

21 REASONS WHY

“I” Don’t Have To Wear A Mask!

WHY PANDEMICS WON’T GO AWAY



A SATIRE

with a little commentary too!

KEN CHRISTENSEN

with Jenni Vinje



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BY KEN CHRISTENSEN
with
JENNI VINJE

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to Nancy Sommer

My friend of almost 40 years who knew
me when I was just a printer,
with Big Dreams!

In Memory of:

*Bill Garman, who watched my book series
grow from one to twenty five books and who gave
me wonderful tours of Laguna Beach, CA.*

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INTRODUCTION

Far be it from me to criticize people in public, but from whatever angle one chooses to look at things, to me a Safety Mask can be a good thing during a pandemic.

In mid-February, 2020, I became aware of COVID-19 and thought, "Just for safety's sake, why don't you wear a mask and gloves when in public, and bring wipes to wipe everything down. Just in case!"

Observing people closely when in public after that, it has astounded me that some people don't consider a pandemic a threat to their health.

Don't get me wrong, I've been healthy all my life and it's easy to believe in one's indestructibility, especially if one has had a few Close Encounters in life. But, Reality is Reality and a few extra steps could save your life. My Awakening to how casual - and cynical - some people are about wearing a mask in public began with a trip to the local hardware store.

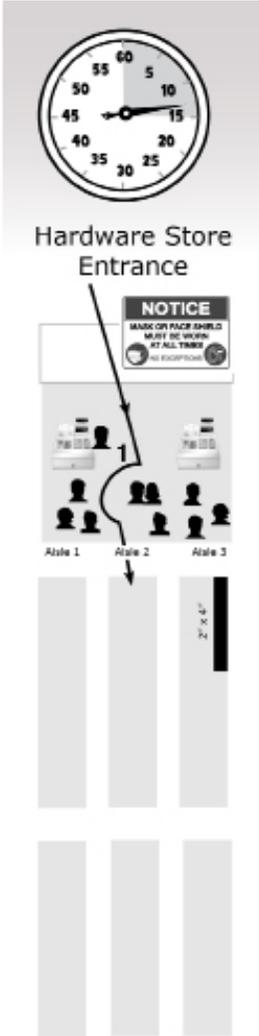
HOW IT ALL BEGAN...

My Trip To The Local Hardware Store



by Jenni Vinje

MY TRIP TO THE LOCAL HARDWARE



It's a rare occasion when I need just one item from the hardware store, but today, this beautiful Sunday morning, all I wanted was one 2" x 4". With mask on and wipes ready, I walked in through the entrance of the lumber section only to find 10+ people in line with no masks! The man next in line wore a T-shirt that said:

“YOUR OPINION MATTERS TO ME”!

Without missing a beat, I pointed at him and said,

“My opinion is you need to wear a mask!!”



As I passed him I heard his wife say, ”
I'm not wearing any underwear either!”

As I was just about to say *EEEWWWW...*

#1 WE'RE FAMILY, WE DON'T HAVE TO WEAR A MASK!

I walked down the first aisle and encountered three unmasked adults with children and said:

"Is this the No Mask aisle?"

only to be met with,

"We're family, we don't have to wear a mask!"



#2 I DON'T NEED ONE! YOU'RE WEARING ONE.

I backed out and went down the next aisle to find, once again, a man not wearing a mask:

"Where's your mask?"

I blurted out.

*"I don't need one!
You're wearing one."*



As I quickly passed him by I started talking to myself...

*"They're lowering the gene pool!"**

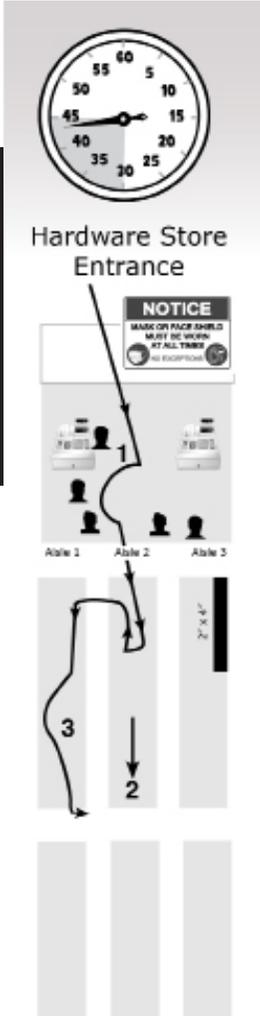
"They won't live as long as they should."

