

Sheltering in place with Shelter-In-Plays: by Kaci Elder

COVID-19 scares by scale – How many infections, how many deaths, how many feet of distance between you and me? These numbers can consume us. Yet last weekend provided a chance to turn away from that terrifying math, if only for a moment, to count something much more joyful.

On Sunday, more than 50 artists from Southern Oregon (plus a few long-distance friends) collaborated to create 12 original plays, performed for an audience of over 220 people logging in from Bali to Pittsburg to Medford to Cave Junction, and raised \$3,300 for coronavirus relief in the Illinois and Applegate valleys.

Local theatre-makers Eliot Feenstra and Sophie Traub of Taklima were two of the six organizers of the Shelter-in-Plays Virtual Theatre Festival.

Feenstra has co-organized many 24-Hour Whirlwind Theatre Festivals in the Illinois Valley and Grants Pass areas. This winter, Applegate Valley theatre artists Maud Powell, Kate Vangeloff, Sara Tamler and Kenny Taylor invited Feenstra and Traub to host a 24-hour theatre festival, and they met in person to plan. Co-organizer and natural builder Sara Tamler grew up with Feenstra, doing theatre

together in Pittsburg, and “Sara hosted the first 24-hour play festival that I was part of,” said Feenstra. “So it was exciting to organize one together in Southern Oregon.”

“Then the shelter-in-place order happened,” Feenstra said. “We were already excited about working on something, so we decided to do something virtual.”

The entire process took only four weeks: participants were invited to join March 30 and dozens did, with Eliot Feenstra, Sophie Traub, Chris Hall, Lindsey B. Jones, Finn Franklin, Ryan Forsythe, Kaci Elder, and Forrest Roth representing the Illinois Valley. Writers completed their scripts April 14, performers rehearsed the following week, a virtual rehearsal was held Friday the 24th, and Sunday, April 26 approximately 50 performers and writers performed for 200-plus people on the video conferencing website Zoom. Performances were either pre-recorded (and screenshared to the live audience) or performed live.

Lindsey B. Jones, known locally as a RiverStars Performing Arts teacher and performer, did not hesitate to join. “I was cast with a stranger in Klamath Falls and a former Whirlwind Playfest participant in Portland. We jumped right in and worked as an ensemble to produce

the work. We rehearsed about 40 minutes nearly every day for a week over Zoom. After only a week, I felt like our cast developed a rhythm and familiarity with each other. It was a great way to get to know each other,” said Jones, who has been performing since kindergarten. “It’s my life.”

“This was an imaginative and timely initiative during this stressful period in our restricted lives,” said Cave Junction alpaca farmer John Gardiner. “It was surely welcomed as a blessed relief from the tedium of having to deal with everything through a mask 6 feet away from everyone but folks in our own household!”

Four plays were written or co-written by Illinois Valley residents, including an imaginative Amazon-based blast-off, a clown-yoga-alien farce, the misadventures of a toilet-paper-tied-fairy, and Chris Hall’s somber tale of the risks faced by healthcare workers: “Chris Hall’s skit was touching, as I am often aware of how this virus is affecting our medical community,” said Deb Lukas of Taklima, who joined the virtual audience. “Their self-sacrifice affects families and communities.”

Bill Gray and Joya Feltzin of Taklima appreciated a scene from “Sugar on My Tongue,”



(Courtesy photo for the Illinois Valley News)

Lindsey B. Jones (top right), Isobel Charlé, and Andy Bracco perform for an audience of 159 devices during the Shelter-In-Plays Virtual Theatre Festival.

which was performed by this reporter and her partner. “I got a real kick out of your and Ryan’s discussion of what to do with lentils (soaking AND cooking???) and [people’s] lack of knowledge of actual food preparation or harvest,” Gray said.

“I expected that many of the adult actors were going to be good, and they were. I was pleasantly surprised and impressed with the talent of the child and teen actors,” Feltzin said.

One of those teen actors was local RiverStars performer Finn Franklin, who portrayed a dog in “Covid-K9,” a comedic romp through an imaginary world in which four sheltered-in-

place dogs join Zoom for regular conference meetings, embodying the newly created Zoom archetypes of the modern age: The Agenda Abider, The Unmuter, The Attention Wanderer, and The Off-Topic’er.

Donations (\$3,300 and counting) will be given to the Doug Hasken Resource Center, which provides emergency food supplies in the Illinois Valley, as well as the Unete Farm Worker & Immigrant Family Relief Fund, A Greater Applegate, Indigo Grill, and Applegate Country Club.

