originated in mammalian animal hosts, possibly in a live-animal market in Wuhan, China.

But a recent advisory from the World Health Organization states that “there is no evidence to suggest that dogs or cats can be infected with the new coronavirus,” and the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) concurs. Even so, the slowdown in customers, like the pandemic itself, is all too real — and unpredictable in its duration. A shame, since, as Mundy notes, on her own behalf as well as her competitors, “There’s enough business out there for everybody.” — Jackson Baker

“Showbiz seems off the table.”
— Delivery Driver

John, who prefers to be referenced by his first name only, used to work in the music industry as a marketing manager and show promoter. But when COVID-19 struck, he was forced to pursue other streams of revenue. “Showbiz seems off the table for a long time,” he says. “That makes me incredibly sad.”

With delivery services increasing in demand, John decided he would switch to same-day grocery delivery and pick-up service, Instacart. “Customers seem to really appreciate and need the service right now,” he says. “It’s not something I could see living on, but it’s better than nothing.”

In the last week, John managed to fulfill 30 orders. “It can be very time-consuming,” he says. “A large order can take more than an hour, total.”

Due to high demand, John has experienced lags or complete crashes with the Instacart app, and he says their employee protection could be better. “Their support is nonexistent right now,” he says. “Instacart is stacking the orders and not increasing pay enough. Apparently, they reduced the suggested tip amount [to 5 percent], and they aren’t really doing anything to keep their shoppers safe.”

Instacart employees across the country are going on strike, saying that the company isn’t providing workers with enough safety items, including hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, and sprays, and that they aren’t supplying ample hazard pay. Instacart has since announced that they will start working toward demands, including offering free hand sanitizer to employees and supplying up to 14 days of pay for any full-service shopper who contracts COVID-19.

John isn’t taking any chances. “I went out and bought some gloves,” he says. “My sister has access to an N95 mask she’s going to bring me. And I’ve tried to keep distance from people. Most orders have been leave-on-porch orders to minimize contact.”

John says that he is worried about risking the safety and well-being of both himself and his family. “This could kill me,” he says. “I’m 35 and not in great shape. More than anything, I’m worried about my stepmom who just beat cancer, my mom who isn’t in great health, and my 93-year-old grandma. But I have no backup [for income], and I have to risk it.” — Julia Baker

*Names of some sources in this story have been changed to protect their anonymity.*
Critters  By Julia Baker

Local ceramics artist Becky Zee hosts a virtual Crittermaking at-home ceramics class through the first of Arrow Creative’s Creatively Quarantined online series this Friday, April 3rd.

“It’s new for me, and it’s new for them,” she says.

While the world of online classes is new to Zee, as it is for many others, one thing she knows very well is the art of ceramics, having worked with the medium since she was 5 years old. Through her artistic career, she has become a full-time ceramics artist, specializing in crafting critters out of clay.

And she’s here to show the public that they can do it, too, using a basic pottery method called “pinch pot” construction.

“It’s the very first thing that you’re taught whenever you take a ceramics class,” says Zee.

She says this class is appropriate for all ages and all levels. What's more, anyone who doesn't already have materials can have a kit containing clay, sculpting tools, acrylics paints, and a paintbrush delivered to their door by Arrow Creative.

In times like these when we must be creative in how we spend our extra free time, Zee says this class could serve as a great outlet.

“As anybody can tell you right now, we're all under a lot of stress, and I think arts and entertainment help to alleviate that stress,” says Zee. “The only thing you can control right now is just to maintain a positive attitude. So Arrow is helping people to get rid of that stress and just have a little bit of fun.”

