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Dear I.I. Friends,

Social distancing may keep us from gathering in person during the pandemic, but there are other ways we can stay connected as a chapter.

These days, staying connected is challenging and we must rely on technology more and more to communicate with one another. We are thinking of ways to continue with chapter meetings and programs and we would greatly appreciate your input. You can still support our chapter by sharing your ideas and inspirations. We look forward to hearing from you!

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## Staying Connected

The popularity of video conferencing has soared in recent weeks. This medium allows people to connect with one another through audio and video streaming. Popular web conferencing platforms include WebEx, Skype, and Zoom. We as a chapter can leverage this technology to continue with meetings and programs if we so wish. This might involve thinking and moving outside the box a little, but might prove to be very beneficial to us in terms of staying connected and keeping the spirit of friendship through flowers alive and well as a group. Online (virtual) meetings would require the use of a computer, tablet, or smartphone. There are members among us who can offer support to others who are less versed in web conferences using devices.

Please send an email to Rebecca Chesin to share your interest (or disinterest) in pursuing web conferencing: [leavesdance@gmail.com](mailto:leavesdance@gmail.com). Please also share ideas for online programs and meetings. Thank you in advance for your participation!

## Extension of Annual Dues Deadline

We received notice from I.I. Headquarters in Tokyo that the membership renewal deadline is extended until September 30, 2020, for the year 2020-2021. For us, this means that we will need to submit our dues and membership forms by mid-September.

The first I.I. Magazine 65-1 will be sent to all current members based on the 2019-2020 list, irrespective of whether they have renewed. Unfortunately, due to the impact of the coronavirus the new deadline does not provide enough time for the membership staff to arrange delivery to new members based on the year 2020-2021.

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The National Cherry Blossom Festival committee created a video in light of the recent 2020 festival cancellation. The video is a celebration of the festival through memories of past events. Please click this link to view the

video: <https://nationalcherryblossomfestivallive.org>.

Also, check out this video of a virtual tour of The Orchid Show at the New York Botanical Gardens: <https://www.nybg.org/take-a-virtual-tour-of-the-orchid-show-jeff-leathams-kaleidoscope/>.

The Asian Art Museum in San Francisco has a virtual tour of its collection: <https://asianart.org/museumfromhome/>.

Although Art in Bloom 2020 is cancelled, Minneapolis Institute of Art is offering a virtual festival of flowers April 23-26 through their Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter channels.

There are also many museums that offer virtual tours that can easily be found through an internet search. We can still enjoy art from a distance.

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During a recent outdoor walk, Barb Foss picked up some materials to create a "self isolation spring Ikebana arrangement". The arrangement includes hydrangea from last fall, maple tree buds, and lilac branches. Touched up with some of her granddaughter's craft paint, she skillfully created pink cherry blossoms and hyacinth. Voila!

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Rebecca Chesin created these arrangements to lift her spirits and then posted the photos on our chapter Facebook page.

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Inspired by her mother-in-law who studied Asian history, Myrna Little has been writing haiku during self-quarantine. You might notice a theme in the following group of poems.

Coronavirus

Among us you slither near  
A snake in the grass

As the seasons changed  
It came like a creeping vine  
Our world is shaken

Germs swirl around us  
Like locusts in the spring air  
Go away, COVID

The full April moon  
The pink of cherry blossoms

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Therein lies beauty

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We'd love to hear your stories and receive photographs of your spring Ikebana arrangements to share in the next newsletter. Also, if you have anything else to share that might be of interest to our members, please send us a message! You can email Myrna at: [myrna0118@gmail.com](mailto:myrna0118@gmail.com)

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