"What's wrong with people? Wear a mask!"

(at this point the family had moved down the aisle and I suspect, overheard me.)

*Definition of Gene Pool

The collection of genes in an interbreeding population that includes each gene at a certain frequency in relation to its alleles: the genetic information of a population of interbreeding organisms: Merriam Webster Dictionary



#3 OUR CHILD IS SCARED OF MASKS!

Safely away in the last aisle looking at the display on the back wall, two adults and their daughter suddenly appeared right next to me.

"Where's your mask?"

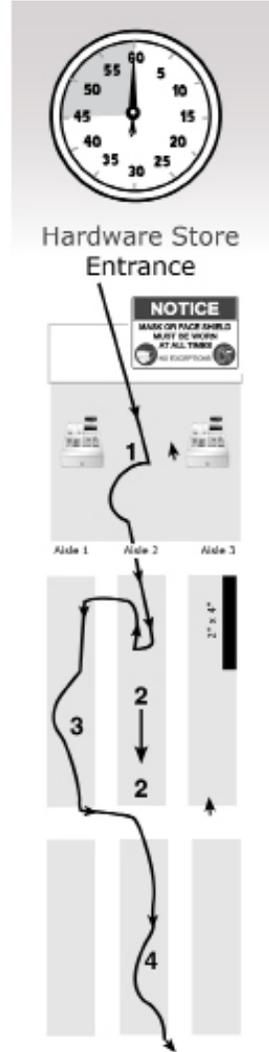
I quipped in a somewhat irritated voice.

Their response was
"Our daughter is scared of masks!"

I said,

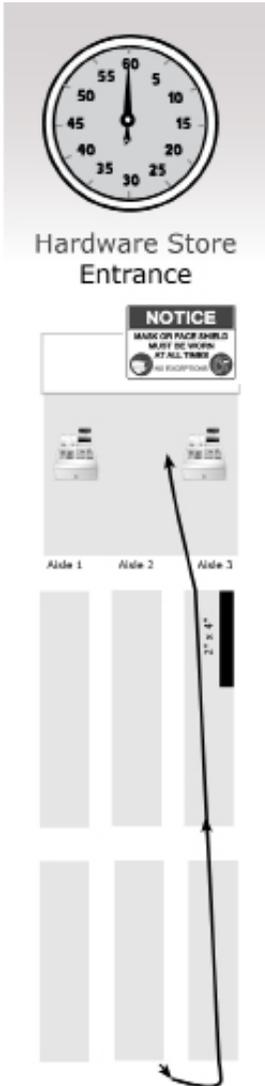
"Then why are you standing so close to me?"

and once again, I swiftly left the aisle.



EXCUSE #3

MY JOURNEY ENDS



Now, keep in mind, this whole journey took about a minute.

I looked down the aisle where the cashiers were and didn't see anyone in the checkout line. With 2" x 4" in hand, I went to the young lady at the register, who was wearing mask and gloves while delousing the counter. I queried,

"Don't all these people without masks scare you?"

She just rolled her eyes and said,

"People are saying there's someone in the store saying You're all gonna die!"

With a straight face, I said *"That was me!"* and told her the story. She laughed and we both agreed that something was terribly wrong out there!

Synopsis: Under normal circumstances I am not verbal in public. Something hit me that day that truly bothered me for more than a week. Reflecting on incidents that happened to me the past few months, I realized..

I had a book here!

#4 EXCUSES! EXCUSES! EXCUSES!

I picture in my mind people adamantly opposed to wearing masks discussing why they don't have to wear one and, what they will say if someone asks them why not.



Famous Germaphobes*



Richard Nixon • Elvis
(Fear of hospitals)



Nikola Tesla



Howard Hughes



Cameron Diaz



Adrian Monk



Darth Vader
(He had to be!)