CREATIVELY QUARANTINED: CRITTERMAKING WITH BECKY ZEE, ARROWCREATIVE.ORG, FRIDAY, APRIL 3RD, 10:30 A.M.-12:30 P.M., $65 CLASS FEE (INCLUDES CERAMICS KIT), $20 FOR EACH ADDITIONAL KIT.
nd just like that, the gigs were
gone. Musicians around the world
have suffered a setback as their
primary sources of income —
performances in public venues
— have evaporated. In previous
centuries, such straits might have sent troubadours
making do with digging ditches. Now, we have the
live-streamed event. And many local players are
making it work for them.
“A few people had already done [live-streamed
performances] in Memphis before me,” says multi-
instrumentalist and songwriter Graham Winchester.
“But mine was one of the first ones that someone made
an event for and advertised. And it got a lot of support.”
Indeed, Winchester’s live-streamed Facebook event
on March 14th occurred right on the cusp of the great
shift to social distancing. “The night before, I played
my actual record release show at Bar DKDC, and
I know a lot of folks weren’t comfortable going out
even then. So I wanted to do a second part [online].
And it went really well. I was blown away.”
While such events may not match the steady pay
of real-life gigs, there’s a chance they’ll earn you even
more. “People were super-generous on the donations,”
says Winchester. “On the actual feed, I wrote, ‘If you
want to donate $15 or more for an LP, I’ll deliver a
record directly to your doorstep.’ So a lot of people
were giving two to three times the asking price of
the vinyl, saying, ‘I know it’s hard times, man,’ or
‘keep the change.’ It really touched me. I was in tears
that night, thinking about how many people were so
generous with their donations.”
Gerald Stephens, keyboardist extraordinaire for
the Love Light Orchestra and other bands, has also
jumped into live-streaming, noting that, “It’s the
sharing economy. ‘Give me some content, if I like
it I’ll give you a $10 tip.’ That’s people helping each
other. I’m grateful. I’ve made some of what I’ve lost
back, a substantial amount of it, so I feel grateful.
There’s something to us taking care of each other.
That’s the good part of this.”
Stephens was surprised, given that his first live-
streamed event was launched on the spur of the
moment. “It was real quick,” he says. “I just realized,
‘Hey, we lost some money. Hey, my friends tried that,
it works.’ And I do enough restaurant gigs, blues gigs,
and rock gigs that I’m always in practice. I always have
a bunch of different songs that I can play at any given
time. So I came up with a setlist on the fly. The second
one, I planned a little bit more ahead. Doing the
same thing within
a week, I don’t want it to be exactly the same.”
Winchester throws himself into the planning. “We
put plants in my room, which has a shag carpet, a
good vintage vibe, and tried to turn it into a jungle
room. And we also ran a bunch of sound checks. You
can make a Facebook Live setting private and invite
a couple friends. I think there’s a misconception out
there, where musicians think, ‘Once you’re live, you’re
live. It’s on.’ But there is a way to make it private and
sound check it first.”
There’s an aesthetic payoff as well. Stephens says he
started his first solo streaming event partly to satisfy
his creative side. “I don’t think people are doing it
necessarily for the money,” he says. “We need that,
and I’ll take it and say thank you. But also, this is
what we do. You know how it feels if you’re playing
all the time, and then suddenly you’re stuck at home.
Now there’s an outlet, you know? The emotional
outlet to art is more important than the money. It’s
nice to have a little of both so we can just have time to
do it better.”

Gather by the Stream  
Memphis music lovers support players’ online events.
**BAR REPORT** By Meghan Stuthard

Drink Responsibly

Bring your favorite bar home during quarantine.

Wooooo boy, ain’t we in the throes of it now? Feels like it was just last week when my assignment was simply to go to a bar and let y’all know that service is good and drinks are delicious. Well, shit’s changed, and frankly, it’s our duty to change with it. So let’s go to a bar, virtual-style.

I’ve not been able to go to an actual bar (because quarantine is the responsible thing to do, son!), so I’ve explored many options, including delivery, curbside service, and controlled irresponsibility, which is a thing you do with Clorox wipes, growers, and general intelligence.

Unless you’ve written it off because your best friend from high school is an anti-vaxxer or your in-laws are trying to friend you, Facebook has been an astoundingly solid resource for restaurants and bars doing some cool stuff. Most any restaurant that you call is willing to make you drinks to-go, offer wines at a discount, or at least try to offload their selection of beer. They mostly let their deals be known on Facebook, so ignore the friend request from your mother-in-law and check out a menu.

“I don’t have the Facebook!” Neat. You can still navigate to the page and see their specials, you catastrophic moron.

Buster’s Liquors & Wines is doing curbside pick-up from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Place an order by 5:30 p.m. and patiently wait outside, and they’ll bring it to you. This is a great option if you haven’t begun drinking yet but plan to before the sun goes down. Shake up some local vodka and a squeeze from a lime you got from the Blue Monkey walk-in cooler. Log into Google Hangouts and play Jackbox and a squeeze from a lime you got from the Blue Monkey walk-in cooler. Log into Google Hangouts and play Jackbox.

