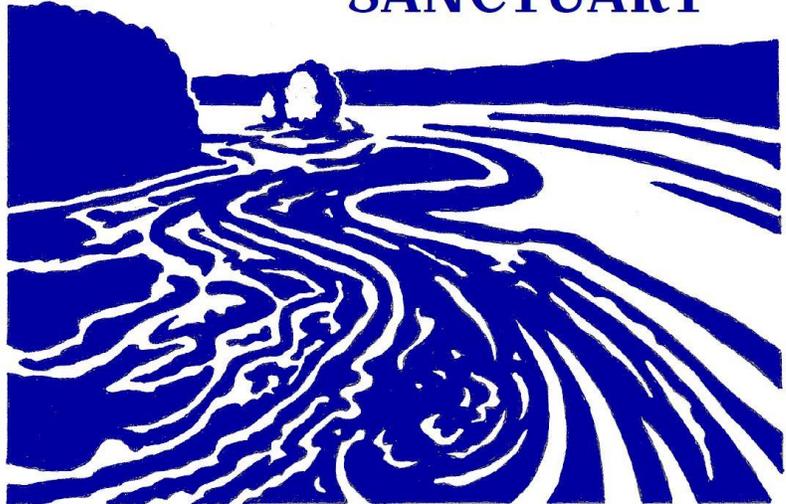


Ebb and Flow

*Reversing Falls
Sanctuary*

*April 2020
Newsletter*

REVERSING FALLS SANCTUARY



Masks Needed

Carol Gregor [326-9541 or carolmgregor@aol.com] is coordinating a community mask making effort. An estimated 2000 masks are to be produced. These numbers have been coordinated with hospital staff in charge at this time to cover our area.



Many people working or helping may need masks also. So, we expect this number to increase. In coordination with Hancock County and Eastern Maine Medical, we will be sharing CDC/Deaconess protocols to deliver the masks.

Please contact Carol Gregor if you can sew, and you will be sent the template and help with materials if necessary.

And check this Facebook Page: [Blue Hill 2000 or Bust Mask Initiative](#)



Thank you so much, Carol Gregor 326-9541
or carolmgregor@aol.com

Bucks Harbor Market

The Market is open. Gail and I were there after ringing the church bell on Sunday and found the Market well stocked – a contrast to Hannaford in Bucksport with its long stretches of empty or nearly empty shelves of those items the public thinks it necessary to hoard. Shopping at the Market will benefit an essential small business and reward you with whatever you need.

New Address for Reversing Falls Sanctuary

Please send any postal mail communications and/or checks to our new address:
P. O. Box: 265, Blue Hill, ME 04614-0265

Communications

Ecclesiastes 3 includes these words famously rendered into song by Pete Seeger:

For everything there is a season,

and a time for every matter under heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die . . .

A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing . . .

This is a time to refrain from embracing. How can we stay in “touch?” This newsletter will largely consist of reflections during a time of epidemic either written by community members or a reading that a member finds sustaining and wants to share with the rest of us.

In subsequent weeks, not in full newsletter format but as more singular email texts, I will continue to forward whatever you send to me whether by way of a community announcement, or update, or an inspiring reading, or a link to uplifting music, etc.

Wisdom from the RFS Community While We are Absent One from Another

Sheila Moir sent this counsel:

Every hand that we don't shake must become a phone call that we place. Every embrace that we avoid must become a verbal expression of warmth and concern. Every inch and every foot that we physically place between ourselves and another, must become a thought as to how we might be of help to that other, should the need arise. Rabbi Yosef Kanefsky

Bob Jones suggests two questions we might ask ourselves:

What do I need help with?

What do I have to offer?

And he adds that they have free firewood available.



Lisa Mazzarelli sent this quotation from Rebecca Sonit.