*A person with an extreme fear of germs and an obsession with cleanliness ~ Oxford Languages

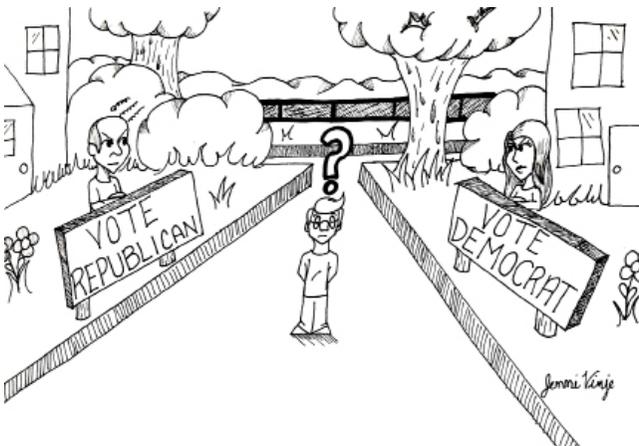
WHAT MY MOTHER TAUGHT ME ABOUT POLITICS

I grew up in a suburb of Chicago and when I was at a young age, my mother took me to two houses directly across from each other just before the 1960 Kennedy / Nixon election. One house was a staunch Democrat and the other, Republican. Both had their party signs to prove it with no less than 10 signs in each yard!

Having grown up in Germany, Mom had some keen insights into freedom of expression in the United States compared to living in a country where you dare not express yourself politically. She told me,

"Kenny, look at how ridiculous this is. These people do this EVERY election and they hate each other. I've seen them arguing at Piggly Wiggly. You should never let politics get in the way of friendships."

Words of Wisdom from my mom that I live by to this day!



HOW I STAYED POLITICALLY NEUTRAL OVER THE YEARS

"Every four years they get the runs!" ~ George Carlin

As I grew older and started paying attention to politics, I saw many people in heated arguments about which candidate / party was best. As my friends were few and far between, I certainly didn't want to break up a relationship over politics.

I watched the political shows (some call them circuses) over the years and my feeling was this. "I respect the Presidency - no matter who's in office - and the ability to express your views in this country but, I have many more interesting things to do than discuss *"What if he did this", "Did you see what he did today?"* and worse! If a candidate was elected that I didn't care for, I said, "It's only four years, and I can get a LOT done in that time", and I moved on with life. How simple is that?

Occasionally, I was involved in a political conversation that suddenly became volatile and said *"I don't want to talk politics!"* and left it at that. Sometimes, I just left and said in the immortal words of Groucho Marx:

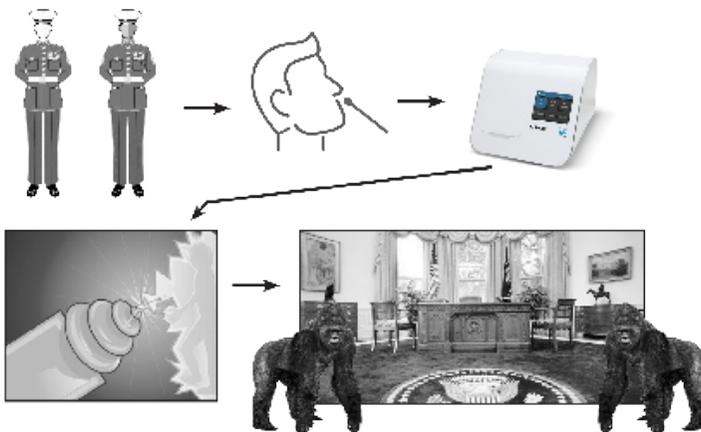
"Hello, I must be going!"



#5 THE PRESIDENT DOESN'T WEAR A MASK!

Being one of the most powerful leaders in the world, one would expect nothing less than the people around the President are tested daily using the latest in technology. Plus, a few special features thrown in just to be sure. Here's my version of testing on visitors and staff before getting into the Oval office:

- 1) Pass two Marine guards
- 2) Swab Test
- 3) Swab Sample performed on the ID NOW Instrument. The latest in technology, this vitro diagnostic test utilizes an isothermal nucleic acid amplification technology intended for the qualitative detection of nucleic acid from the SARS-CoV-2 viral RNA. *Did you get that? There'll be a test tomorrow!*
- 4) Delousing Ray just to be sure.
- 5) Pass two gorillas who are intimidating enough to make you think twice about coming into the oval office when sick.