Wiseacre Brewing Co. is doing delivery: I recommend ordering a couple six-packs of Ananda between 1 and 6 p.m., tipping the person who drops it off, and pressure-washing your driveway with your roommates. If there’s any left over, wipe it down real nice with some industrial wipes you got from Highbar and spit-covered instruments marching through a neighborhood (get your shit together, Central Gardens!). I’m talking about all of us being in this together.

And together, we can support our local establishments and, of course, safely consume boozie off-premises in the comfort of our meticulously clean living rooms and/or porches, or really anywhere you can pour a tall one. Cheers to staying safe, everyone! 🥂

Drinking local with hurricanes in pouches from Bayou Bar & Grill.

You know the best part about being asked to stay at home and stop the spread of a lethal virus? First off, it’s responsible at-home consumption of booze acquired from local restaurants, but the second-best thing is camaraderie. No, I’m not advising having a damn parade with children and spit-covered instruments marching through a neighborhood (get your shit together, Central Gardens!), I’m talking about all of us being in this together.

And together, we can support our local establishments and, of course, safely consume boozie off-premises in the comfort of our meticulously clean living rooms and/or porches, or really anywhere you can pour a tall one. Cheers to staying safe, everyone! 🥂
Farm Fare
Coronavirus has impacted local farmers, too.

COVID-19 is radically changing how local restaurants operate, and, in turn, local farmers are facing mounting challenges as well.

"To be completely frank, it’s run us ragged," says Scott Lisenby, who operates Bluff City Fungi.

“Our day-to-day operations have changed dramatically almost overnight. We’re running on a skeleton crew, and we’re working at 110 percent to keep up with the almost daily changes," he says.

Local restaurants are reporting dramatic losses in sales, which has had an inevitable impact on the farmers from whom they source their food.

For example, Ed Cabigao, one of the owners of Zaka Bowl, Interim, and South of Beale, has experienced this phenomenon at each of those restaurants — which all source food from local farmers.

"Interim experienced an 80 percent drop in sales instantly," Cabigao says. "S.O.B. experienced a 30 percent drop in sales initially, and it has now dropped to around 50 percent. Zaka Bowl experienced a 50 percent drop in sales and has held at that.

"Interim was the first concept where we closed the dining room because of sales, and also because it’s pretty clear that the pandemic should be taken very seriously," he says.

"We’re right next to a retirement home and a pediatrician’s office, so that helped strengthen our decision."

The effects of restaurant closures like these have been felt throughout the local farming community.

"Since farming takes months and months of planning ahead, we have tens of thousands of dollars worth of product coming up and no one to sell it to," Lisenby explains.

"The majority of our business is direct to restaurants and wholesalers, and, understandably so, almost every single one of those streams of income has dried up overnight," he adds.

"The nature of the restaurant business relies on a constant flow of sales every single day, and when a sharp, unprecedented decrease happens so swiftly, and coupled with the fact that there has been no direction or leadership in terms of when we can expect the pandemic to pass, it forces us as business owners to make very difficult decisions," says Cabigao.

Though they’re considered essential businesses, farmers markets are having to make tough decisions, too. It was recently announced that the opening of this year’s Memphis Farmers Market (MFM), originally scheduled for April 4th, would be delayed and projected to open on May 9th instead.

"We feel it is our responsibility to do our part to flatten the curve and help stop the transmission of this virus through our city," says Robert Marcy, executive director of MFM.

"Please know that we made this decision with the entire MFM community in mind, as the health of our vendors, customers, volunteers, and staff is most important, and whatever measures we need to take to ensure their health and safety are the proper ones," he adds.

Sandy Watson, market director of the Cooper-Young Farmers Market, is also adapting rapidly to changing circumstances.

"This situation can’t help but have a lasting impact — the community has been forced to cook at home more now that restaurants are closed," says Watson, recognizing that the need to access fresh food is more important than ever.

"Will that continue after this is over? Will restaurants be able to recover from this? Some will not," Watson says.