“When will there be a second round?” asked John Gardiner. That is a question for the

three theatre troupes who co-organized the event: Beyond Boom & Bust (Illinois Valley), The Little Apple Players (Applegate Valley), and Wanderlust Theatre Company (Applegate Valley). Whatever comes next, staging a live theatre event over Zoom has become a new step for the world of theatre.

“As John Steinbeck once observed: ‘Theatre is the only institution in the world that has been dying for 4,000 years and never succumbed. It requires tough and devoted people to keep it alive,’ reflected Jones. “I am excited to be part of whatever is next for the evolution of theatre.”

Wholesome Foods: by Laura Mancuso

It’s time to boost your immunity with healthy food

Now that we are all staying home as much as possible due to COVID-19, one of the things that you can focus on is building up your immunity so that your body can fight off illness much more effectively.

Your first line of defense in preventing infection is to choose a healthy lifestyle. Here are some good health guidelines for you to follow:

- Take steps to avoid infection such as washing your hands frequently
 - Exercise regularly
 - Don’t smoke
 - If you drink alcohol, drink only in moderation
 - Get adequate sleep
 - Cook and prepare meats safely
 - Try to minimize stress
 - Eat a diet high in fruits and vegetables
- It is the last guideline – eat a diet high in fruits and vegetables

- that I am going to focus on. Here is a list of foods that are commonly mentioned in today’s research:

- 1) Berry up** – Elderberries have antiviral properties that may prevent or reduce the severity of certain common infections and exert anti-inflammatory effects, reducing swelling and pain by tempering the body’s immune response.
- 2) Go Nuts** - Almonds are rich in vitamin E, which research suggests is important for maintaining the immune system, particularly as we get older. Pecans are a rich source of manganese which is a powerful antioxidant, protecting nerve cells from free-radical damage.
- 3) Fancy Fungi** – Mushrooms are jam-packed with healing antioxidants and anti-inflammatory components that destroy infections, slow down aging, and regenerate nerve cells.
- 4) Get Garlic** – Garlic has been used for centuries as a natural

- antimicrobial to fight infections. Cook it lightly to retain the active ingredient allicin, which boosts the disease-fighting responses in white blood cells when they encounter a virus.
- 5) Pro Yogurt** – Probiotics found in yogurt are healthy bacteria that keep your intestinal tract free of disease-causing germs. Traditional fermented foods like yogurt have been used for centuries to help maintain balanced gut flora and support immune cells located there.
- 6) Pom pom** – Pomegranate seeds (fresh or dried) are a superfood that can account for nearly 40 percent of your daily vitamin C intake.
- 7) So seedy** – Mustard seeds are a close relative of green veggies like broccoli that have a high magnesium content which promotes new cell growth and raises red blood cell production.
- 8) Spin away** – Spinach, along with kale, packs a powerful punch.

These leafy greens both are loaded with antioxidants that shield immune cells from environmental damage and encourage the production of bacteria-busting white blood cells.

9) Mom’s soup – Chicken soup: not just an old wives’ tale. It contains vitamins A and C, magnesium, phosphorus, gelatin and antioxidants, which are known to fight off viruses.

10) Pearly way – Oysters have beta-glucans and zinc to support a healthy immunity with virus-fighting powers.

Other notable immunity boosting foods include: honey, acai berries, broccoli, citrus, artichokes, turmeric, green tea, cranberry juice, ginger, miso soup, chilies, red bell peppers and much more.

An easy way to fit several healthy foods in at once is to make a smoothie. Here is a recipe for you:

- Ingredients:**
- 1 (100 gram) packet frozen acai pulp (about 6 tablespoons)

- 2 cups frozen blueberries
 - 1 peeled banana, cut in half
 - 1/2 cup reduced-fat milk
 - 1 1/2 cups low-fat vanilla yogurt
 - 2 tablespoons honey
 - 1 cup ice
- Preparation:** Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.
- Bottom line:** If you want to build your immunity, boost up your intake of fruits and vegetables; basically your plate of food should look like a rainbow. And then throw in some nuts and seeds for good



Today in History: by The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, April 29, the 120th day of 2020. There are 246 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History:

On April 29, 1945, during World War II, American soldiers liberated the Dachau (DAH’-khow) concentration camp. Adolf Hitler married Eva Braun inside his “Führerbunker” and designated Adm. Karl Doenitz (DUHR’-nihtz) president.

