

Schools

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will be assigned to students, she said. Vero Beach High School's prom is scheduled for April 24, with graduation May 22, Maddux said. In St. Lucie County, graduations will be held outdoors with students seated 6 feet apart and masks required for everyone, spokesperson Lydia Martin said. Like last year, tickets will be limited to allow for social distancing, she said. Treasure Coast High and Lincoln Park Academy graduations are planned

for May 25; St. Lucie West Centennial High and Fort Pierce Westwood Academy, May 26; and Fort Pierce Central and Port St. Lucie high school, May 27. Staff and students at the six high schools still are finalizing a plan for proms, but no dates have been set, Martin said. Martin County schools are the furthest along in their planning, and the School Board Tuesday heard tentative details. Jensen Beach High seniors would graduate May 19, with Martin County and South Fork commencements May 20 and 21, respectively. Health and safety guidelines for all graduations will be similar to last year's.

The School Board also heard plans for this year's proms, which are expected to be April 10. Martin County and South Fork seniors have chosen to have outdoor movie screenings as their prom. The events would feature photography opportunities and food trucks, though details such as cost have yet to be finalized. Students would sign up to watch the movies in "pods" to ensure social distancing. Jensen Beach High seniors chose having a formal dinner in the school courtyard. They said ensuring an opportunity to attend a formal event was an important aspect for them and

their families. For board member Victoria Defenthaler, creative alternatives to the traditional proms of years past could be a way to attract even more students than before. "I really think activities like this may bring in students who don't normally go to prom because they're not comfortable (or) intimidated" by the event," she said Tuesday. "I think this is a great idea and I think it's exciting." Sommer Brugal is TCPalm's education reporter for Indian River, St Lucie and Martin counties. You can keep up with Sommer on Twitter @smbrugal and give her a call at 772-221-4231.

Reisman

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Other COVID-19 victims struggle daily — with health, economic or education issues. There's plenty of bad news and divisiveness to go around. On the other hand, Adam Zavelghorba, a member of our reader advisory board from Port St. Lucie, got me thinking about how COVID-19 has affected us — as individuals or as a society — in positive ways. Some we might never have imagined pre-COVID-19 — like one that helps feed Zavelghorba regularly. "Since I wasn't able to visit my favorite wing joint, I had to find a way to fulfill my craving," he said in an email, noting his \$189 purchase of a Ninja Foodi air fryer. "What started as trial and error quickly turned into something more creative with different sauces, mixtures, and other recipes. ... it's not just a chicken wing thing anymore." For some of us, such as Adam Neal, our editor, professional changes spurred those at home. "It's all about time," he said, noting our company's requirement to work at home saved him from a 30-minute to two-hour commute each day. "I'm able to help get my young kids ready for school and even pick them up sometimes when needed. I see them more throughout the week than ever before. "Lunch time at my desk or grabbing something out quick near the office is now (at least sometimes) next to my



Britt and Laurence Reisman, right, smile after officiating a high school soccer game together in Indian River County on Dec. 7. The father and son got to referee several games together with Britt attending college online from home because of the novel coronavirus. LAURENCE REISMAN/TCPALM

wife, who also works from home, or eating with my kids — especially during the summer," he continued. "This extra time together has strengthened our family bond beyond more than a few hours together in the weekday evenings." Unexpected family time has been special for me, too. In late spring, fall and for two weeks this year my son had to attend college virtually, from home. We even got to officiate several high school soccer games together. Our family is spread throughout the country. It always was challenging and expensive to get everyone together for birthdays and holidays. Virtual dinners and parties make it easy.

Working from home has helped me use my time more efficiently. I've been able to get in an hour or two of exercise almost daily and become more productive at work. One reason is I've been able to cover many court and government meetings without leaving my computer. Zoom meetings have given the public incredible access to their government. Jackie Vitale, a reader adviser from Stuart, didn't have it as easy as some. She lost her job as a chef over the summer. "The biggest positive impact the pandemic has had on my life is the reframing of my relationship to work and productivity," she wrote. "I've been a workaholic since my school days, and a huge part of my identity has been my overactive work ethic. "When I got laid off this summer, it was the first extended chunk of time in my life that I wasn't working or in school full time. The existential dread of not having a lengthy to-do list was intense. It made me question whether or not my idea of hard work wasn't in fact extreme and unhealthy." So, Vitale said, she decided to balance her work ethic with "being a good friend, loving daughter, avid reader, taker of long bike rides, and engaged community member. "The pandemic has let me experience the obvious benefits that rest, free time, and a general turning down of the pressure I put on myself have on my well-being," she said. Vitale also has managed to stay active socially.

"I now Zoom with my college buds every Friday, gather monthly with my choir friends from London, and play virtual "Settlers of Catan" on the regular with my buds in different ZIP codes," she said. "These recurring events, and the technology that makes them possible, have deepened my relationships and strengthened my support system ... so important for getting through a pandemic with my head screwed on." Louise Phillipine, the sole retiree among our reader-advisers, found a more practical silver lining. "I found that I apparently frittered away a lot of money before the pandemic," the Sebastian resident said, noting she shops online way more now. "I found I could still shop at ... Bealls and Publix for food and gifts," she wrote. "Even after I started going to Publix, the store's website allows you to prepare a list on your cellphone that even gives you the aisle where you can find it so you don't have to wander aimlessly. It also tells you when they don't have the item you want." Have you found silver linings amid the year of the pandemic? If so and you'd like us to publish your comments, please email me a brief description like those above along with your name, city and phone number and you might see it on TCPalm and a future edition of the newspaper. This column reflects the opinion of Laurence Reisman. Contact him via email at larry.reisman@tcpalm.com, phone at 772-978-2223, Facebook.com/larryreisman or Twitter @Laurence-Reisman.

A new view of God

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Christian Science practitioner
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Martin County Local Planning Agency will conduct a public hearing on March 18, 2021, beginning at **7:00 P.M.**, or as soon thereafter as the item may be heard, to review the following item.

The Board of County Commissioners of Martin County will conduct a public hearing on April 13, 2021, beginning at **9:00 A.M.**, or as soon thereafter as the item may be heard, to review the following item.

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, REGARDING FLOOD PROTECTION; AMENDING ARTICLE 4, SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS, DIVISION 10, FLOOD PROTECTION, LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; AMENDING CHAPTER 21, BUILDINGS AND HOUSING REGULATIONS, PART 1. ADMINISTRATION, APPEALS AND LOCAL AMENDMENTS, GENERAL ORDINANCES, MARTIN COUNTY CODE; PROVIDING FOR APPLICABILITY, CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

All interested persons are invited to attend and be heard. The hearings will be held in the Commission Chambers on the first floor of the Martin County Administrative Center, 2401 S.E. Monterey Road, Stuart, Florida. Written comments may be mailed to James Gorton, Public Works Director, 2401 S.E. Monterey Road, Stuart, Florida 34996. Copies of the items will be available from the Public Works Department. For more information, contact Christopher Van Vliet, Floodplain Coordinator, Public Works Department, at (772) 288-5956.

Persons with disabilities who need an accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding are entitled, at no cost, to the provision of certain assistance. This does not include transportation to and from the meeting. Please contact the Office of the ADA Coordinator at (772) 320-3131, or the Office of the County Administrator at (772) 288-5400, or in writing to 2401 SE Monterey Road, Stuart, FL, 34996, no later than three days before the hearing date. Persons using a TTY device, please call 711 Florida Relay Services.

If any person decides to appeal any decision made with respect to any matter considered at the meetings or hearings of any board, committee, agency, council, or advisory group, that person will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose, may need to insure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record should include the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.