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Your Independent Hometown Award-winning Newspaper

LA CONNER WEEKLY NEWS

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\$1.00

Public Health Emergency declared by County

Tuesday the Skagit County Board of Commissioners declared a public health emergency on COVID-19. This allows Skagit County to take the immediate steps necessary to prepare and respond appropriately to this state outbreak.

The Skagit County Health Officer, Dr. Howard Leibrand, issued recommendations in order to slow the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the number of people infected.

La Conner Mayor Ramon Hayes and Town staff are emphasizing Leibrand's recommendation that "The community should postpone non-essential events and gatherings of ten or more people."

The other recommendations are:

- People at higher risk of severe illness should stay home and away from large groups of people as much as possible. People at higher risk include people over 60 years of age; people with underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease or diabetes; people with weakened immune systems; and pregnant women.

- Employers should maximize telecommuting options for as many employees as possible; urge employees to stay home when they are sick and maximize flexibility in sick leave benefits; consider staggering start and end times to reduce large numbers of people congregating at the same time.

These recommendations were made in consultation with the State Department of Health and align with similar recommendations from neighboring jurisdictions.

The Health Officer is not recommending school closures. "We understand this guidance has significant implications

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Bill Reynolds now Weekly News news editor

Your weekly newspaper is doubling down on its commitment to La Conner, elevating journalist Bill Reynolds to news editor and buying the property his office is in at 119 North Third Street.

"Bill Reynolds does much more than report on La Conner events. He is practically the town historian and certainly its champion. From the school hall to the town hall, Bill knows, and cares, about everyone. He is a thoughtful, careful journalist and I am thrilled he will increase his role by becoming the news editor," said Ken Stern, La Conner Weekly News publisher and editor.

Reynolds will work most closely with the paper's primary freelancers, Anne Basye and Claire Swedberg, plus Michelle Havist and Cindy Vest on the management team. He will continue his wide range of coverage on both sides of the Swinomish Channel and take on managing news coverage and editing responsibilities.

Reynolds is a 1975 graduate of La Conner High School. He has two bachelor's degrees from the University of Washington, history, 1980, and editorial journalism, 1982. He began writing for the Channel Town Press as an intern in 1978 and became its reporter. He has freelanced with the Weekly News since its inception. Reynolds has also written for the Mart (Texas) Messenger since moving to Texas in 994.

Reynolds got his teaching certificate in 1995 and for 22 years taught a variety of classes at Mart High School, including journalism. As soon as he retired he returned to La Conner. Reynolds has

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LOCAL NEWSPAPER INVESTS IN ITS FUTURE – Bill Reynolds is a retired high school history teacher, but he is a lifelong journalist. This week he has a new job, as news editor for the La Conner Weekly News. Yes, that is a typewriter in the window. Stop by with tips and stories. – Photo by Ken Stern

Dance cancelled Saturday

As the primary EMS provider for the town, and with majority of our calls going to members of the community with increased risks to COVID-19, it is hard to justify increasing the possible risks of exposure.

We are abundantly thankful for the support from the community and we only care about your health and wellbeing.

Plan, don't panic. Wash your hands, practice good hygiene and stay away from people who are sick if possible.

Please donate to the La Conner Fire Department at PO Box 581.

We are still planning on having our 1st golf tournament on May 5 and look forward to seeing many of you there.

It's an honor to serve this community and we can't thank you enough for all the support.

Wylie Thulen
La Conner Firemen's Association



IF EVER A RAINBOW WAS NEEDED – Nature is not taking humanity's pulse, or even Skagit's County. It is up to us to find signs of hope. Taking the initiative, Sarah Walls put together Saturday afternoon's "sun, rain, sun, rain, all day long." She decided "it was a great day for some rainbow chasing. She was right.

– Photo by Sarah Walls

Locals make run on hand sanitizer; toilet paper supplies low

By Ken Stern

Concerns of the Coronavirus have reached into La Conner.

Tuesday Mayor Ramon Hayes sent this recommendation from the Skagit County Health Officer to Town Councilmembers and staff: "The community should postpone non-essential events and gatherings of ten or more people."

While there are no known infections in Skagit County, there have been local cancellations and runs on hand sanitizer, rubbing alcohol and, yes, toilet paper.

At the start of last week staff taped a "No masks, No Sanitizer" sign on the door of the La Conner Drug store.

Saturday they were still out of masks, if they ever had them. They had four-ounce bottles of hand sanitizer on a shelf across from the cash register, along with disinfectant wipes and latex gloves. Delivery of more sanitizer, and larger sizes, was expected Tuesday.

