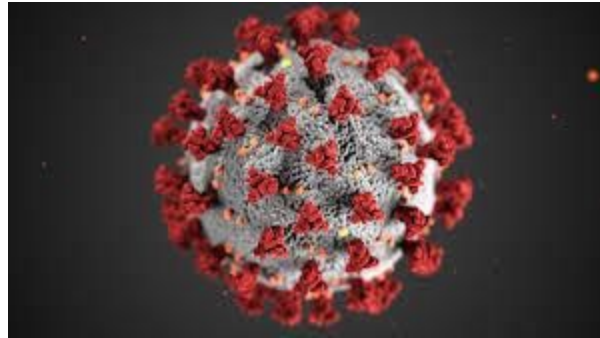


Protest of pandemic shutdown scheduled for noon today at fairgrounds

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

So, Schultz reached out through social media to organize a grassroots protest of Governor Gavin Newsom’s lockdown today from noon to 1 p.m. in front of the Del Norte Fairgrounds.

Schultz said the response was unexpected, which includes support from Del Norte County Supervisor Roger Gitlin, who will join the ranks of protesters.

“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 has a simple message and is one 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 direction of opening counties now and next week. Southern California is not one of them doing do.”

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 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.

Gitlin said he hopes the protesters keep 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.