

CORONAVIRUS IN MARYLAND

Pandemic has forever altered how people shop

Experts say growth of curbside pickup and online shopping is here to stay

By Lorraine Mirabella

More than a year and a half into the pandemic, Anne Harriott has pared down what her family needs and what they buy, and that has changed how and when they shop.

Harriott's not planning on buying any new work outfits anytime soon — the M&T Bank project manager has cut back on once-frequent business travel and works from her Towson home. She limits grocery runs as well, to once a week at nonpeak times. Gone, too, are those store stop-ins she'd make after work.

"We're just much more efficient," said Harriott, 61. "We realized we don't need a lot of things. ... If we run out of milk, we just don't have milk. We're not going to keep running out. You realize how much time you get back when you do it that way."

The health crisis, which initially shuttered most stores and limited the number of shoppers inside ones considered essential, has altered buying habits

in ways both big and small, forcing retailers to adapt to the new patterns to survive.

Online sales have reached levels not expected for years. The share of consumers who shop in stores for nonessential items has shrunk, from nearly 50% to fewer than a quarter, according to one survey. More than 30% surveyed said they now shop mainly online for both essentials and nonessentials.

Such new shopping patterns are here to stay, experts say, with growth expected to continue in home delivery, curbside pickup and online subscriptions of everything from pet food to coffee.

More and more parking spaces at malls, supermarkets and other merchants are reserved for curbside pickup as a growing number of stores offer the service. The share of retail chains offering the option has jumped from the single digits to more than half

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Kelley Heuisler, owner of Poppy & Stella, thought that expanding her online inventory was the only way for her business to survive. **KARL MERTON FERRON/BALTIMORESUN**



MEET THE 'VACCINE AMBASSADORS'

Baltimore group dispatched into neighborhoods to personally convince those who remain hesitant to get the COVID-19 shot

By Hallie Miller, Meredith Cohn and Lizzy Lawrence

While canvassing for a COVID-19 vaccination clinic on Baltimore's Pennsylvania Avenue, James Green met a woman who chastised him for wasting his time.

"That's the white man's vaccine," she told him this summer. "They're trying to wipe us off the face of the Earth."

It wasn't the first time Green, 23, heard that sentiment in his role as a vaccine ambassador for the city health department. The West Baltimore resident said he understands where it's coming from.

"A lot of the hesitation is ingrained, even in my generation," Green said.

After the coronavirus vaccines became available, demand was initially strong, while supplies ran scarce.

Health officials knew that demand would ease and many people still would need convincing to get inoculated and help stop the pandemic. They launched a messaging campaign, including prominent Marylanders such as sports figures, celebrities, community leaders and politicians rolling up their sleeves and spreading the word that the vaccines were safe and effective for all.

Yet the number of people getting the shots now has dropped off. About 32% of the U.S. population hasn't been vaccinated,

Ambassador James Green, a University of Maryland School of Nursing student, says young men are "still stuck in that egocentric, 'Well, it won't happen to me,' attitude."
KENNETH K. LAM/BALTIMORESUN

according to national data. And several studies found that those who remain hesitant, reluctant or dismissive about getting vaccinated were more likely to distrust institutions such as hospitals, government officials and the news media. That meant that they wouldn't necessarily respond well to messaging campaigns pushed out by recognized figures.

At the same time, disinformation and misinformation about the vaccines continued to circulate largely unchecked across the country, targeting individuals who remain unvaccinated or on the fence.

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Pair of women sit at MLK's 'table of brotherhood'

Descendant of slaves teams up with Baltimore descendant of her family's slaveholders to begin facing barriers of race

By Jonathan M. Pitts

Looking back, Phoebe Kilby says, she believes that when her conservative, white physician father sent her to the private Bryn Mawr School in the mid-1950s, he had an ulterior motive: to shield her from the integration taking hold in Baltimore's public schools.

If that was his plan, it backfired in a big way.

At Bryn Mawr, Kilby was assigned to read for

the first time a book on the civil rights movement, and that planted a seed that blossomed years later. That's when, in her 50s, she learned her family had once enslaved people, tracked down a descendant of the workers her family owned and reached out to connect.

Now, she's part of a two-woman, racial reconciliation juggernaut.

Today Kilby, 69, who is white, and Betty Kilby Baldwin, 76, the daughter of Black Virginia sharecrop-

pers, are friends, co-authors and sought-after speakers. They travel the country describing a bond they've built over 14 years and how it can serve as a model of change. They published a cowritten book, "Cousins," this year. And the pair recently appeared at Bryn Mawr, where they taught classes and spoke at the annual Founders Day.

Both are acolytes of the late Rev. Martin Luther

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Betty Kilby Baldwin, left, and Phoebe Kilby published a co-written book, "Cousins," this year. **CONTRIBUTED**

"Betty was right ... we're cousins. We knew we had a deep connection."

Phoebe Kilby

INSIDE Facebook and its insurrection

As supporters of Donald Trump stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, an insurrection of a different kind was taking place inside the world's largest social media company.