#6 DISTRUST OF SCIENCE

Blame it on political ideology, scientific skepticism, or just plain “stupidity”, but it’s hard to imagine anyone having a fear of modern medical technology. Not that long ago it was believed that the sun revolved around a flat earth (OK, some still believe that!) and being outside in the cold was the cause of the common cold. But common sense, in time, broke down those barriers.

Today, vaccines prevent the spread of disease, saving millions of lives every year. Accurate diagnosis and better patient care have come a long way in the past 150+ years, and if you don’t believe me, watch a documentary on how doctors performed surgery during the Civil War. For many, it was a fate worse than death!

Here’s just a sampling of medical breakthroughs in the past 100 years:

- 1929 - Development of Antibiotics
- 1930 - Immunization against viral diseases
- 1934 - Medicine against Malaria and Yellow fever
- 1952 - DNA and Molecular Biology
- 1953 - Polio Vaccine
- 1982 - Artificial Heart
- 1960s - Birth Control Pill
- 1960s - Measles Vaccine
- 1980s - Laser Surgeries

and the list goes on and on, and on...



#7 I'M TOO PRETTY TO WEAR A MASK!

Concerned individuals who worry more about their looks in public than the health of others are an adventure into the world of narcissism. *"But, I spend so much time putting on makeup and nobody can see me!"* seems to be a common excuse. Don't worry, there will be a time when everyone can see our faces again (you can always post your picture on Facebook or Twitter).

EXCUSE #7



Yes, a mask covers my smile which I frequently use when out in public, so now I rely on body language and being observant of the name tags cashiers and employees wear. By directing a question to them, or saying *Thank You* and calling them by name is appreciated and even though I can't see their mouth, I know they are smiling.

Groucho Marx was proficient at raising and lowering his eyebrows and rolling his eyes for any given situation. I mimic this and have found it satisfying... and fun!



#8 UNCOMFORTABLE

I can't imagine being in a position where you have to wear a mask all day at work. In the brief times I venture out in the world to shop for groceries - I'm laying off the hardware stores - it is slightly uncomfortable, but I deal with it.



EXCUSE #8

#9 FOGS UP MY GLASSES

Yes, it does to mine also, especially here in Florida where it's humid a lot. It's just one of those things you deal with, and what shirt tails are for. Washing your glasses with soapy water or using an anti-fogging product are both ways to make lenses resistant to condensation. Check how your mask fits and make sure the top fits tighter to your face than the bottom. This allows respirations to flow downward rather than up.

However, it all comes down to this "What is more precious to you? Not wearing a mask, or, your health and possibly your life?"

EXCUSE #9

#10 I JUST DON'T CARE! DOING THE FLORIDA TWO STEP

During another visit to the local hardware store, in the parking lot I saw a cowboy complete with hat and boots and his girlfriend, pull up in a monster truck. My intuition told me to get ahead of them as fast as possible. Once I entered the store and turned around to keep tabs on him, I realized my instincts were right.

I watched in disbelief as Cowboy Bob went back and forth between the two registers, stopping at the beverage cooler for a drink. Touching anything he possibly could, including the plexiglass shields at the registers, he casually talked to the cashiers. I stood further back and watched as he went to his girlfriend and said, *"I don't know why I'm buying a drink, I have plenty in the truck!"* and then, he two-stepped his way back to the cooler and put the drink back inside. Any potential virus on his hands or breath is now spread throughout a busy 20 square foot area!



#11 SOLIDARITY MAN! (HERD MENTALITY)

People tend to long for a sense of belonging in uncertain times. Driven by political scare tactics and negative media hype, those who refuse wear masks may see it as a sign of **SOLIDARITY**, and that **TOGETHER** they are making a stand against **AUTHORITY**.

*An Interesting
Perspective to be sure!*



EXCUSE #11



Commuters in Berlin, Germany, are required to wear masks when using public transportation. They can be fined if they don't. Despite that, reports Deutsche Welle, so many people wear masks incorrectly (covering the mouth but not the nose) that BVG (Berlin Transport company) is suggesting that riders not wear deodorant in hopes that body odor on crowded trains keep their masks in place. BVG is calling for a general deodorant waiver!

