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STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

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State slowly starting to reopen

Inslee releases road map to ease restrictions in 4 phases

By EVAN CALDWELL
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The Stanwood-Camano area, like the rest of the state, will begin a slow reopening in the coming days and weeks, beginning Tuesday, May 5, with parks and golf courses.

While extending the state's coronavirus stay-at-home order through at least May

31, Gov. Jay Inslee on Friday also laid out a roadmap to ease the restrictions in four stages, which will advance based on metrics showing a decline in the COVID-19 pandemic.

"If we stick together for a while longer, we don't lose the gains we've already made," Inslee said in a Friday news conference.

Phase One starts Tuesday and includes

allowing drive-in spiritual services with one household per vehicle; restart of existing construction projects; outdoor recreation like hunting, golfing and fishing; some non-urgent surgeries to resume. Day-use activities will be allowed at state parks, including Cama Beach and Camano Island state parks. Stanwood, Snohomish County and Island County will also begin reopen-

ing parks and trails for day-use. Bathrooms will remain closed.

The ban on large gatherings will remain in effect.

"We have not won this fight against this virus," Inslee said.

Statewide, there have been more than 15,100 cases and 830 deaths. In Snohomish County, there have been about 25 new cases a day for the past three weeks.

■ SEE REOPEN, A5

The parallels to polio

Coronavirus reminds older area residents of surviving polio epidemic

By PEGGY WENDEL
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While people all over the world are self-isolating, waiting for the COVID-19 contagion to subside and a vaccine to be developed, two Camano Island residents remember another pandemic virus: polio.

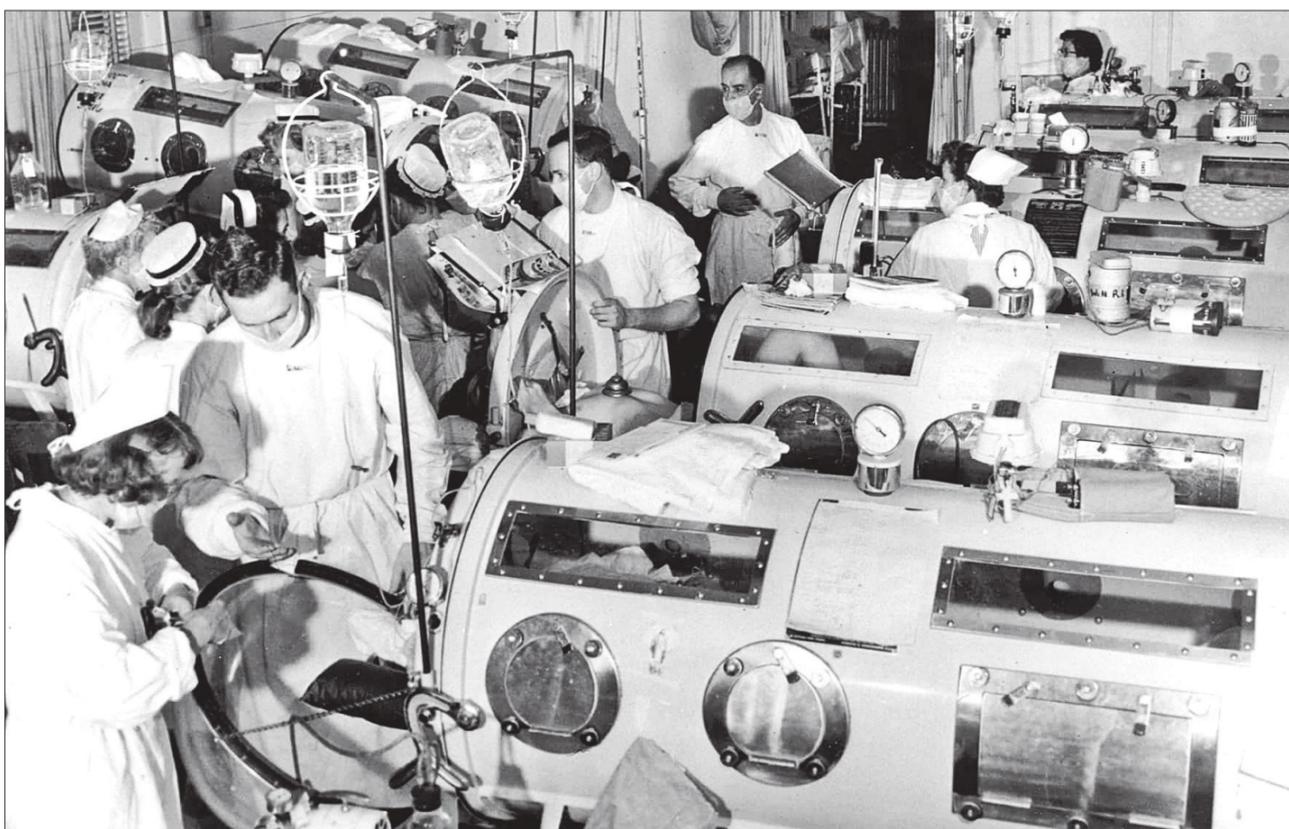
Betty Metz took the trial vaccines when she was young and later as a nurse worked with polio patients. Kristin Jensen contracted polio before the vaccine came out when she was 18 months old. Both have the experiences seared into their memories.

