Architects' Lives in Coronavirus Times.
Well, where do we go from here? It wasn’t the end of the world, but it is a new beginning. Due to COVID-19, we’ve learned a lot about how we interact, work, and even live. We may have missed a few events, celebrated a few stale birthdays, or felt trapped within our homes, but our actions may have greatly helped individuals we know and those we do not. While separated six feet, we realized we can still be personable, still bring joy, and still show support. We all transitioned to new environments and experiences, whether working from home to slow the threat or putting ourselves on the front lines to aid those ill or in need. We have seen how old ways may need to be put in the past and how rapidly changing technology will greatly effect how we live and work for the best.

I question how this will impact our role as architects. Previously, we wrote how sustainability is the future but part of that effort encompasses health, safety, and welfare. In the coming months, we will start to re-examine the built environment and how we can provide positive experiences utilizing the lessons we have learned while social distancing and fighting an invisible foe. It is not the time to further separate people but a time to bring people together in new and creative ways. While the answers may not come immediately, it is yet again our responsibility to use design and creativity to solve the riddles and provide a path. I look forward to how we will all continue to inspire and engage the world around us.

Matthew A. Fink, AIA
ALNNJ President 2020

New Members
ALNNJ is pleased to welcome the following New Members:
Joseph Cestaro, AIA
Mike Chiappa, Assoc. AIA
Shamima Chowdhury, Assoc. AIA
Dante Cosentino, Assoc. AIA
Matthew DiMarco, Assoc. AIA
Peter Dito, AIA
Eli Dreiser, Assoc. AIA
Mahmoud Eladly, Assoc. AIA
Mohammad Haque, Assoc. AIA
Richard Koszeghy, AIA
Zeynep Kurt, Assoc. AIA
Elizabeth Leedes, AIA
Thaisha Nicolas, Assoc. AIA
James Palumbo, Assoc. AIA
Olivia Szymkowski, Assoc. AIA
Vladislava Turbina, Assoc. AIA
The Architects League looks forward to your involvement and participation. Please introduce yourself at the next live meeting or event.

IN MEMORIAM
Virgil William “Bill” Murrell
January 18, 1947 – May 7, 2020
Bill Murrell, founder of Murrell Tensile Works of Washington Township, passed away on May 7, 2020 at his home in Naples, FL. He was a pioneer of tensile structures and was a respected lecturer for the Industrial Fabric Association International as well as the AIA. Notable works include SummerStage in New York’s Central Park and Baltimore Harbor Light. He was active in the Garden State Ski Club, and the Unitarian Society of Ridgewood.

Leagueline
Leagueline is also available online: www.alnnj.org

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE
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On March 21st, 2020, life went on pause for all except the New Jerseyans who are essential front-line workers. Schools and all non-essentials businesses throughout the state were closed due to the stay-at-home order as a result of COVID-19. Nobody was prepared for the changes in how we handle life in the weeks and months to come. Overnight, we transitioned our normal lives into the virtual world - kids were in school via Google Classroom and the like, Zoom quickly became the meeting room (and “off-hours” gatherings) of choice, and for many office workers, any part of the home with good Wi-Fi had been commandeered as a make-shift office. This pandemic has a tremendous and profound impact on every single person on this planet to say the least. Still, many health experts say this is far from over, and the prediction is that the second wave will arrive just when the next academic year begins. If we learn anything from the 1918 flu pandemic, we can expect the worst is yet to come. Let us hope that is not the case now that we have the help from advanced science and technology.

For the past few years, many architects and their firms have embraced off-site technology, namely the “cloud” or cloud computing, to untether themselves from their desks in order to perform work efficiently from the field. Some of us present projects to clients via virtual reality while others meet with government officials through video conferences to obtain project approvals. Already, many of us are no strangers to technology and within weeks of the quarantine we realized that we could serve our clients remotely on a regular basis. What is hard, however, is the nature of what we do requires a high level of communication, collaboration, and coordination with our team. Members of medium and large firms may find the isolation aspect difficult to get used to. Smaller practices, however, may feel the least impact on how they work.

Regardless, many architects are in the same boat as far as the future is concerned. Will the projects that went on hold restart once the restrictions are lifted? Will the clients cancel the projects due to lack of funding? What are the changes that will impact the way we conduct our businesses due to social distancing or other health related protocols? These are just some of the questions many of us are asking but the most important question is “what are we learning from this pandemic that would allow us to better serve our clients and the society at large”?
Leagueline reached out to ALNNJ members to learn how they are doing since the stay-at-home order mandated by Governor Phil Murphy. We asked our members the following questions and are grateful to receive their feedback. Here are the questions and the responses we received.