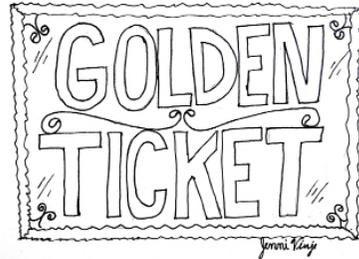
#12 WAITING FOR MY GOLDEN TICKET

On January 17, 2020, I had an operation on my hand and knew I would be down for six weeks and stocked up on supplies. After surgery, therapy was scheduled. At that time I saw the Chinese were celebrating their New Year and their citizens were traveling all over the world. January 23 brought a quarantine of Wuhan, China.

Rehab on January 27th was uneventful. On February 2, travel to and from China was restricted and the next day a Public Health Emergency was announced in the U.S. At that time I saw face masks, and gloves at the Rehab center for all visitors. By Valentines Day, with news about a possible pandemic, I cancelled the sessions and when in public, wore a mask and gloves and carried sanitary wipes.

In early 2014, President Obama did a TV broadcast about the potential hazard of the Ebola flu. In a somewhat irritated voice he said *"There may come a time when an airborne disease could become deadly. (sic) For Gods' sake people, wash your hands and cough into your elbow."* Did people pay attention? I don't think so! To me, the entire country was handed a **Golden Ticket** in 2014 to improve their hygiene in public.

Come mid-February 2020 it became obvious that there was a serious problem. Since then, I have heard peopl, and the media say that we were weren't warned properly.



"All I Know Is" that I took it seriously right from the start!

What happened everyone? Did you need a **"Second Golden Ticket"** to realize there was a serious problem with a pandemic? Jeez.. *(and that's all I have to say about that!)*



#13 IT'S NOT OUR PROBLEM

In 2008, now in my mid 50s, I went to Community College to expand my design skills and noticed that every semester I became viciously ill, and I just didn't get sick that often.

At college, I payed attention and noticed that people coming in and out of the restroom (and stalls) were not washing their hands, but going directly to class. To say I was horrified would be an understatement and I decided to contact our Dean Of The College to discuss this situation.



In the course of this “*Get Together*” I told him of this activity and the story of a new student coming to class sick, with pink eye, resulting in half the class of 30+ students getting sick it.

Suggesting that “*Wash Your Hands*” signs should be in restrooms, I proposed a required seminar for new students with a frank discussion about personal hygiene and refining social skills that would benefit everyone at the school.

I was told quite bluntly “*It's not our problem!*” My response was “*Yes it is!*”, and I was met with a blank stare!

From then on in every computer class, I wiped down my area, desk and chair. I know my classmates thought I was nuts but, I didn't get sick again!

Over the years I paid close attention in public, and when checking out in a store I never picked up a credit card pen, or touched a card screen without using my shirttail.

Did COVID-19 come as a surprise to me? **Heck No!**

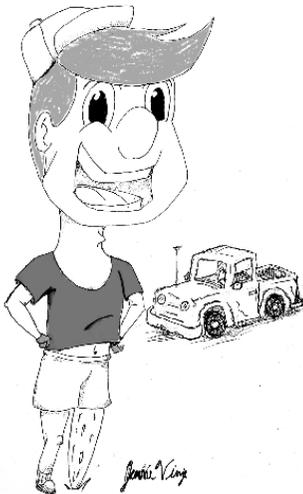
Honestly, I expected it a lot sooner! Whatever happened to Personal Hygiene Awareness?

#14 MASKERS ARE A THREAT TO ME!

In early March when I saw there was a serious problem with the pandemic, I would wear not only a mask but blue gloves which by some twist of fate, I had bought on-line to fill a "Free Shipping Over \$100" order. Walking tall and wearing Hawaiian type shirts accented by a light blue mask with a tuft of blonde hair, I did my best to have a positive attitude when shopping.

In the course of a few weeks while crossing the pavement in front of a few stores, I realized people were gunning their cars at me as if I was a target. At this point I hadn't put two and two together until, YES FOLKS, once again I went to the local hardware store.