It’s not too late to support your local farmers, and many have transitioned to online sales and home delivery.

Lisenby offers his own advice: “Please shop local. Please. Your farmers are adapting to better serve you right now, many will deliver or ship right to your door, many are still working farmers markets with ramped up safety protocols.

"Reach out to your favorite local farms and see what your options are for supporting them," Lisenby suggests. Find out more about your options from local farmers markets at memphisfarmersmarket.org and cycfarmersmarket.org, or order from Bluff City Fungi at bluffcityfungi.com.
Barbecue and Vino

Uncorked is a rare film that gets Memphis right.

In what must be a coincidence, both productions that filmed in Memphis in 2019—Bluff City Law and Uncorked—have protagonists named Elijah. But there is where the similarities end. The NBC series Bluff City Law was led by Jimmy Smits as Elijah Strait, a seasoned lawyer and pillar of his Memphis community whose personal life was considerably more messy and morally ambiguous than his professional reputation would suggest. Smits is a great actor, with a commanding screen presence, but his Elijah was an idealized hero for prime-time, network TV morality plays. He never felt like someone you could run into on the street, even as we were actually running into Jimmy Smits on the streets of Memphis.

Uncorked, the feature-length Netflix production which recently debuted on the streaming service, is the story of a young man named Elijah (Mamoudou Athie) who is much more recognizably a Memphian. Athie is the heart of the place, and the glue that keeps the family together. Elijah loves his family, but he’s also intensely aware of his own place in the clan’s hierarchy. He’s quiet, sensitive, and frequently drowned out at the dinner table by his more boisterous sisters and cousins. Where he really comes alive is at his other job. Elijah’s workday involves being the sommelier, or wine steward, of the restaurant his father founded. “This place is historic!” Louis (Courtney B. Vance) puts into selecting the perfect rack of ribs and the right balance of woods to smoke them.

One thing Uncorked gets right about Memphis barbecue is the deeply personal connection our restaurateurs have with their cuisine. Pork barbecue is a fundamental part of the culture, and for the predominantly African-American families who pass down recipes from father to son, the barbecue business has been a ticket out of grinding generational poverty. Louis is intensely proud of the restaurant his father founded. “This place is historic!” Frankie Beverley had a stroke over there,” he says.

The restaurant is wildly successful. When we first see it, there’s a line out the door. (I had a little pang of COVID-19 angst when I first saw the crowded dining room. When will we be able to gather over pulled pork sandwiches again?) It brings in enough money to support the whole extended family, who are all expected to pitch in to make it run smoothly. While Louis is the gruff patriarch, mother Sylvia (Niecy Nash) is the heart of the place, and the glue that keeps the family together.

Elijah loves his family, but he’s also intensely aware of his own place in the clan’s hierarchy. He’s quiet, sensitive, and frequently drowned out at the dinner table by his more boisterous sisters and cousins. Where he really comes alive is at his other job. Elijah’s got a passion for wine and a talent for selling it. He successfully flirts with his soon-to-be new girlfriend Tanya (Sasha Compere) by comparing wines with hip-hop artists. And, like any good wine- and hip-hop-head, he is a little deflated when she says she’ll take the Drake.

Louis wants Elijah to follow in his footsteps and become the third generation to run the restaurant. He’s even planning to open a new location. “The neighborhood is gentrified. You know, with white folks.” But when Elijah gets an opportunity to take the entrance exam for a prestigious sommelier school, he takes it, and, to his surprise, he passes it. This seeming good fortune brings to a head the simmering conflict between Elijah and his father. When Louis wants Elijah to take the Drake, Elijah takes the Drake. Louis is even more shocked when Elijah chooses grapes and oversees the exacting process of making his own wine. Louis wants Elijah to follow in his footsteps and become the third generation to run the restaurant. He’s even planning to open a new location. “The neighborhood is gentrified. You know, with white folks.” But when Elijah gets an opportunity to take the entrance exam for a prestigious sommelier school, he takes it, and, to his surprise, he passes it. This seeming good fortune brings to a head the simmering conflict between Elijah and his father. When Louis wants Elijah to take the Drake, Elijah takes the Drake. Louis is even more shocked when Elijah chooses grapes and oversees the exacting process of making his own wine. Louis is the gruff patriarch, mother Sylvia (Niecy Nash) is the heart of the place, and the glue that keeps the family together.