NATION & WORLD

■ Alec Baldwin fatally shot a cinematographer on a film set with a gun a crew member had assured the actor was safe, a tragic mistake that came hours after some workers walked off the job to protest conditions and production issues.

NATION & WORLD

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King Jr., and hardly a presentation goes by when one or the other doesn't quote a line from the civil rights icon's 1965 "I Have a Dream" speech that both say encapsulates their vision. On Founders Day at Bryn Mawr earlier this month, it was Kilby's turn.

"Dr. King said he had a dream that 'the sons and daughters of former slaves and former slave owners will be able to sit down at the table of brotherhood,'" she told an audience of about 500 at her alma mater, no longer an all-white school. "Look around. We're living that dream today."

Different worlds

Kilby grew up in Guilford, one of Baltimore's most historic and affluent neighborhoods. She remembers a happy childhood of playing with friends in beautiful public gardens, roller-skating in the streets, riding her bike to the Baltimore Museum of Art.

It didn't strike her as odd the family had no nonwhite neighbors. She did find it discomfiting when her tyrannical father, Walter L. Kilby, used racial epithets. And she noticed he kept separate waiting rooms for white and "Colored" patients in his office downtown.

"It took a long time before I questioned these kinds of things," she recalls. "They seemed like a normal part of life. I'm embarrassed to say I absorbed the racism of my surroundings."

Kilby Baldwin grew up about 110 miles southwest of Baltimore, on a farm in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. Her grandfather and father worked for Richard Finks, a white man whose ancestors enslaved African Americans named Kilby for generations.

Grandfather John Kilby and father James Kilby were sharecroppers, giving up a portion of their crops as rent, an arrangement that was a remnant of slave times made possible by Jim Crow laws. They had no expectation of building wealth or owning land.

It was when James Kilby, fed up at 17, vowed to leave that Finks offered him a deed to 24 acres. Kilby accepted, built a house, a barn and a herd of cattle and started a family. Then Finks sued to get the land back, and an all-white jury ruled in his favor.

When he told Betty and the others about it, he sounded shattered.

"If you don't get a good education," she recalls him saying, "you're going to get taken advantage of and end up hopeless just like me."

Opportunities

Phoebe Kilby graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1970. Her parents paid the tuition for a bachelor's degree at Duke University in North Carolina; she won scholarships to cover the cost of earning a master's degree.

Her career as an environmental planner then took off, leading Kilby to the Washington, D.C., area, then to Harrisonburg, a city in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley.

"There's so much serendipity in this story," she marvels.

All the while, the questions that arose while reading such books as "Black Like Me" and "The Autobiography of Malcolm X" in high school remained: Why were people she knew entitled to demean and oppress others? What could be done to help? One day, as she perused reading material in a client's waiting room,



Photo of Phoebe Kilby's graduating class from Bryn Mawr School in 1970. Kilby is fifth from the left in the front row, to the right of the girl flashing the peace sign.



Betty Kilby Baldwin and her brother, James, on Feb. 18, 1959, as they helped integrate Warren County High School in Virginia. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Betty Kilby Baldwin of Happy Creek, Va., in 1947, at age 12.



Phoebe Kilby, 6, in 1951 at her home in the Guilford neighborhood of North Baltimore.

the outlines of an answer appeared.

A brochure from Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg touted a program there that included courses in conflict transformation, a technique that, in one proponent's words, aims to "transform the negative energy of a conflict and use [it] to build constructive change and foster reconciliation."

She enrolled part-time, working with aspiring diplomats from hot spots such as Syria, Bosnia, Israel and Croatia. They worked together to analyze the roots of conflict, share points of view and leverage peace-making principles such as truth-telling, justice and mercy. She was "amazed" at the friendships that developed.

She earned a graduate certificate and a sense of purpose. But as her classmates left to work at nongovernmental organizations around the world, Kilby remained wedded to her life and career in Virginia. "I was at a loss as to where I fit in," she says.

Betty Kilby Baldwin went to the school for Afri-

can Americans in Warren County in the 1950s, which went through seventh grade. As a student, she personified the African American struggle for equal treatment.

The only option for further education was at Manassas Regional, an all-Black high school more than an hour's drive away. Having learned of Brown v. Board of Education, the U.S. Supreme Court decision that ended school segregation in 1954, James Kilby took action. He founded an NAACP chapter, contacted lawyers and filed suit on behalf of Betty and 21 others in August 1958. Betty, at age 13 the youngest, was named

lead plaintiff. The next six months were crazy. First came death threats to the families. A federal judge soon ordered Warren High integrated. The governor closed that school and seven others. It took until January 1959 for the Virginia Supreme Court to declare the state's justifications for segregation unconstitutional. The night before Betty and her friends were to break the color barrier, gunshots were fired at the Kilby home. The next morning, she lost control of her bladder, then prayed the 23rd Psalm, as they marched, singing, into the building. Three years later, she was a member of the first integrated graduating high school class in Virginia history.