As I was crossing the parking lot to the entrance, a big ol' pickup with trailer raced towards me. I stopped in my



tracks and backed up. The driver parked in front of the store and I gave him a real dirty look. When I left he was still there and with a twisted smile he flashed an employee badge at me. I said, *"That doesn't give you the right to run me over!"* His reply, *"You weren't in the crosswalk!"* which was 100+ ft. away. Considering no-one shopping at these huge stores EVER uses a crosswalk, I came to the conclusion that people were threatened by me. There's some deviant behavior* going on here that I can't explain.

* Definition: Deviant behavior is any behavior that is contrary to the dominant norms of society. ... This means that psychologists believe that individual human beings are solely responsible for their criminal or deviant acts.

#15 LOSING MY FREEDOM ~ DENIAL

Some feel that wearing a face mask is like having their rights trampled on by tyrannical politicians and that it is an imposition on their freedom and an intrusion on ones personal liberties.

NO WAY!

Wearing a mask is a small sacrifice for ten minutes in the grocery or hardware store.

This is an exercise in good community health and most importantly, being a good neighbor. In time, this will be all over and we'll be able to smell the flowers of freedom and life.



EXCUSE #15

#16 DENIAL

Are you kidding me?

I just don't know how to respond to that!

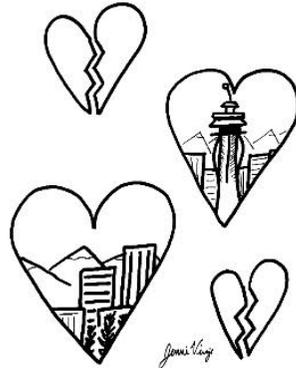


EXCUSE #16

I FELL IN LOVE IN SEATTLE AND PORTLAND What The Heck Happened?

On January 13, 2000 - the new millennium - I met the woman of my dreams, Cindy, in San Diego and we took off like a rocket! Prepping for a Romantic America Media Tour from Vancouver to Seattle and Portland on February 1, I suggested to Cindy that perhaps we could meet in Vancouver where her mother lived and that she could join me on this adventure.

She came with me for my 7:00am CTV-TV television interview. The producer asked us, "Do you both want to go on?" we said "Yes" and once the camera was on, you would think we had been together for years. It was fun, a great interview and we were invited to join the 8:00am segment.



From there we did interviews in Seattle, including a KING TV segment at Camano Island, and then on to Portland. During this time we toured these beautiful cities, dined at the finest restaurants and stayed at Five Star Hotels. At the end of our tour, there was no question that we were in *LUUUUVV!*

Now, with everything going on in these cities, I sit stupefied in front of the TV and just don't understand what happened to these beautiful cities that were such an inspiration in our lives. It's so sad, and there is no answer.



Cindy and Ken
Superheroes!
ComicCon 2001

SOCIAL MEDIA DESTROYING FRIENDS AND FAMILY

According to Norse legend, In The Beginning, Odin created light, fire, smoke signals and drums for mankind to communicate. Then came telegrams, telephone, radio, TV and The Internet. Odin was pleased. Then Loki, the God of Mischief and Mayhem said “*Let me create chaos and disorder to disrupt the earth!*”. A great battle ensued before Loki crossed the Rainbow Bridge and created Facebook and Twitter.



So it is written, So it shall be told.

Please somebody tell me that's how it really happened because I can't think of any other reason why these platforms are here other than to disrupt and divide mankind. Having remained politically neutral over the years I am discouraged when I find posts with one sided opinions based on little facts, mixed with a bounty of curse words, poorly doctored political photos, *and worse*.



At times I offer a neutral *Objective Perspective* with a touch of humor and am astounded at the backlash, verbal abuse and just plain stupidity I encounter. From strangers no less. It's called gang mentality and it's not pretty.

Now, these extreme views have infiltrated Friends and Family and are destroying what were once civil relationships.

Having unfriended over six friends of many years, I now rely on people who post inspirational messages, family images and most importantly, pet cat and dog photos and funny animal videos. This is what I find inspiring!

