



April 21, 2020

Dear Followers and Friends for WNP Life Center,

As promised, six weeks ago I told you I would keep you updated on our situation here at WNP Life Center in regards to Covid-19. Although, we have been doing a phenomenal job of “social distancing” and “sheltering in place”-We are all asking the same questions of this “bigger than us monster” that we have come to know and dislike. When is it gonna end? How long do we have to do this? Will life ever be normal again? And many more questions that you run through your own head. While that is still an unknown of when we will all be released to get on with our lives as we knew them, we know for sure its not **now, not** at this time. And we need to continue to wash our hands, wear our masks, wear our gloves, sanitize our surroundings, stay in our homes, limit our social contacts, in order to be SAFE, Healthy and Alive. If we don’t heed this very evident message we are receiving on a daily basis, we may not be here to carry on our legacies, see our grandchildren graduate from high school and college and have great grandchildren. I know it sounds rather dark, maybe even depressing but somebody has got to share these feelings. This staying home, isolating ourselves is new and is something none of us have ever experienced and it can be a tough concept for many of us to reckon with in this day and age.

I have to share with you a few things I have learned since we “starting staying home” approximately six weeks ago. The first evening after the WNP Life Center was closed down, March 12 to be exact. I stopped at a volunteers house to drop off a paper, it was quite late by the time I had left work and her house was on my way home. The son-in-law was nice enough to answer the door and greet me with my 2020 Census t-shirt on. He could have easily ran me off for a few reasons. I explained who I was and that I had a note for his mother-in-law and please don’t mistake me as a Census Worker, my shirt represented the Kick-Off for the 2020 Census start today at work (for which I had shared much excitement today to be part of this program’s kick-off). After we got through the introductions, he mentioned what his plans were for the next few days or weeks with the Coronavirus scare. I was really impressed that he had a plan and had thought it out enough to share. I had not had time to really think of what my plan might be since prior to the shutdown of the Center, was living blissfully in getting the community excited and take part in their American Duty of filling out the 2020 Census application! What could possibly spoil that? Then back to reality and the plan the gentleman shared with me entailed the following in a very heartfelt explanation. He was going to have all of his family “hunker down” in their house together, already had made a trip to the store buying enough food items for a week or so, not go out in public for any reason, not go to any fast food establishments to eat, and keep all of his family safe because they had a 4 month old grandbaby to protect. I was very touched at his sincerity for his family’s safety. And this was just the beginning of the Coronavirus soon becoming just Covid-19 and we still knew very little of what the next few weeks would turn into and we are still learning new happenings each day six weeks later.

Although, it is apparent that our lives can change in just one short day, it is also a true testament how resilient we as human beings can become. Many of us have learned to trudge on in a different fashion to learn just how strong we have to be to carry on. While not many of us have ever experienced a pandemic before or even any adversity in our own country such as Coronavirus, we are lacking the skills to cope, the wherewithall to stay focused, and to find a sense of security in the world as we once knew it. I am totally impressed with how our state agency has pulled together and provided us with so much information and guidance as to running our nutritional programs. Our Federal government has provided us with many financial how-to-survive opportunities and the vast amount of knowledge from our many doctors and scientists attempting to help us continue to better understand Covid-19 and how it affects all of us. We need to be truly appreciative for all of the expertise shared in the changing times of our lives. And from our County level that has taken the possible outbreaks serious and when we did have three positives and then one death, that it was handled so professionally.

Things will change eventually and when we look back on this time in our lives that everything came to a standstill, in a few months and many years from now, we can agree...that we did this together with these realizations of how precious each of our lives are, how important we are to each other, how we all need each other and we are truly resilient when we have to be! And may we continue some of the practices we have learned at this time, like using the telephone and listening along with being creative to share ideas and fun with our friends and neighbor's at a distance. And while technology is wonderful to have, its not always necessary to be immersed in.

So let's now continue to be Safe, Smart, and Strong by not getting in a hurry to rush this period of much uncertainty and loosing control of our **Social Distancing and Sheltering in Place** practices we have all worked so diligently to make sure we stay healthy.

As soon as William N. Pennington Life Center has a plan, protocol and permission to revamp our programing and a date for reopening we will let you all know immediately.

Until then, stay healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in a cursive script that reads "Lisa".

Lisa Erquiaga, Executive Director  
William N. Pennington Life Center