Pioneer Market was also out of hand sanitizer till Tuesday. There was some choice in toilet paper, though a couple shelves were empty. The 24-packs of bottled water were stacked high on an end cap, but single bottle inventory was low.

Pat Ball, owner of The Sliders Café, wasn't sure if reduced business was weather related or from health concerns. He said, "We are

still in a very safe place. I think restaurants are one of the safest places to go to. They are kept clean and sanitized." His staff is cleaning doors and handles more often.

Heather Carter, director of the La Conner Chamber of Commerce reported that neither merchants nor tourists have called regarding COVID 19. She is updating merchants as she gets information.

On Tuesday she called in to a state update with Governor Inslee, State Emergency Management and the State Health Department organized by the Association of Washington Businesses.

In her weekly Monday update to members, Carter included "The Annual Ice Cream & Pie Social, Chamber Fundraiser has been rescheduled to June 25th." It was set for Thursday.

Last Friday the first "Jazz Valley" Daffodil Festival music festival was cancelled by Carter and Rebecca Strong, manager of La Conner Live, the Gilkey Square Sunday concert series.

Jan Paul, president of the La Conner chapter of Soroptimists, sent an email to its membership after its board of directors met. She shared they were monitoring health directives "to make sure we are doing everything possible to protect us," a reference to the many volunteers and customers passing through the Morris Street

Vintage Shop.

Volunteers can choose to stay home. "Every shift has reported to me how grateful our customers are to see us open," she stated in her email.

In her email update, Soroptimist Linda Maly wrote, "Saturday was crazy busy ... customers were grateful for and used our hand sanitizer ... Sunday started out slow and we thought, 'Oh-oh.' Then the customers flocked in."

The Friends of the La Conner Regional Library canceled their March 16 monthly meeting. In the members' newsletter President Joan Scarboro stated, "There are no important decisions to be made and there is still very little news to share regarding the new library, closure of the Library Thrift Shop or the hiring of a new director."

Christina James, Retirement Inn executive director, has notified all residents and family members. "Friends and family are welcome to visit but we are limiting outside guests," she said. "We are not hosting any large parties or guest at this time, including entertainment activities." The Kiwanis have moved their Wednesday morning meetings to Sliders Café.

James said there is a notice on the front door asking people to

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JUST LIKE IN THE BIG CITY – There is something about a crisis that puts the idea of buying lots of rolls of toilet paper in people's heads. That's what happened in La Conner's Pioneer Market last week, so pickings were slim Saturday afternoon. There was no hand sanitizer to be had at all.

– Photo by Ken Stern

WHAT'S HAPPENING

By Eileen Engelstad
Wednesday March 11
7:30 a.m. – Weekly Kiwanis Breakfast Meeting. Open to all. Sliders Cafe, Morris, St.
12:30 to 1:30 p.m. – Ukulele Fun & Song Circle. Beginners welcome and loaner ukuleles available. Meet each Wednesday. Free. Mount Vernon Senior Center, 1401 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon. 206-790-4862 or yogahartspace0@gmail.com.
5 to 7 p.m. – Tech Night at La Conner Regional Library. See ad on this page.
7 to 8 p.m. – Climate Change Demystified. Retired NASA scientist Dr. Bindschadler explains complexities of climate change. Anacortes Library, 1220-10th St.
7:30 p.m. – “1917” Academy Award nominee for Best Picture. Tickets \$8-\$11. Lincoln Theatre, 712 First St., Mount Vernon. 360-336-8955. lincolnthreatre.org.

Thursday March 12
5 to 7 p.m. – Shelter Bay Choir. New members welcome. Shelter Bay Clubhouse, 100 Shoshone Drive, La Conner. 360-223-3230.
5:30 p.m. POSTPONED – Pie & Ice Cream Social. Now June 25.
5:30 p.m. – En Vogue Fashion Show. 10th annual benefit auction for Friendship House. Swinomish Casino & Lodge, 12885 Casino Drive, Anacortes. Tickets at my360tix.com.
7 p.m. – “Finding Home- A Foster Youth Story” Emmy Award-winning documentary. Free, donations welcome. Q & A with producer Laurie Parker. Lincoln Theatre, 712 S. First St., Mount Vernon / 360-336-8955 / lincolnthreatre.org
7 p.m. – Mount Vernon High School Instrumental Music Spring Concert. Pay as you wish. Come early to avoid long lines. McIntyre Hall, 2501 E. College Way, Mount Vernon. 360-416-7727, ex. 2

brick will share other examples of plant supports that you could build yourself. Free. WSU Mount Vernon NWREC Auditorium, 16650 SR 536, Mount Vernon.
7 to 8 p.m. – Beginning Line Dancing. Adults and teens 13+, each Tuesday. \$6 drop-in; \$25/ five classes. Burlington Community Center, 1011 Greenleaf Ave., Burlington. Register: burlington-wa.gov/recreation or 360-755-9649.
7 to 9:30 p.m. – Folk Dancing. Skagit-Anacortes. Learn to folk dance each Tuesday to a variety of international music. No partner necessary. First time free, then \$5. Bay View Civic Hall, 12615 C Street, Bayview. 360-766-6866.