There's a way a disaster throws people into the present and sort of gives them this supersaturated immediacy that also includes a deep sense of connection. It's as though in some violent gift you've been given a kind of spiritual awakening where you're close to mortality in a way that makes you feel more alive; you're deeply in the present and can let go of past and future and your personal narrative, in some ways. You have shared an experience with everyone around you, and you often find very direct, but also metaphysical sense of connection to the people you suddenly have something in common with.

From **Lynnsey Carroll's** journal titled 3/20/2020 pandemic #2

Some will not survive. It could be anyone really, this virus does not discriminate. Not like HIV where some people thought they were immune. Covid 19 can invade anyone's cells.

Some will think they are safe because they eat a certain way or have no underlying health issues or exercise like mad. They may even be arrogant because they lived through one pandemic. Like cancer, covid does not discriminate. When covid knocks, the door will open, no matter who you are. Maybe being healthier will help your survival rate. Help you handle the invasion a little longer. Ultimately some will still die, even healthy ones.

A corona is an "irregularly shaped pearly glow surrounding the darkness". Such a beautiful image. What darkness is this corona illuminating? Hatred from past pandemics? Forced isolation, by widowhood or old age or disability or fear? Some say it is leading us to the Aquarian Age. A hard way to get there, true, but we don't seem to learn with easy steps. This virus is stepping hard on our toes, demanding that we pay attention. What darkness in me is it illuminating? Each to their own.

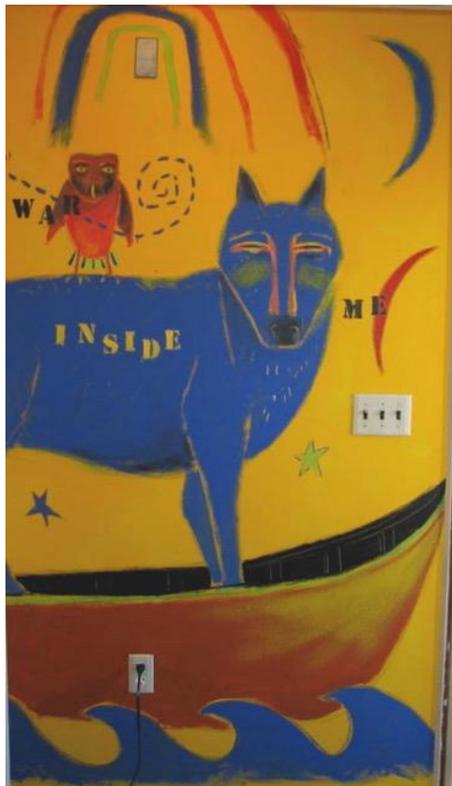
A corona is the trumpet inside the daffodil. It is the crown of our body. It is a circular chandelier in a church. Faith illuminated in the face of a flower or the soft spot on a babies' head. In the natural splendor of woods and field and sea.



We have a choice here, to not let hatred bloom again in the face of fear. A choice to choose love at the onset. In that way, maybe all we lost won't be in vain.

How else can we honor the indiscriminate nature of a virus? We can reach out, over and over again. We can forgive and begin again. We can find patience with ourselves and our friends and family. We can listen and acknowledge the truth of many voices.

A corona is also a glowing circle of light around an object. How will we each get our shine on? Will we be glowing light of love and caring, or will we be the darkness of hate and false arrogance born from fear? Each moment we choose. We must be honest with ourselves; impermanence is close at hand and time is an illusion. Each moment is all we have. Choose carefully, choose with an open heart.



Pat Wheeler reminds us of this wisdom from an old Cherokee teaching his grandson about life:

“A fight is going on inside me,” he said to the boy. “It is a terrible fight, and it is between two wolves. One is evil – he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego. The other is good – he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. The same fight is going on inside you – and inside every other person, too.”

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked, “Which wolf will win? The old Cherokee simply replied, “The one you feed.”



These photos are of Pat and Rob painting a mural as part of a community service sentence.

Sheila Moir forwards this reflection from **Lama Willa Miller**:

Driving home, I found myself silently praying. I prayed to Medicine Buddha. I prayed that sick bodies might heal from their illnesses. I prayed that my own small acts of compliance might be meaningful. Beyond that, I prayed that the world would not devolve into narratives of fear.