On this date: In 1798, Joseph Haydn’s oratorio “The Creation” was rehearsed in Vienna, Austria, before an invited audience.

In 1916, the Easter Rising in Dublin collapsed as Irish nationalists surrendered to British authorities.

In 1946, 28 former Japanese officials went on trial in Tokyo as war criminals; seven ended up being sentenced to death.

In 1957, the SM-1, the first military nuclear power

plant, was dedicated at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

In 1961, “ABC’s Wide World of Sports” premiered, with Jim McKay as host.

In 1967, Aretha Franklin’s cover of Otis Redding’s “Respect” was released as a single by Atlantic Records.

In 1991, a cyclone began striking the South Asian country of Bangladesh; it ended up killing more than 138,000 people, according to the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

In 1992, a jury in Simi Valley, California, acquitted four Los Angeles police officers of almost all state charges in the videotaped beating of motorist Rodney King; the verdicts were followed by rioting in Los Angeles resulting in 55 deaths.

In 2000, tens of thousands of angry Cuban-Americans marched peacefully through Miami’s Little Havana, protesting the raid in which armed federal

agents yanked 6-year-old Elian Gonzalez from the home of relatives.

In 2008, Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama denounced his former pastor, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, for what he termed “divisive and destructive” remarks on race.

Ten years ago: Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal (JIN’-dul) declared a state of emergency in the face of the worsening oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The U.S. Navy officially ended a ban on women serving on submarines, saying the first women would be reporting for duty by 2012. A knife-wielding man slashed 29 children and three teachers at a school in eastern China (the assailant was executed a month later). The NCAA’s Board of Directors approved a 68-team format for the men’s basketball tournament beginning the next season.

Five years ago: Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (shin-zoh ah-by) offered

condolences for Americans killed in World War II in the first address by a Japanese leader to a joint meeting of Congress, but stopped short of apologizing for wartime atrocities. In what was believed to be the first major league game played without fans in attendance, Chris Davis hit a three-run homer in a six-run first inning and the Baltimore Orioles beat the Chicago White Sox 8-2. (The gates at Camden Yards were locked because of concern for fan safety following recent rioting in Baltimore.) Calvin Peete, 71, who became the most successful black player on the PGA Tour before the arrival of Tiger Woods, died in Atlanta.

One year ago: President Donald Trump, his family and the Trump Organization filed a lawsuit against Deutsche Bank and Capital One in an attempt to block congressional subpoenas seeking their banking and financial records. At his first public

ally as a 2020 presidential candidate, Joe Biden accused President Donald Trump of abusing the powers of his office and ignoring everyone but his political base. John Singleton, director of the Oscar-nominated “Boyz n the Hood,” died in Los Angeles at the age of 51; he had suffered a major stroke eleven days prior.

Today’s Birthdays: Actor Keith Baxter is 87. Conductor Zubin Mehta is 84. Disgraced financier Bernard Madoff is 82. Pop singer Bob Miranda (The Happenings) is 78. Country singer Duane Allen (The Oak Ridge Boys) is 77. Singer Tommy James is 73. Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., is 70. Movie director Phillip Noyce is 70. Comedian Jerry Seinfeld is 66. Actor Leslie Jordan is 65. Actress Kate Mulgrew is 65. Actor Daniel Day-Lewis is 63. Actress Michelle Pfeiffer is 62. Actress Eve Plumb is 62. Rock musician Phil King is 60. Country singer Stephanie Bentley is

57. Actor Vincent Ventresca is 54. Singer Carnie Wilson (Wilson Phillips) is 52. Actor Paul Adelstein is 51. Actress Uma Thurman is 50. International Tennis Hall of Famer Andre Agassi is 50. Rapper Master P is 50. Actor Darby Stanchfield is 49. Country singer James Bonamy is 48. Gospel/rhythm-and-blues singer Erica Campbell (Mary Mary) is 48. Rock musician Mike Hogan (The Cranberries) is 47. Actor Tyler Labine is 47. Actress Megan Boone is 32. Actress-model Taylor Cole is 36. Actor Zane Carney is 35. Pop singer Amy Heidemann (Karmin) is 34. NHL center Jonathan Toews is 32. Pop singer Foxes is 31. Actress Grace Kaufman is 18.

Thought for Today: “In any great organization it is far, far safer to be wrong with the majority than to be right alone.” — John Kenneth Galbraith (1908-2006).