Wednesday March 18
7:30 a.m. – Weekly Kiwanis Breakfast meeting. Open to all. Sliders Cafe, Morris, St.
12:30 to 1:30 p.m. – Ukulele Fun & Song Circle. Beginners welcome and loaner ukuleles available. Meet each Wednesday. Free. Mount Vernon Senior Center, 1401 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon. 206-790-4862 or yogahartspace0@gmail.com.
3:30 p.m. – Teen Writing Group. For high school students. A professional writer leads the group, introducing new prompts each session. Anacortes Library, 1220-10th St.
3:30 to 5 p.m. – Grief Support Group. Every Wednesday. In the Fidalgo/Burrows Rooms. Island Hospital, 1211- 24th St., Anacortes
5 to 7 p.m. – Tech Night at La Conner Regional Library. See ad on this page.
7 p.m. – Washington’s Undiscovered Feminists. Writer Mayumi Tsutakawa commemorates the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage, presenting often unsung women of the Pacific Northwest, five “woman warriors” in the arts and journalism. Anacortes Library, 1220-10th St.

Thursday March 19
1:30 to 3 p.m. – Parkinson’s Support Group. For those with Parkinson’s Disease, Fidalgo Room, Island Hospital, 1211-24th St., Anacortes.
4:30 p.m. – Meet the Poets. Matthew Campbell Roberts and our own Bob Skeele will read from their work and talk about what drew them to poetry. Both are local but have very different life experiences. Seaport Books, 106 First St., La Conner. 360-399-1300.
5 to 7 p.m. – Shelter Bay Choir. New members welcome. Shelter Bay Clubhouse, 100 Shoshone Drive, La Conner. 360-223-3230
7 p.m. – Barbershop Harmony. Join the An-O-Chords each Thursday. 4-part harmony group; no experience or auditions required. All ages. Bethany Covenant Church, 1318- 18th St., Mount Vernon. 360-679-7473.
7 p.m. – Mount Vernon High School Choral Music Dept. General admission, pay what you wish, available the day of show only. Arrive early to avoid the lines at the box office. Under the direction of Jesús Gómez, the MVHS choral program presents music that will be performed during the upcoming choral festival season.

Friday March 20
7 to 8:30 p.m. – Seals & Sea Lions. Learn about these pinnipeds of the Salish Sea from The Friends of Skagit Beaches. Free. NW Educational Services District, 1601 R Ave., Anacortes.
Saturday March 21
10 a.m. – Daffodil Tweed Ride. Dress “British” & “tweedy” to bicycle-ride by the daffodil fields to a picnic lunch. Leave from La Conner Coffee Co., 604 1st St., La Conner. Return at 2 p.m. to party until 6 p.m. at Hellam’s Vineyard, 109 N. 1st St.
11 a.m. to noon – Class: Cultivating Dahlias. A growing number of dahlia gardeners are selling their flowers at roadside stands. Because dahlias must be cut to grow, flower stands offer a ready-made cash crop. Instructors John and Kathy Willson will teach you how to cultivate and market high-quality flowers. \$8 class fee. Christianson’s Nursery, 15806 Best Rd., Mt Vernon. 360-466-3821.
7:30 p.m. – “Unforgettable, That’s What You Are” Skagit Symphony. Tickets \$10-\$45 (High School students 16 and older are free on the day of the performance with a valid ID) The Skagit Symphony’s concert will begin with a newly commissioned work for the 40th Anniversary Season by Roupen Shakarian, followed by three tales from A Thousand and One Arabian Nights as set to music in Ravel’s Schéhérazade, sung by Laura Corina Sanders. The evening will conclude with Elgar’s Enigma Variations. Pre-concert lecture in the concert hall at 6:45 p.m. McIntyre Hall, 2501 E. College Way, Mount Vernon. 360-416-7727, ex. 2.