I think of gifts. Fear is an invitation. It is not only an invitation to weigh risks or to adjust to externals. It is an invitation to look deeply within and befriend the animal in oneself.

We are sitting with the unknown. The unknown is exactly what pulls back the veil. It offers a glimpse of the truth that nothing has ever been certain. This world with all its beauty and all its vibrancy is just so because it is not fixed, everything is contingent. Life's natural cousin is uncertainty.



The final gift, the one that I keep returning to in these shadowy days, is kindness. As pandemic is a common (pan) experience. We are in this together. We can face it together, and we can help one another get through it. Ironically the 'social distancing' we are asked to practice is a call to care. It is not a request made for oneself; it is an act of public good.

In a pandemic, self-isolation is called quarantine. In Buddhism, it is called retreat. From the cave of our home, like the mediators of ancient times, we can consciously kindle the lamp of compassion and connection.

Events Cancellations, Community and Building Updates

For the time being, all events at RFS are postponed or canceled. That includes *Stitching up a Raveled World*, **Daksha Baumann's** workshop scheduled for this Saturday. Her title is evocative of the work to which we are called in these days.

Meanwhile, all entrances to the building itself have been securely locked.

Karen Adamo has resigned her post as treasurer. That post is demanding, requires skill and dedication, and is largely invisible to the community. Karen has done that work diligently and faithfully, and we are grateful.



Ralph Chapman has agreed to be the new treasurer. Hopefully, the future will offer opportunity to continue our programming and community service. And as work continues to restore the steeple, the financial support of the RFS community is needed. Please send contributions to the P. O. Box announced on page 2 above.

Boccaccio and Camus

Many years ago, I read Camus' *The Plague*. I remember finding it a bit tedious. Plagues, as we are seeing, are tedious. And that is the least of it. I'm rereading *The Plague* and finding it much more fascinating and prescient in many ways. I was struck by these words which speak to so much more than pandemic.

Everybody knows that pestilences have a way of recurring in the world; yet somehow we find it hard to believe in ones that crash down on our heads from a blue sky. There have been as many plagues as wars in history; yet always plagues and wars take people equally by surprise. . . . When a war breaks out, people say: 'It's too stupid; it can't last long. But though a war may well be 'too stupid,' that doesn't prevent its lasting. Stupidity has a knack of getting its way . . .

Boccaccio does, I am reminded, introduce *The Decameron* with a description of the havoc the plague has brought to Florence. Katie Hodges-Kluck, writing for *Sojourners* magazine, contrasts the human response in Florence to the response in Damascus. Ibn Battuta from Morocco, a world traveler like Marco Polo, was in Damascus when the plague struck. He describes a mass parade of Muslims, Jews and Christians through the streets making visible their community solidarity. Perhaps the multifaith submissions we have published here and will publish in the weeks ahead, while not so dramatic as that march through Damascus, will signal our solidarity one with another.

From Robin Wall Kimmerer

When the Program Team met on March 10, **Anne Ferrara** opened the meeting with this quote by Robin Wall Kimmerer which came from the March/April 2020 *Sierra Club Magazine*.



“On a recent Earth Day, I spoke with a beloved student who was about to graduate and go into environmental activism. ‘I’m sorry,’ I said, ‘that you have to still fight these battles. I thought we would have this figured out by now.’ She responded, ‘Don’t you see that this is the best possible time to be alive?’ Climate chaos? Extinction crisis? I didn’t get it. She looked me in the eyes and said, ‘We are on the precipice. When everything hangs in the balance, it matters where I stand. How wonderful to live in a time when everything I do matters.’”

We do live in a time when everything we do matters. That we can embrace.

Photo credits as far as I can tell: Carol Gregor, Pat Wheeler, Gail Vencill, Pat Wheeler, Rob Shetterly, Daksha Baumann, Ames Assoc., Daksha Baumann

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