

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH



UPDATE from the City Manager for Sunday, January 17, 2021

**Deaths to date from COVID-19: US:
396,000. NH: 927. Rockingham County: 163.
Cumulative cases: US: 23.8 million. NH:
55,945. Rockingham County: 13,594.
Portsmouth: 862. Current NH:
6,081. Rockingham County: 1,251. (Positivity
8.3%). Portsmouth: 90.**

While reading countless headlines this week one in particular caught my eye, and my ear. I found a comfort in it, and part of it became the refrain in this poem. The article about fish was written by Timothy Roberts. <https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/fish-sing-at-dawn-like-birds/>

A New Day Dawns for America

This week Operation Warp Speed inched out to some of us, as others wrestle for vaccination priority with needle-ready arms.

Meanwhile elsewhere
under bright blue waters
fish were recorded
singing a chorus at dawn.

This week our COVID death toll eclipsed that of all other nations as super-spreaders travelled and huddled to scream spittle-laden lies.

Meanwhile elsewhere
under bright blue waters
fish were recorded
singing a chorus at dawn.

This week panic buttons were removed, advance private tours were granted, plans were made and executed, promises fulfilled, promises broken.

Meanwhile elsewhere
under bright blue waters
fish were recorded
singing a chorus at dawn.

This week young staffers, intent on being part of our democracy, boldly displayed active shooter survival skills learned at school.

Meanwhile elsewhere
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fish were recorded
singing a chorus at dawn.

This week in a revolting revolt a leader gave a direction, our Capital was overtaken, law and order were obliterated.

Meanwhile elsewhere
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singing a chorus at dawn.

This week in front of the Capitol a gallows was assembled, a call was made for heads on pikes. Zip ties readied, legal guns loaded.

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This week police officers were dragged down stairs, beaten with the American flag, cursed, cornered, kicked, crushed, killed.

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This week the Capitol and the National Mall, where thousands of peaceful protestors once gathered to hear Reverend King's rightful speech, was locked down, remains under military occupation.

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fish were recorded
singing a chorus at dawn.

-- Tammi J Truax

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

For the entire Advisory collection of poems by Portsmouth Poet Laureate Tammi Truax:
<https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/city-manager/portsmouth-poet-laureate>

Portsmouth Poet Laureate Program "A Bridge to Japan: A Poetry Broadside Contest" Jan 31.
Deadline: midnight Jan. 31, 2021.