Sunday March 15
1 to 4 p.m. – Community Seed Share & Garden Fair. Free entry & free seeds. Seed germination workshop with botanist Brenda Clifton. Mount Vernon Library, 315 Snoqualmie Street.
4 to 6 p.m. – All That Jazz with Ben Sterner and Phillip Nakaiod. \$10. Sips, 608 First Street, La Conner.
Monday March 16
9 a.m. to 3 p.m. – Donate Blood in the Fidalgo/Burrows Rooms at Island Hospital, 1211 24th St. Anacortes. Schedule your appointment: schedule. bloodworksnw.org using sponsor code 2298, or 1-800-398-7888.
11:30 a.m. – CANCELLED: Friends of La Conner Regional Library monthly meeting.
1 to 3 p.m. – Monday Dancing, to The Skippers or Good Vibrations. \$7. Each week at Mount Vernon Senior Center 1401 Cleveland Ave., Mount Vernon. 360-336-3682
2 to 3 p.m. & 5 to 6 p.m. – Food Bank: La Conner Sunrise Food Bank is located in the Garfield Masonic Lodge at 602 S. Third St. behind the Methodist Church on the hill. All are welcome, those who need groceries and those with food to share. 360-488-3878 / laconnerfoodbank.com
7 to 8:30 p.m. – Spiritual Movements Exploration Class. Non-secular. All ages. Suggested donation \$5. Skagit Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 500 W. Section St., Mount Vernon, 541-619-2675

Tuesday March 17
1 to 2:30 p.m. – Know & Grow. Protect and support your plants by building attractive wire cages to protect and support plants. Master Gardener Sandra Swar-



HARLEQUIN DUCKS

– photo and text by Rosi Jansen

Harlequin ducks

By Rosi Jansen
 One of the most colorful ducks in the area, next to the Wood Duck, is the Harlequin Duck.

It is small, about 16-17”, with a steep forehead and a short bill. The male has slate-blue, brown and white colors, while the female is all brown with white patches on the head.

They are common during the winter on rocky coasts, riding the waves and diving for mollusks and other marine organisms.

We see them in this area at Rosario Beach and Bowman Bay around Deception Pass, and at Washington Park in Anacortes. In late February we went further north and saw quite a few at Semiahmoo, in addition to many Surf Scoters and Northern Pintail Ducks.

Their courtship starts in

Locals . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

stay away if they have any symptoms.

The Inn has reduced its transportation services.

James reports extra sanitizing of handrails, door-knobs and “touch spots.” The Inn has plenty of cleaning supplies.

She said the residents were calm and not complaining: “They trust us to take good care of them.”

The Skagit County Sheriff’s Office is issuing and fitting all of its employees with the N95 masks, for incidental contact with citizens that are COVID-19 symptomatic, Traffic Sergeant Jeff Willard of the La Conner Detachment shared in an email.

Saturday the La Conner School Board met in an emergency meeting via phone conference and created a safety plan.

U.S. Rep. Rick Larsen met with Skagit County elected and public health officials last Friday in Mount Vernon. There are no confirmed coronavirus cases in the county, Polly Dubbal, Skagit County Public Health communicable disease and environmental health manager, told them.

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- In the mood for a looong vacation? Consider the planet Uranus. Its summer lasts 21 Earth years.
- It takes 700 gallons of water to make a cotton shirt. To put that in perspective, the amount of water needed to make a T-shirt is enough for one person to stay hydrated for 900 days, while the amount necessary to create a pair of jeans is equivalent to hosing down your lawn for nine hours straight.
- The official color of the Golden Gate Bridge is “International Orange.”
- Speaking of that delightful hue, Alexander the Great washed his hair in saffron to keep it shiny and orange.
- The world’s least-common surnames include Sallow, Miracle and Relish, while extinct surnames include Bread, Spinster and Bythesea (By the sea).
- Your navel contains thousands of bacteria that form an ecosystem the size of an entire rainforest.
- Ever wondered about those ridges along the edges of some coins? They were the brainchild of Sir Isaac Newton, who while warden of the Royal Mint in 1696 used the reeded edges to help combat theft and counterfeiters.
- After the hip-hop duo OutKast coined the phrase “shake it like a Polaroid picture” in their hit song “Hey Ya!” Polaroid released this statement: “Shaking or waving can actually damage the image.”
- Just like fingerprints, no two tongue prints are alike.

