

Crescent City protest draws cries to reopen the county

April 23, 2020





Crescent City residents may call Dan Schultz “Dr. Dan,” but as a holistic chiropract practitioner, he’s seen enough during the COVID-19 shutdown to join the growing chorus the cure may be worse than the disease.

Nearly 100 residents answered Schultz’s call through social media to join in a grass roots rally Tuesday in front of the Del Norte Fairgrounds to protest Governor Gavin Newsom’s shelter place order during the pandemic.

Schultz said he was happy to get the support of Del Norte County Supervisor Roger Gitlin, who joined the ranks of protesters. Schultz said he was thrilled by the turnout, saying anything over five would have been great, let alone anything nearing 100.

“I’m surprised by the amount of support, talking to people at the feed store, people at the grocery store,” Schultz said. “They’re the silent majority this is happening to, walking around in masks, fear in their eyes, yet know this is ridiculous and harmful, and just want to resume their normal lives.”

“We have to stand up and say something. Who it will affect, I don’t know,” Schultz added. “My objective is to stand up and tell the truth – we can stop being scared, start thinking for ourselves and realize the disaster this is.”

For Gitlin, the protest had a simple message he hopes reaches the governor’s ears in Sacramento.

“Here’s the bottom line – our county and city are bleeding, hemorrhaging money, and we cannot sustain this state,” Gitlin said.

He points to the city and county’s lost share of the Transient Occupancy Tax usually collected at area hotels. With them now closed to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, Gitlin said Crescent City has lost \$1.25 million and the county more than \$600,000 which he sees as unsustainable.

“We’re asking Gov. Newsom to relax some restrictions on our county to return to some form of normalcy,” Gitlin said. “Twenty-two states are moving in the direction of opening counties now and next week. Southern California is not one of them doing do.”

Crescent City retiree Jim Tofahl, sporting a Trump 2020 campaign hat and carrying an American flag, said he participated in the rally to support his Supervisor, Roger Gitlin.

“I’m retired. But I feel bad for the people who have businesses and can’t run them. You’ve just got to follow the rules,” Tofahl said. “I want small businesses to go back to work because we don’t have problem up here, we’re isolated. They should be able to open up parts of our state.”

Schultz hopes the protest brings to light other downsides to the economic shutdown. His first issue is why past pandemics did not require shutdowns and quarantines.

“With the Hong Kong Flu in 1968, 8 million people died. Ask anyone who’s 70 years old, they’ll tell you that was far worse than this,” Schultz said.

He also points to another event that caused hundreds of thousands of deaths, that is not making headlines.

“During the 2008 financial crisis, there was a 25 percent increase in suicides. This financial catastrophe is magnitudes greater than 2008. Add in deaths from drug abuse, deaths from domestic violence – they’re already seeing a 30 percent increase in France – plus unemployment, lack of insurance. Food shortages are already happening. It’s getting worse,” Schultz said.

Schultz added he fears the government is going to make its citizens a prisoner to the annual flu, equating to medical martial law.

“If we become obedient, good little citizens, following blindly without questioning, we’re all in trouble,” he said.

Schultz added the protest remains one of his unassailable constitutional rights to assemble.

“I’ve already talked to law enforcement and been told what we’re doing is legal. I have their thumbs up. This is our right, inalienable right, as a free, sovereign citizen. They can’t with a whisk of their hand, erase our liberties, erase our rights. That’s why we’re doing this,” he said.

The fear for the loss of constitutional rights was prevalent in the crowd.

Del Norte County resident Gino Desolenni, who brought his two daughters, a niece and nephew to the protest, was eager to assert his constitutional rights to attend and fears the right to assemble is not the only one being trampled.

“I’ve never seen the authority to issue a blanket order telling 40 million Californians to stay in place under these circumstances. I’ve seen authority for the state to quarantine one individual at a time if they’re sick, but not healthy individuals. If somebody can show me the models and data these decisions this is based upon, I might change my mind,” Deolenni said. “It’s been a big disruption in the lives of the kids, too, being out of school. It seems like there’s ways we could make sure the virus is taken safely, keep ourselves safe, and still proceed with our daily lives.”

Gitlin’s hope was fulfilled that protesters kept the message focused, with lots of American flags and no talk of impeaching Newsom, just support of opening Del Norte County back up.

“I hope Newsom responds by giving us the opportunity to exist, that the shutdown is not a one size fits all solution,” Gitlin said.

Liz Freeman, dressed in red, white and blue, said she did not attend the rally as a representative of the Daughters of the American Revolution, where she is chapter president.

“I came for myself, my children, my grandchildren, my great grandchildren, my whole lineage so that we remain free in this country. We’re in the fight of our life for the life of our country. This is a big hoax. They have violated the Constitution, and have made us subject to their whims, Gov. Newsom and his crowd,” Freeman said.

Freeman added she was sorry that the county supervisors couldn’t find a way around the governor’s executive order to shelter in place, statewide.

“I was hoping they would have a spine and stand up and say Del Norte County is not going to do this, we’re going to go ahead and live life. But that didn’t happen. So, here we are,” Freeman said. “A lot of blood in my

family has been spilled for this flag. We fought in the Revolutionary War all the way to the present time. We've fought in the military and served at home and abroad. So, long may she wave. God bless America. “