

## CITY OF PORTSMOUTH



# UPDATE from the City Manager for Sunday, July 12, 2020

**Governor Sununu's "Stay At Home 2.0" order replaced by "Safer At Home."  
Portsmouth Protection Plan: Do your part. Wear a mask.**

**Number of COVID-19 deaths, to date, in the US 137,729. Death to date in NH 391. Deaths in  
Rockingham County, 92.**

**Cumulative cases in Rockingham County: 1,520.**

**Current cases in Rockingham County: 135.**

**For the complete, new NH Department of Health & Human Services dashboard, [click here](#).**



### **For Frida Kahlo on What Would Have Been her 113th Birthday**

Pain and loneliness, companions you couldn't send away.  
First confined to bed at the sweet age of six when polio  
and the sound of *chico* playing nearby brought tears.

Then again at eighteen when a bus crash  
mangled your bones, imprisoning you in plaster corsets  
and the four stucco walls of your sick room.

Again and again and again over the years;  
confined, undermined, entwined, by steel and stitches  
as surgeons sought, but failed, to end your suffering.

You spent so much time abed  
you learned to play and paint  
even while lying prone and alone.

Looking at your bounty of self-portraits now,  
few know you explained, "I paint myself  
because I am so often alone..."

I wonder if those of us bemoaning isolation  
in the here and now; unable to postpone a party,  
to forego what we want, think we need, do desire,

would make you laugh or cry,  
to shake a paint-splattered fist,  
from the bed in the blue house,

cigarette smoke, monkey chatter,  
the scents of oil paints and sweat,  
the heavy heat of a Mexican afternoon,

encircling your response  
as it rose ~ unheard ~  
blaspheming us to the beyond.

**-- Tammi J Truax**

*Portsmouth Poet Laureate 2019-2021*

*Maine Beat Poet Laureate 2018-2020*