1. What are the challenges and lessons learned in your practice since your stay-at-home order?
2. What are the issues and concerns that will affect your practice going forward?
3. What are some of the activities (e.g. hobbies, personal projects, new routines, etc.) that you are doing or picking up?

Peter Cooper, AIA, C.L.A.
1. Payments on invoices are erratic, some non-payments and no response to requests. I am firming up policy—no drawings released without payment, a portion of retainer to be held to the last payment. Employee furloughed, some new work, uncertainty about when to rehire, and pursue loan programs.
Remote work at home for me is a challenge without proper computer equipment to run efficiently. Don’t want to invest, as the future is unknown. Staying focused is an issue without imminent deadlines.
2. New client/work dilemmas. Under what conditions and social distancing to take on new work which requires meeting in people’s homes, and measuring their houses?
I am directing clients to have no one in the house during the measure, wait for nice day, doors open, lights on, and windows open.
Concerns—uncertainty about future, both work and lifestyle.
3. Walks, runs, TKD, movies, reading, tennis (until a couple of weeks ago), more time connecting with friends, oil painting, learning new software program. Social meetings on Zoom.

Leo Malkin, ALNNJ Allied Member
1. Being a startup business has its own set of challenges. I have had to learn a lot about marketing website design and search engine optimization while I search for clients and see who needs a Revit and AutoCAD trainer. I have also been taking the time to examine the services that I offer, and I’ve expanded it out to offering advising on disability architecture. I have been working at home since 2009 in one business form or another, this is nothing new to me.
2. The ability to have meetings and provide training online that is engaging to the student and to the client has always been a concern for me. And my biggest concern is firms have less money at this point to spend on training and consultations with other people. Keeping a business alive in that kind of environment, especially when your startup is a very out of the frying pan into the fire kind of situation, isn’t easy.
3. I’ve taken the time to do some personal learning in Autodesk Revit with family modeling and components that are in place and special requests by my students such as design options, roof massing, schedules and creating construction documents. Outside of work, my time is spent managing my ALS making sure I don’t fall out of my wheelchair, and finding new treatments that can help me manage the disease and/or cure it. Since I’m more susceptible than most people to the COVID-19 virus I haven’t left my apartment complex in over a month and a half.

Steven B. Lazarus, AIA
1. The first challenge was for the office to have a platform for all workers to retrieve the work from. Once that was established, communication between the partners and the staff was much smoother. The next issue was client interaction: How to keep the job and keep it moving. We discovered that clients were very cooperative, so we had them send pictures and crude sketches of their project. We were able to piece the projects together and complete them.
2. The first concern was money, Axis had enough money to pay our staff for two pay periods along with critical bills. We applied for the Payroll Protection Plan on the first go around but we were not selected. On the second reissue we were successful. This allows us to continue for 8 more weeks. The other concern was jobs that were canceled. We are hoping that the client intends to pick up the jobs once allowed.
3. I am still going to work so nothing has changed for me.
Kevin Brown, AIA

1. We’ve learned that working from home is a lot easier than imagined – it was mostly a matter of getting over inertia. The biggest challenge is keeping track of staff and their work, since it’s quite natural when we’re just around each other, but it requires specific efforts when everyone is remote.

2. Most of our work has been hospitality - hotels, F&B - so we may need to account for changes to standards and operating procedures concerning hygiene and social distancing. Changes in travel and dining habits, and shifting priorities may affect business generally. There has only been passing discussion of such topics so far – nothing certain, and no telling how wide-spread or long-lasting such changes may be.

3. Yard work/gardening. Quarantine couldn’t have come at a better time in that respect!

Some of the members also wrote to us about their thoughts and experience during the pandemic…

Richard Bettini, B.Arch., M. Arch., M.Ed., Associate AIA

Since this COVID-19 Pandemic has started and everyone is sheltered in place, I had decided to do a very detailed project in a computer aided drawing format. And, since I am a licensed AutoDesk Instructor what better way to keep my skill set up but to produce something of value for my condo community, Independence Harbor. My Condominium Management staff and Board had a wish list which included the underground parking schematic of our condo community. Our complex had no known drawing on file and it was felt that such a drawing would be very useful especially with all of the renovation going on in the site.