The polio and corona viruses have similarities and differences. At first, people didn't know much about either virus.

Betty Metz of Camano Island remembers how it affected her life as a kid in grade school in 1945-46. From her perspective as a child, she wanted to go out and play, but the world outside was a dangerous place.

"When I was young, I couldn't go to the swimming pool. Other young people did, and they got polio," Metz said. "It was a frightening time because they didn't know what caused it, and they didn't have a vaccine. But we got through it and we'll get through this," she said, referring to the COVID-19 pandemic.

■ SEE POLIO, A11



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In the late 1950s, Betty Metz worked as a registered nurse taking care of polio patients in "iron lungs," similar to this 1950s photo of a Pennsylvania hospital treating people in the long metal cylinders that maintain negative pressure and manually work the lungs to breathe for the patient.

Polio and COVID-19

Polio was once one of the most feared diseases in the U.S., according to Centers for Disease Control. In the early 1950s, before polio vaccines were available, polio outbreaks caused more than 15,000 cases of paralysis each year.

Scientists studied the poliovirus, as they are doing now with COVID-19, to learn how it

works and how it's transmitted.

According to CDC, the two viruses are spread differently. The poliovirus spreads primarily through fecal matter, especially in pools and contaminated water. But the coronavirus is spread by coughing and sneezing, or by touching surfaces that the virus has landed on.

Some people can carry the polio or corona viruses without showing symptoms, while others come down with flu-like symptoms,

like coughing, sneezing, fever. Polio symptoms tended toward intestinal problems while COVID-19 symptoms include trouble breathing and persistent pain or pressure in the chest.

COVID-19 attacks the lungs while polio infects the spinal cord and can cause paralysis, including to muscles that work the lungs, according to CDC.

— Peggy Wendel / SC News

Remote learning underway in Stanwood-Camano schools

By EVAN CALDWELL
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Jessica Jansma sat in her Elger Bay Elementary School classroom answering questions about verbs.

Aside from her second-graders attending via Google Classroom, learning isn't all that different from what would take place without the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We miss the kids; we want to give them a hug and see them," Jansma said. "This is not what we wanted to do when we became teachers. It's the social interaction we miss most. But we will still be there to help kids anyway we can."

Last week, Stanwood-Camano teachers began rolling out new instruction through remote learning platforms — such as Seesaw, Clever and Google Classroom — as well as through paper packets for those unable to connect to the internet.

■ SEE SCHOOLS, A8



EVAN CALDWELL / STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

Second-grade teachers Aileen Cruise, left, and Jessica Jansma work on a new Seesaw lesson in Cruise's classroom Thursday, April 30, at Elger Bay Elementary.



Polio

► FROM A1

Polio left some people with severe handicaps. It wasn't unusual to see children with withered limbs or braces on their legs, she said.

March of Dimes

President Franklin D. Roosevelt was never able to walk again on his own after contracting polio. He founded the March of Dimes in 1938, which was boosted by radio and Hollywood.

"School children collected pennies, nickels and dimes. It was promoted as children helping children," Metz said.

It was a time of working together. Americans united to get through World War II, so they worked to get through this, too, she said.