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In compliance with local, state and federal directives, Malco Theatres is TEMORARILY closing all locations.

We anticipate returning soon!

Look for updates on www.malco.com and the Malco app, as well as on social media platforms under @malcotheatres (Facebook & Twitter) and @malcotheatres1915 (Instagram).

Malco Theatres thanks you and appreciates your ongoing patronage.

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The COVID-19 pandemic has people keeping their distance from each other, but what if you had no choice but to be in a crowded room, sharing a sink and a toilet, unable to so much as sanitize your hands or step away from a person when they sneezed?

America’s culture of mass incarceration is unnecessarily forcing hundreds of thousands of people to crowd together, often with substandard sanitation and medical care. They’re prisoners held for low-level offenses such as shoplifting, drug possession, and even driving with a suspended license. For their sake, and ours, we need to let them out.

Many of our prisons and jails are overcrowded. Even the ones not considered overcrowded house strangers in close proximity, with a revolving door of inmates. Jails, which mostly house people who have not yet been convicted, move people in and out on a constant basis. As medical experts will tell you, this is a recipe for coronavirus disaster. You cannot practice social distancing in prison.

It’s also a constitutional issue. Keeping prisoners in unhealthy conditions can constitute “cruel and unusual punishment” in violation of the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments. The standard is lenient. Prisoners must prove that prison officials acted with “deliberate indifference” to prisoners’ well-being. The Supreme Court has stated that exposure of prisoners to a “serious communicable disease,” even if the prisoners currently show no symptoms, can meet this standard. Most would agree that COVID-19 qualifies as a “serious communicable disease.”

This injustice is even worse with respect to the roughly half-million people jailed in the U.S. who haven’t been convicted. Under the Due Process Clause, they’re entitled to at least as much protection as those actually convicted. Such people are being held awaiting trial — some because a judge has determined they are likely to flee or be dangerous, but most simply because they can’t afford bail. To add insult to injury, many federal courts have suspended jury trials under the Speedy Trial Act’s emergency provisions, ensuring that those people remain in jail even longer while awaiting a trial. Surely, we can release many of these people pending trial without serious risk.

This isn’t just a question of justice; it’s sound health policy. Prisoners constantly cycling in and out of crowded prisons can spread coronavirus to the population at large. The virus is already spreading at New York’s Rikers Island facility. Our mass incarceration regime can mass-produce thousands of Typhoid Marys. No reasonable person would urge the release of dangerous prisoners who have committed serious crimes. But a large percentage are held for nonviolent drug, property, or “public order” offenses like prostitution, public drunkenness, and even driving on a suspended license. They would pose less of a public safety threat healthy and released than as potential pandemic vectors.

Los Angeles, Cleveland, and Boston have already decided to release prisoners deemed low-risk. Other cities are not only releasing some inmates but slowing down the influx of new. Baltimore prosecutors are no longer prosecuting most drug, prostitution, and other public order offenses.

The federal system has announced no policy regarding releasing low-risk prisoners or slowing the influx of new low-level, nonviolent offenders. Thankfully, Immigrants and Customs Enforcement has temporarily suspended most immigration arrests, reserving arrests for those who pose a public safety threat or whose confinement is mandatory.

New Orleans prosecutors have gone the opposite direction, arguing to judges that inmates have to be kept in jail precisely because they may pose a public health risk even if they don’t have the virus. They have also argued that release policies are unnecessary because there are no confirmed COVID-19 cases in the jail — precisely the type of short-sighted decision-making we can’t afford in this pandemic. If we wait for outbreaks in our jails and prisons, it will be too late.

Prosecutors should suspend prosecutions for nonviolent, low-level offenses. Jails should release nonviolent pretrial detainees who languish in jail simply because they cannot afford bail. Prisons should release low-level, non-public-safety offenders who are near their release term anyway. For others charged with or convicted of similar offenses, they should consider parole, home confinement with ankle bracelet monitoring, or other alternatives to traditional incarceration until we are certain the pandemic is behind us. Finally, we need to implement nationwide testing for COVID-19 in jails and prisons. The time to act is now. It’s a matter not only of justice, but societal self-defense.

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