Converging paths

It was 2006 when Kilby left her career for a job at Eastern Mennonite, where she soon learned of a program that aimed to bring together the descendants of enslavers and those of their victims. It reminded her of a question that had plagued her: her father grew up in rural Virginia, near Warren County. Had his forebears owned slaves?

Googling "Kilby," she found a website that traced the family genealogy. She moved on to county courts, libraries and historical societies. An entry she found in the 1840 census told of a Leroy and Sarah Kilby who owned two people at their Warren County home.

A court document described a legal battle between two white Kilbys, Thomas and Mortimer, over the ownership of an enslaved woman, Juliet, in 1865. It gave the names of Juliet's children: Simon, John, James and Sarah.

Then Kilby came across "Wit, Will & Walls," the 2002 autobiography of Betty Kilby Fisher, an African American woman who'd grown up amid sharecroppers, helped integrate schools, and gone on to college, graduate school and business success.

Kilby realized the farm where Kilby Fisher grew up was next door to "Belle Meade," the farm on which her own father was raised. The book included names she'd heard her father mention when she was a girl. It wasn't anything defin-

itive, but she resolved to reach out, whatever might come next.

On Martin Luther King Day in 2007, Kilby sent an email to Kilby Fisher, who by then had the surname Baldwin. The white woman from Baltimore told her back story and shared some speculation about a possible connection.

A response came days later. "Hello, Cousin," it opened. Then, Kilby Baldwin went deep.

"I have always known that we were descendants of slaves, but I couldn't open that door," she wrote. "I thank God for bringing you into my life."

Kilby Baldwin, it turned out, had spent years trying to process conflicting emotions: anger at the bigotry she and her forebears faced and the teaching of her Christian faith that believers should love their enemies.

"If I'd heard from Phoebe a few years earlier, I wouldn't have been ready," she says.

Kilby Baldwin invited her to visit, the two laughed and embraced. Phoebe Kilby introduced herself to Kilby Baldwin's extended family, and a journey began. As Phoebe Kilby kept on with her research, the two processed her findings.

According to a death certificate at the Virginia health department in Richmond, a man named Simon Kilby was the father of John Kilby, Kilby Baldwin's grandfather. Simon Kilby, in turn, was the son of Juliet, the enslaved woman from the Kilby legal dispute. Phoebe Kilby's family had indeed enslaved Betty Kilby Baldwin's forebears.

And in 2016, DNA research revealed that one of Phoebe Kilby's cousins, Tim Kilby, and a cousin of Betty Kilby Baldwin's shared an ancestor, a white man named James Kilby who lived in the mid-1700s.

"Betty was right in her email — we're cousins," Phoebe Kilby says. "We knew we had a deep connection."

Reconciliation

By the time they spoke Oct. 1 at Bryn Mawr, Kilby and Kilby Baldwin had delivered more than 25 talks across the U.S., describing how they've reached each other across differences of race, class and history. Not

that it's been easy.

Reconciliation, both agree, calls for unfiltered truth-telling as a first step, and neither held back. Kilby Baldwin described for the first time how a group of white boys sexually assaulted her during the integration battle, a trauma that led her to consider suicide. Kilby grieved on confronting the effects of the systems her family had embodied. The revelations drew them closer.

After consulting with Kilby Baldwin and her family, Kilby decided to effect a form of reparations by starting a Kilby Family Endowed Scholarship Fund. The endowment benefits descendants of people enslaved in the region where the white Kilbys lived, particularly those who are direct descendants of those enslaved by John Kilby of Culpeper County, Virginia, during the 1700s.

One of Kilby Baldwin's grandsons, Derrick Byrd, says he would not be studying to be an English professor without the funding.

"The scholarship has provided an opportunity for me that my grandmother should have had," he says. "It's a source of reconciliation."

At 137-year-old Bryn Mawr, the Founders Day event followed a student walkout earlier this year after a Black teacher resigned amid claims a student had used racially charged terms in speaking to her.

The school is not the all-white Bryn Mawr where Walter Kilby enrolled his daughter. The student body is more than 40% nonwhite, the administration has engaged a diversity and inclusion director, and faculty and student groups lead regular community dialogue aimed at making students feel engaged and acknowledged, school head Sue Sadler says.

Kilby Baldwin says she wouldn't have come to the North Baltimore school if she hadn't felt that energy. As she and her cousin interacted with students, she said she found herself wondering, without bitterness, what her life might have been like had she attended such a school.

"At the end of the experience, I said, 'I want to be a Bryn Mawr girl,'" she says. "Phoebe told me I already was."

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Baltimore Sun Media, a Tribune Publishing Company, 300E. Cromwell Street, Baltimore, MD 21230, publishes The Baltimore Sun (ISSN 1943-9504) daily, baltimoresun.com, community newspapers and magazines, and portfolio of print and online products.

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Periodicals postage paid at Baltimore, MD (USPS 526-100). Postmaster: Send address changes to The Baltimore Sun, P.O. Box 17162, Baltimore MD 21202-17162.

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