Thought for the Day: “I don’t need a friend who changes when I change and who nods when I nod; my shadow does that much better.” —Plutarch
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MAPLE HALL
ACTIVITY CENTER
TUESDAYS 8a – 4p
FITNESS PROGRAMS
 Zumba Gold
 Strength&Balance
 Tai Chi
GROUPS and CLASSES
 Woodcarving Group
 Non-fiction Creative Writing
 Stitchers ‘n Crafters Group
 Artistic Journaling Seminar
GAMES
 Mah jongg, Canasta, Scrabble
VARIED SPECIAL EVENTS
 Call/email for full schedule
360-855-5440
 SeniorCenter@townoflaconner.org

CLASSIFIEDS

To run an ad, please stop by the office (119 N. Third), call 360-466-3315, or email: production@laconnernews.com BEFORE NOON ON FRIDAYS.

POSTPONED!! Chamber Fundraiser. Maple Hall. Support Town flower baskets! Silent auction, pie and ice cream social. Live music, Lazy Acres”. Entryfree.Payfortreats. 2tc3/4

The Library Thrift Shop
 We have chairs, lots of ‘em!
All 30% off until March 15.
 Frugal Fridays: 20% off
 520 Morris St. 360-399-1154
 Wed. - Sat., 11-5
 Sun., Noon-3
 All proceeds go to support the La Conner Library.

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 or call: 466-3315

WINTER CLEAN UP TIME!
 Get your yard ready for spring. Pruning, leaf pick up, bark etc. Blackbird Landscaping of La Conner. Please call Tim Chomiak 360-421-1652. tfcn11/13

LaConner Regional LIBRARY EVENTS
TECH NIGHTS
 Every Wed. night: 5-7 PM
 Bring in a device & get help.
 Appointment required.
 Call 360-466-3352 during the library open hours.
Friday Story Times
 10:30 AM every Fri.
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 www.lclib.lib.wa.us

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the winter, when they fly as pairs into the mountains, where they nest along rivers and feed on insects.

There they seem to be more difficult to find, but we’ve seen them along the North Fork Nooksack River on the way to the Heather Meadows on Mt. Baker.

We enjoy them while they’re here, with their beautiful and funny look!

Simple . . .

(Continued from Page 3)

garding you as his partner.

This needs to stop immediately if you two are to continue as spouses. His daughter needs to learn that adult thoughts, decisions and plans are meant to be discussed between husband and wife, then shared with the kids as the adults choose to and not the other way around.

I hope you can stand your ground and create some boundaries since it’s not too late to turn this around. If you don’t, expect to have conflict in your future family.

Girls’ basketball . . .

(Continued from Page 4)

its state basketball tournaments in Spokane, Yakima and Tacoma. “It will be interesting,” Torgeson said, “what we’ll see happening in the next couple weeks.”

• Justine Benson finished her La Conner High career with 1,580 points, passing Mount Vernon High’s Kim Brydges (1,577; 1990-94) for fourth place on the all-time Skagit County girls’ basketball scoring list.

• Burnham’s dad, Blaze Burnham, ranks 22nd on the Washington State boys’ basketball scoring leaderboard with 2,121 points, six more than O’Dea alum Clint Richardson, who went on to star at Seattle University and play in the NBA.
 TRI-CITIES PREP

4 11 5 7 – 27
 LA CONNER 20 13 23 13 – 69
 (TCP) – Martinez 9, Chang 7, Dickson 6, Brandner 3, Monteon 2.

(LC) – Morgan Herrera 15, Cook 14, Justine Benson 11, Swanson 9, Marble 8, Makayla Herrera 8, Harper 3, Cram 1.
 WAHIAKUM 11 12 8 9 – 40
 LA CONNER 11 12 12 11 – 46
 (W) – Mace 20, Merz 8, Leitz 8, A. Watkins 2, K. Watkins 2.
 (LC) – Justine Benson 10, Marble 10, Cram 9, Cook 7, Swanson 5, Morgan Herrera 5.
 LIBERTY (SPANGLE)

13 14 11 14 – 52
 LA CONNER 7 13 15 10 – 45
 (LS) – Burnham 22, Goodwin 12, Aleena Cook 6, Fletcher 5, Denny 5, Budde 2.

(LC) – Justine Benson 18, Morgan Herrera 9, Marble 6, Swanson 5, Cram 4, Sarah Cook 3.

Coronavirus . . .

(Continued from Page 6)

(8) Reach out to your neighbors to open communication in a new and positive way and make firm mutual offers of help and support.

Dorothy Downes, RN, MSW, MPA, a community member, worked for CDC researching the transmission of communicable disease and is currently practicing as a case manager in a post-ICU respiratory hospital in Seattle. The best source of advice on medical issues is your personal physician, ARNP or PA.