

Hoagland reminds us that we are the lucky ones. We are sheltering in place on the Oregon Coast. We have some of the world's most beautiful social distancing locations, our beaches and forests. State and City beach parking lots, hiking trails and facilities are blocked off, but locals are still able to access our beaches and find new areas of the forest to explore. There has been some confusion about getting outside, however, city officials assure us that locals are allowed to avail ourselves of beaches and forests, as long as we keep a safe, six-foot distance and don't block streets.

We spoke with a few retirees whose lives hadn't changed much; they make fewer store runs and are having a hard time with the library closure. Those without e-readers are re-reading books in their personal collections, some for the "umpteenth time." Physical books aren't the only thing seeing a comeback, adults and children alike are finding pen pals from around the world in social media groups. Good old snail mail is keeping us in contact. Families and new friends alike appreciate getting a handwritten letter or card in the mailbox. As we distance ourselves physically we crave connectivity and communication; writing each other is a rewarding way to keep up to date.

Baking shelves at the grocery store are being hit hard as people try to stay busy or take a break from working at home. One amateur baker we spoke with had gone through four bags of flour this month as she tried new recipes for coffee cake, streusel and banana muffins. Stress eating, meet stress cooking. People are getting creative in the kitchen and outside. Nature walks, gardening, art and crafts are just a few things helping people fill the hours. Parents are reconnecting with their children and teaching them things they wouldn't have learned in the classroom. One parent said it was especially rewarding to bring her son along for a few of her culinary adventures. He recently hand-rolled pasta for the family meal and excitedly proclaimed to his teacher via Zoom the next day, that it was "science and math!" For those that have run out of creative ideas for your little ones, the Lincoln City Cultural Center is offering "Creative Quarantine" kits every Thursday. Visual Arts Director Krista Eddy puts together instructions and supplies that can be picked up in the cultural center parking lot. She then posts how-to videos on the center's Facebook page.

Retiree Dallas Baird said she hopes the pandemic encourages people to be gentle with themselves and with others.

"I hope we all learn some compassion" she said, "and realize that no matter who we are



LEFT: Lincoln City resident Terry Sissel peers out of her window during week five of social distancing. **RIGHT:** Lincoln City's Lincoln statue is adorned with his own PPE, as is his horse. **TOP:** Closed signs line the parking lot of Lincoln City beaches, like the one pictured at Roads End

or what we think, we share the same time and space."

We are being inundated with inspirational posts, motivational quotes and being urged to do, learn and create. Many we talked to are on a roller coaster of emotion. One day you stare out the window at nothing, wondering how you will make it through one more week. Other days you are checking projects of the to-do list, making a new recipe and scrubbing the floor boards. With much of our interaction coming from online and social media content we are feeling the

pressure to perform; even more now than before the pandemic. Remember this though, if you aren't feeling up to crawling out of bed, or getting off the couch, you aren't alone. It is OK to not be OK during these turbulent times. None of us know how to navigate this situation, as nothing like this has happened in our lifetime. Garden or don't. Cook or order in. Hike or binge-watch Netflix. There is no right way to handle this, so we all get to do it our way. What we have heard time and again as we asked our questions is that people are hopeful that we will come out

of this better than we went in. That we will create new habits, learn from each other and gain a stronger connection around the globe as we fight through a global pandemic. We are all humans, doing our small part to keep each other healthy. We are staying apart now, so that we can come together again soon.

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In addition to being professional photographers, Krista Melone and Rachel Baird are co-owners of Tab•Lume Curiosities & Gifts, which offers online commerce at www.tablume.com.