So six weeks ago I started on this grand project. My very first task was to measure up the existing conditions, which in this case was rather easy. This site is located on a pier which goes out into the Hudson River and, since it was originally a Ford factory, it was built on a set of steel columned bays. After laser measuring the span of each bay, I began the arduous tasks of locating all the parking spaces. I have found that the most tedious aspect of the project is the numbering of each parking space. So far there are 809 interior parking spaces with an additional 150 on the outer sections of the North and South pier. I am still working on the parking space numbers.

Joseph J. Bruno, AIA

I am fortunately working just as I was before the stay at home order was issued. I have a home based office (in a separate building that was a horse barn built in 1886). The only thing that has changed is the lack of face to face meetings (not really liking that too much). I had my first Zoom Zoning Board meeting for a project in Morristown. It went very smoothly and I am looking forward to another during the month of May. While I prefer the in-person Board meetings, as they allow for a more accurate “read” of the Board members during the proceedings, the Zoom meeting eliminates travel time and frankly seems to put everyone at ease. This I find to be a great positive.

Anthony Iovino, AIA

The challenge as a business owner is to find a way to keep projects moving forward by convincing clients it’s OK to continue and orchestrating the workflow with our staff. We are always looking for new opportunities but for the foreseeable future we will have to apply more of an effort. The goal is to keep everyone employed and to afford interns so that the next generation is not discouraged by our profession.

Having been through several disruptions in our 28 years of business we understand that it is important to be financially sound. To survive the tough times you need to be preparing in the good times.

Workplace environments in general, not just our practice, will need to take a hard look at remote working and social distancing. Efficiency and motivation is a major concern for any company and its employees. Many issues will need to be resolved as we face the next few months including...How will people feel comfortable in an office? How to deal with shared spaces such as a lunchroom or bathrooms? Is the data secure when working remotely?
The COVID-19 pandemic has changed nearly everything in our lives and in architectural practice. There are some resulting insurance issues that are important to consider and address.

**Taking Charge of Your Insurance Premiums**

Professional liability policies are priced as a percentage of revenue. Given the current situation which may result in less business for your architecture firm, if you can show expected reduced revenue from your original estimates, then you should approach your agent to request re-pricing of your policy to reflect the lower revenue projections — and thereby, lower your premium payment. Architects must make the request themselves because these policies are generally not subject to an audit of revenue at the end of the policy period. In addition, there may be another way for an architect to lower premium payments — if there have been staff cutbacks of salary, hours, and/or employees. Architects in this situation can make a similar request of their Workers Compensation insurers whose premium is a function of payroll. Those policies are subject to a payroll audit at the end of a policy period, so architects should get returned premium when the payroll is overstated.

Some personal auto insurers are also returning premium payments back to their insureds in recognition of the greatly reduced driving exposure during this period.

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**Paul S. Bryan, AIA, CDT, LEED AP BD+C, NCARB**

I am an administrator for “Good Ol’ Haskell”, a Facebook group that discusses the history of the neighborhoods in Wanaque, New Jersey, where I grew up. While staying at home with not much to do, I thought I’d start posting one old photo each day and ask group members to identify the location. Most of the photos are over 90 years old, and feature places that are no longer in existence. It’s proven quite popular with the group, with one post garnering up to 260 comments in just a matter of hours! It’s been a pleasure getting to know, or reconnect with, people from my hometown, and in the process, share some history and appreciation of the vernacular architecture in the area.

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**Anna Chang, Associate AIA**

People have been staying at home for about two months now — some of us might start to get used to working online, some might still miss the good old days when we were allowed to talk face to face (like me). Architects are one of the most tech-sensitive groups, and unlike years ago, we can now do our job remotely and exchange information online on a real-time basis. From this point of view, we are way luckier than people in the past; although there are still many challenges — physically, mentally, financially — people are working hard to make things work.
Architect’s Guide to Business Continuity
Guidance for reducing firm disruption

Floods, cyber-attacks, pandemics, and unexpected staff absences are just a few of the risks that can prevent architecture firms from remaining open and profitable during disaster and disruption.

Will you be able to provide clients with the assurance that work on their project will continue despite a disruption? From climate impacts and ransomware to staff absences and the everyday challenges of fragile power grids and internet services, the Architect’s Guide to Business Continuity helps firms become more resilient. The guide shares lessons learned from previously impacted firms, builds on and adapts business continuity best practices specifically for the building industry, and helps firms remain open in the face of disruption.