According to the March of Dimes, the organization helped fund Dr. Jonas Salk in leading the project to create a vaccine. Tested in a massive field trial in 1954 that involved 1.8 million schoolchildren known as "polio pioneers," the Salk vaccine was licensed for use in April 1955.

Metz was one of those students who received the trial vaccine when she was a high school junior and senior. She lived in Hamilton, Montana, where her uncle's cousin worked at the state public health service lab helping the effort to create the first polio vaccine. The same lab is working on a vaccine now for COVID-19, she said.

Iron lung

In the late 1950s, Metz worked as a registered nurse. There were far fewer polio cases, but new cases came in as people who didn't take the vaccine contracted the virus.

"I would take care of people who had polio in the old iron lungs," Metz said.



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A young boy stricken with polio gets physical therapy. In the early 1950s, before polio vaccines were available, polio outbreaks caused more than 15,000 cases of paralysis each year.

"They didn't have ventilators at that point. They had these great big old machines that would take up half of the room. My heart just broke for them because of what they were having to go through."

The patients would each lie with their body sealed in a long cylinder with just their head sticking out. The cylinder maintained negative pressure and manually worked the lungs, basically breathing for the patient.

Polio patients couldn't move and their skin tended to break down. Their worldview was limited to an overhead mirror that reflected someone standing behind them.

It was hard for nurses working with polio patients. They'd work through ports in the side, so the iron lung could maintain proper internal pressure to work the lungs, Metz said.

"It was heartbreaking, because by that time (scientists) had come up with a vaccine. I don't believe they had been vaccinated," Metz said.

Vaccine was too late for some

For another Camano Islander, the effects of polio have been a life-long challenge.

Kristin Jensen contracted polio two years before vaccine came out in 1954.

"My dad and I had polio at the same time," she said. "I was a tiny little child."

"I remember the headache and my dad holding me," Jensen said.

She also remembers going up unending stairs in the original Swedish Hospital where she got a shot of penicillin, which was new, and she said led



PEGGY WENDEL / STANWOOD CAMANO NEWS

Graphic artist and musician Kristin Jensen of Camano Island survived polio as a child.

to a lifetime of allergies, although she thinks it saved her life.

The hospital wouldn't take polio patients because it was so contagious. But a doctor agreed to let her mother smuggle her husband in. She had to carry him up the back stairs.

After contracting the disease, her father was never the same.

"He'd get terrible muscle cramps in the middle of the night, drink quinine and stomp his feet to get the pain out," she said.

Jensen didn't have the muscle wasting, but she was sickly and worked hard to grow straight. She had physical therapy and went to the YMCA pool, where other polio patients were swimming. The lifeguard

steadied a pole, which she held while kicking in the water. That helped, but it wasn't easy for her to grow straight. Even now, one side is not as limber as the other.

"In junior high I had to think about every step to walk straight. I'd get in trouble for not standing up straight," she said. "I clearly had a bunch of crookedness that I've had to deal with. One shoe would be all messed up. I only had one pair of shoes a year, so I had to teach myself to walk straight."

She found out when she was 28 that she'd developed scoliosis, not sideways, but inward. In spite of the challenges, she stayed positive.

"I wasn't in an iron lung or anything, thank God," she said. "From that first

experience, it changed my whole entire life. A serious disease can make you more aware and certainly grateful," she said.

Staying safe

Jensen is taking the COVID-19 pandemic seriously. She's lucky she has a gardening job, working alone "in quarantine paradise." She said that having something like this, an infection of the lungs, people can lose their whole health.

"Do anything you can to avoid it," she said.

Metz sees some of the same behaviors today as she did decades ago.

"There was a lot of fear back then as well as now. We certainly didn't have the information daily updates hourly updates; you had to wait for the newspaper to come out. There was a lot of uncertainty," Metz said.

Back then, some people didn't believe in vaccines, like today's anti-vaxers. Some didn't think the disease was so bad. It's different if you've seen it with your own eyes, she said.

"It was quite a terror throughout the world. It caused a number of deaths, and it caused lifelong incapacitation for people, and crippling after-effects for many," Metz said. "Deny at your own risk."

"If people put on their thinking caps, and look at the facts, they would say I'm going to stay home, do social distancing and protect my loved ones and others."

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