

...dying. Stress and anxiety are increasing. It can be hard to listen to those "silver lining" stories when you're suffering. It can also be a matter of perspective, though, if you're able to take in the bigger picture.

A couple of things have come across my radar this past week that I'd like to share. One was attributed to Bill Gates. Sources later determined this was inaccurate, although the advice and guidance about what the COVID-19 virus is doing to us is worth considering.

It's reminding us it's the great equalizer. Regardless of our culture, occupation, financial situation or fame, this disease is treating us all equally.

It's reminding us how materialistic how society has become and how, in times of difficulty, it's the essentials we need, as opposed to the luxuries we sometimes give value to.

It's reminding us how important family and home life are and how much we've neglected this. It's forcing us back into our houses so we can rebuild them into homes and strengthen the family unit.

It's reminding us how precious our health is, and it's encouraging us to look at the food we eat and the

Maybe you'll be a little more grateful to have those freedoms that have been taken away restored. Maybe you'll find that you're more resilient and compassionate than you thought. Or that you were able to accomplish a lot during this "time-out."

Whatever your answer, design a reverse timetable from a couple of months out back to now. Look at the steps you need to take each week — and each day — to get there. When you get to your future self, you'll be able to look back to see how far you've come.

Another reminder COVID-19 is bringing our way: We can look at this time as either the end or a new beginning. It can be a time of reflection and understanding where we learn from our mistakes, and it can be the start of a new cycle.

With the volume of our world turned down, we're able to listen.

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tion Library books.

"Goodnight with Dolly" launched April 2 with the hope that this gift will further inspire a love of books and shared storytime during this important period.

The weekly read-aloud series features several of the Imagination Library's wonderful books including "The Little Engine That Could." Watty

all newly registered children in the United States and Canada receive when they sign up for Dolly Paton's Imagination Library.

Dolly hopes this series of stories will provide comfort and reassurance to kids and families during the shelter-in-place mandates.

For more information, go to imaginationlibrary.com.

Brunswick SWCD cancels board meeting

The Brunswick Soil & Water Conservation District Board's regularly scheduled meeting for Monday, April 20, has been canceled.

Brunswick Family Assistance thanks members of the local community

Brunswick Family Assistance Agency would like to say "thank you" to the following members of the community for their generous donations:

Chip and The Old Blocks, a local band playing music from the '60s to '90s, donated \$83. Members of the group include Larry Hershoff, lead vocalist; Chip Hopkins, lead guitarist; Jim Geary, rhythm guitarist; Doug Rauch, drummer; Steve Sowder, bass guitarist; and Richard Carcich, percussion. Walmart Community Grants Store 1829 Sam's Club donated \$1,000 to help Brunswick County residents in need of food assistance. Ocean Ridge Charities Association, continuing their

action and communicate in a timely manner our decision about the scheduled May 21

in Ireland. All veterans are welcome to attend.

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LIFE 101

When our world slows down

Remember the song, "Shout"? Many of us have danced to this and will recall the part that goes, "A little bit softer now ... a little bit softer now."

That's the way our world feels. The volume

has been turned way down. Every event is being canceled, postponed or moved to a technological connection. And the lack of external noise is giving us more opportunities to listen. If we only will.

The past few weeks have rocked our worlds. No behavioral shift has spread more rapidly across our planet than that caused by the COVID-19 virus.

Nothing like this has ever taken place in our lifetime.

Your reality show

If you had been told a couple of months ago that schools, churches and many businesses are closed indefinitely — and that you've been ordered by the government to stay

way we exercise.

It's reminding us that we're all connected — and something that affects one person has an effect on the other.

It's reminding us that our true work is not our job. That is what we do, not what we were created to do. It's reminding us to keep our egos in check. No matter how great we think we are, a virus can bring our world to a standstill.

It's reminding us we can either be patient or we can panic.

It's reminding us the power of free will is in our hands. We can choose to help each other to give and share or we can choose to be selfish and to hoard. A crisis like this brings out our true colors.

It's reminding us of the shortness of life and emphasizing what is most important.

On a lighter note, a beautiful poem by an anonymous author is making the rounds about the current state of our world, inspired by Dr. Seuss:

"The buildings were big, and people would smile, and travel they would, mile by mile. But sick they became, in numbers it grew."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Many events, including all library events, have been cancelled out of concern about the coronavirus.

All Brunswick County branch libraries are now closed to the public indefinitely and all of their activities, including tax return assistance, have been cancelled.

Citizens are advised to contact individual entities for more information about these other previously scheduled events.

Anyone with any additional program information, corrections or updates for this weekly calendar is asked to contact assistant editor Laura Lewis at the Beacon at 754-6890 or llewis@brunswickbeacon.com.

Thursday, April 9

Weight Watchers in Southport: In-person workshops will temporarily be virtual at 10 a.m. Thursdays. Links for members are available at weightwatchers.com. Coaches and the community will continue to provide support through virtual workshops.

