

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH



UPDATE from the City Manager for Sunday, September 6, 2020

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

Deaths to date from COVID-19: US: 188,711. NH: 432. Rockingham County: 100. Cumulative cases: US: 6,302,080. NH: 7,424. Cumulative cases: Rockingham County: 1,837. Portsmouth: 108. Current cases in NH: 250. Rockingham County: 68. In Portsmouth: fewer than 5. For the complete, NH Department of Health & Human Services dashboard

<http://www.nh.gov/covid19>

Click here for the entire Advisory collection of poems by Portsmouth Poet Laureate Tammi Truax.

<https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city-manager/portsmouth-poet-laureate> For Peter Biello's interview with Portsmouth Poet Laureate on NHPR, click here <https://www.nhpr.org/post/portsmouth-poet-laureate-adds-verse-citys-covid-19-briefings#stream/o>



An Encircling Charm

The bottle, cobalt blue of course,
I've kept in the kitchen window
to play with the prettiest light
always with the someday intention
of building a bottle tree out back
wanting to beautify the tired yard,
to honor my Appalachian roots.

Now, though I haven't a biblical myrtle tree
with dead limbs begging for colorful bottles,
I want to build a bottle tree
for the reasons they were always built
in our own southern states,
in ancient times and faraway places.
My concerns are back to basics.

To keep the haints out of my house.
To protect my family, my life, my lungs
from evil and wicked spirits,
uncharmed, invisible and airborne
wandering all about
seeking the heat
of tender loved ones.

To bedazzle and capture the bad,
leave it swirling in the bottle's throat
wailing and moaning their power away
unable to escape, until at last
the morning sun's healing rays
burn them into impotent particles
that fall to the ground like lazy day dust.

This is no time to hedge our bets,
when a bottle in the hedge
might bring benevolence.

-- **Tammi J Truax**

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