Not only can Business Continuity Planning reduce post-event hardships, it can also lead to insurance discounts, a positive reputation for building performance, and even new business opportunities; including post-disaster detailed assessments and repairs, hazard mitigation retrofits, risk-informed site evaluation, facility feasibility studies, and design for shelter in place and/or rapid recovery to promote business continuity goals.

Use this guide to:
- Understand the elements of a business continuity plan and its value in reducing risk and protecting profits
- Assess hazard and climate risks that can disrupt your ability to conduct business
- Apply a methodology for analyzing business impacts triggered by various hazards
- Identify actions that reduce vulnerability and minimize disruption


Property and Business Interruption Coverage
It’s important not to misunderstand what your Business Owners policy covers. Unless specifically stated otherwise, any “business interruption” coverage applies only if there is a “covered loss” – which is property damage to your own property. In order to collect business interruption, there must be physical damage to your owned or leased property. The general liability (GL) and the business interruption (BI) coverages are completely separate. One coverage is related to property damage and related (BI) and the other is third-party liability (GL). They may both be part of a business owners package policy but one does not trigger the other. GL would respond in a situation where a client might become infected after exposure to your office or employees and would then sue your firm for bodily injury. Business interruption would pay your firm for lost revenue due to covered physical damage to your office – but it will not cover your firm for loss of business due to the Covid-19 virus or any other pandemic.

There may be lawsuits for years over these type claims. Some state Insurance Commissioners are attempting to force insurers to pay such BI claims. Other states are trying to pass legislation also mandating coverage. Another approach may be legislation that establishes a federal backstop for such claims similar to the Terrorism Risk and Insurance Act (TRIA) that came out of the 9/11 attacks. TRIA provides federal reinsurance for terrorism losses so that the coverage can be made available to all insureds when there would otherwise not be any insurance available. Flood insurance is another example where the federal government has provided protection in flood prone areas where insurers would not provide enough coverage for the exposures presented.

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Life in coronavirus times.

Upcoming Events

**Annual Trade Show**
Architects League and Newark & Suburban, look for reschedule date in September. Check Date – alnnj.org

**Virtual Skyline Challenge**
Winner to be announced at alnnj.org

**Architects League Golf Outing at Crystal Springs**
Monday, July 13th

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Virtual Architecture

**The Glass House**
Visit Philip Johnson’s Glass House.
[theglasshouse.org/explore/the-glass-house/](theglasshouse.org/explore/the-glass-house/)

**The Spaces**
12 Frank Lloyd Wright buildings are now hosting virtual tours

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NOTE:
All Events and Dates are subject to change. Please confirm online.

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[theglasshouse.org/explore/the-glass-house/](theglasshouse.org/explore/the-glass-house/)
Online videos to make good use of your time.

**Virtual Museum Tours**

Many museums have closed their doors but they are open for business online. Here’s a list of museums that have put their collections online for you to enjoy. [artsandculture.google.com](http://artsandculture.google.com)

1. British Museum in London
2. Guggenheim Museum, New York
4. Musée d’Orsay, Paris
6. Pergamon Museum, Berlin
7. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
8. Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam
9. J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles
10. Uffizi Gallery, Italy
11. Museu de Arte, São Paulo
12. The Louvre, Paris
13. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC

**Virtual Cities**

Explore Six Cities with Extraordinary Architecture [artsandculture.google.com](http://artsandculture.google.com)

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**Ten Architecture Documentaries and Series on Netflix**

Netflix isn’t just a great service for relaxing or procrastinating—it can also be a great learning tool for architecture and urbanism. That is why we have put together seven tips—including both series and documentaries—for architecture-related viewing that, in addition to being entertaining, can help broaden your knowledge. [www.archdaily.com/876708/6-must-see-architecture-documentaries-and-series-on-netflix](http://www.archdaily.com/876708/6-must-see-architecture-documentaries-and-series-on-netflix)

1. The Abstract: The Art of Design
2. The World’s most extraordinary Homes
3. Tiny House Nation
4. Grand Designs
5. Minimalism: A Documentary About the Important Things
6. Amazing Interiors
7. Secrets of Great British Castles
8. Stay Here
9. Big Dreams Small Places
10. The Great Interior Challenge

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