Boiling Spring Lakes Community Center, all activities are cancelled through March 30, which may be extended as the situation warrants. Registered participants and fitness room members will receive a credit on their account during this time of closure. Lunches for BSRI congregate lunch participants will be available 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays through the drive-up line in

Corral in Shallotte are suspended until further notice. Don Eggert, 471-0474 or doneggert@hotmail.com.

Nar-Anon Serenity Brunswick Group, which normally meets 7-8 p.m. every Thursday at Zion United Methodist Church at 6864 Zion Church Road in Leland, and all other activities have been temporarily suspended. For updates call the church at 253-5673. For Nar-Anon information go to nar-anon.org.

Friday, April 10

Rotary Club of the South Brunswick Islands, which normally convenes at 7:30 a.m. at Tammer's Restaurant in Ocean Ridge has temporarily suspended meetings for at least the next two weeks, according to a posting by club president David Vanasse at sbrotary.org.

Brunswick Duplicate Bridge Club, normally at 1:30 a.m. at Silver Coast Winery, 6680 Barbeque Road near Ocean Isle Beach and all other activities are suspended as the winery is following the mandate issued March 17 by Gov. Roy Cooper. The winery will only be open from noon to 3 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays for take-out bottle and case purchases. Call the winery at 287-2800 for more information.

Beginner yoga classes, normally at 11 a.m. in the Holden Beach Town Hall Public Assembly, are temporarily suspended. Call 842-6488.

Shallotte Group AA meetings, are temporarily suspended Mondays and Fridays at Shallotte Presbyterian Church, 5070 Main St., Shallotte, but will still gather in the picnic area outside the church at 5:30 p.m. Wednesdays. All daily AA meetings at 6608 Ocean Hwy. at Grissetown are scheduled as

CALENDAR

Monday, April 13

Beach Walkers, 9 a.m. two-mile walk at the Jordan Boulevard beach access in Holden Beach is suspended. Call 842-6488.

Weight Watchers, with 9:30 weigh-in and 10 a.m. meeting at St. James the Fisherman Episcopal Church at 4941 Main St. in Shallotte, cancelled for now. In-person workshops will temporarily be virtual. Links for members are available at weightwatchers.com. Coaches and the community will continue to provide support through virtual workshops.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS), previously at 10 a.m. at Sharon United Methodist Church on Holden Beach Road won't meet again until after April 14.

Rummikub, rummy played with tiles, normally at 10 a.m. in the Holden Beach Town Hall Public Assembly, is cancelled. Call 842-6488.

Free lunch, normally scheduled 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at St. Philips Episcopal Church, 205 E. Moore St., Southport is cancelled. All activities at the church are suspended at this time due to the coronavirus. Call Building Hope Ministries/Brunswick County Streetreach at 842-2711 or go to bcstreetreach.org.

Bingo, noon games are suspended at American Legion Post 186, 4285 Pine Drive, Little River, S.C., until further notice. Call (843) 249-6643.

Al-Anon, which normally meets at noon, as well as all other activities at Seaside United Methodist Church, 1300 Seaside Road SW in Sunset Beach, are cancelled until further notice as the church is closed.

Senior lunch with cards and games afterward, previously at noon at Bonaparte Baptist Church, Shady Forest Drive, temporarily suspended. Pickup lunches are still available at

2:30 p.m. in the Betty S. Williamson Meeting Hall at Ocean Isle Beach Town Hall, 3 W. Third St., is temporarily suspended as are all other town recreation events effective through April 15. Contact recreation director Hayley Burgess at 579-2166 or hayley@olhgov.com.

Healing From Trauma Support Group, 1-2:30 p.m. Coastal Horizons Center, Shallotte — group meetings temporarily discontinued until further notice. Call 754-4515 or email cnelson@coastalhorizons.org.

Families Anonymous, 5:30-7 p.m. Coastal Horizons, 120 Coastal Horizons Drive in Shallotte (U.S. 17 South behind Jones Ford and Ocean City Chevrolet) — temporarily cancelled. FA is a support program primarily for families whose lives are affected by a family member's use of mind-altering substances or related behavioral problems. Contact David Hammond at (201) 213-5353 or daveh4194@gmail.com or go to familiesanonymous.org.

Hope Harbor Home empowerment classes, for women who have been battered by their intimate partners at 5:30 p.m. are temporarily suspended. Call Tommy Griffin at 754-5726.

Weight Watchers, in-person workshops will temporarily be virtual. Links for members are available at weightwatchers.com. Coaches and the community will continue to provide support through virtual workshops.

New Hope Al-Anon Family Group 6 p.m., Grissetown AA Building, 6610 Ocean Hwy. W., just north of the N.C. 904 intersection on U.S. 17 South, OIB/Grissetown

Divorce support group, 6:30 p.m., Seaside United Methodist Church, 1300 Seaside Road SW in Sunset Beach, cancelled. Call the church at 579-5753 or go to seasideumc.org.

Training sessions, Tri-Beach Volunteer Fire Department, 7 p.m. 854 Sabbath Home Road, Sup