

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH



UPDATE from the City Manager for Sunday, July 26, 2020

**Portsmouth Protection Plan:
Do your part. Wear a mask.**

**Deaths to date from COVID-19:
In the US: 149,981. In NH: 409.
In Rockingham County: 94.
Cumulative cases in New Hampshire, 6,415.
Cumulative, Rockingham County: 1,581.
Current cases in Rockingham County: 118.
Current cases in Portsmouth: 5.
For the complete, NH Department of Health &
Human Services dashboard
<http://www.nh.gov/covid19>**

Transitions

Today I find the mask useful
along with sunglasses
to hide my tear streaked face,
not wanting to scare the barista
who has enough to deal with
behind his own mask.

He need not know
I just read the good-bye letter
of a beautiful, brilliant poet
signing off forever
from the outside world
to slip into her hospice.

Her courage,
her sadness,
her eloquence,
her impending death
have pummeled me
with premature grief.

I don't know how to
prepare my good-byes.
Though the inevitability,
the enormity, of the task
hovers on the edges of
this gorgeous summer.

For today, I only know
how to harvest a gourd
from my meager garden,
wash it in clear, cool water,
and chop it with slow strokes
of a sharp blade.

For today, I only know
how to measure, pour,
and stir in slow folds,
batter for zucchini nut bread,
to bake for the young man
who fixed my car.

Realizing in the doing
that there are so many ways
to say good-bye.

-- Tammi J Truax

*Portsmouth Poet Laureate 2019-2021
Maine Beat Poet Laureate 2018-2020*