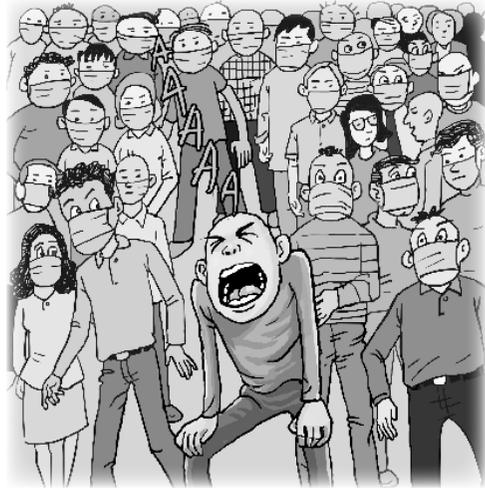
What happened to civility and respect?
I don't know, let's ask Loki.



#17 I'M IN CONTROL

Not Wearing A Mask Puts Me In Control!

I don't think so!



#18 I DIDN'T SEE THE SIGN



Every store nowadays has numerous, hard to ignore signs asking customers to wear a mask. Many have hand sanitizer on a table and if supplies last, FREE MASKS! It can't get any clearer than that!

In the famous words of a current politician: "C'MON MAN!"

#19 I'M OUTSIDE, I DON'T HAVE TO WEAR A MASK!

Sneezing and coughing without covering up: Yet another hardware store story, this one blew me away when I saw two women and three kids walking towards me in the parking lot, none of whom had a mask on. As I deliberately walked to the other side of the parking row and said “Why aren’t you wearing masks?”

The reply,
“We’re outside, we don’t have to wear a mask!”

and then, this is a TRUE STORY, she sneezed into the open air right over the kids, one of which, looked horrified. (she did say Excuse Me however) I ran away quickly!



EXCUSE #19

In the early days of “Not” wearing masks, I stopped at the local retail chain specializing in farm supplies and other merchandise to buy birdseed for my feeders. At the entrance, I sensed someone walking faster than I and stepped aside to let him pass. As he did, he coughed right on me (no he wasn’t wearing a mask). His excuse when I said “Did you just cough on me?” was, “I was just clearing my throat.” I could only hope!



#20 ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE?

With her somewhat anti social behavior and the world quickly changing around her, she isolated herself in the house for a month. As time flew by her husband suggested a trip to the store before she went insane.

Nervously she went shopping, the thought of how some people were expecting the Zombie Apocalypse and not COVID-19, ringing in her mind.

Parking in the store lot with her mask on, she wonders how everyone is taking this mandated mask requirement. It quickly becomes apparent that people have blank stares, are eyeing others suspiciously, keeping a distance from each other, like a zombie movie. Pausing by the produce, she thinks *"So this is what a Zombie Apocalypse looks like!" ~ Jenni Vinje*



#21 AND THE WINNER IS

I'd rather die instead of wearing a mask!

EXCUSE #21



SPECIAL THANKS DEPARTMENT

Ken Christensen photograph by **Mary Wozniack**

Jenni Vinje photograph by **B.Lovely Photography**

Nancy Summer: Proofreader and Friend!

Marsha Rodden: My biggest supporter and believer in me and who introduced me to Jenni Vinje.

Jeff Lampe Manager of Skypowersports, Lakeland *and* **Jon Lackey** Owner of Blvd Customs of Lakeland, who believed in my Marketing and Video Design Skills and let me *"Run With It and Beat the ompetition!"* (not bad for an old guy!)

Everyone at **Jahna Chiropractic** who listened to my rambling "Experiences" (with no criticism) the past few months, never expecting I would make a book out of them.

Michele and **Marilyn Garman** who were there right from the start of Romantic America.

Brett Burner: Lamppost Publishers: Always there in the last minute for me!

Roxie Hart: Special Assistant to Ken Christensen



Special Thanks to Ms. Jenni Vinje, artist / cartoonist / writer for her contributions to this book and who never let me down in the two short weeks of putting it together.

REFLECTIONS

I'm just a person who watches the world from her window praying for peace. If I could paint the world the way it is now, it would bring tears. If I could paint the world with peaceful colors, it would calm me. No violence, no war, just peace. Judging others would be futile because we are all different. If we were the same, the world would be grey.

Will we ever get along, or will we all remain lost? Yes, the world is changing but it doesn't mean you have to change. Keep looking forward and march along with life while sharing our abundance of peace and kindness through our blessings of nature and art.

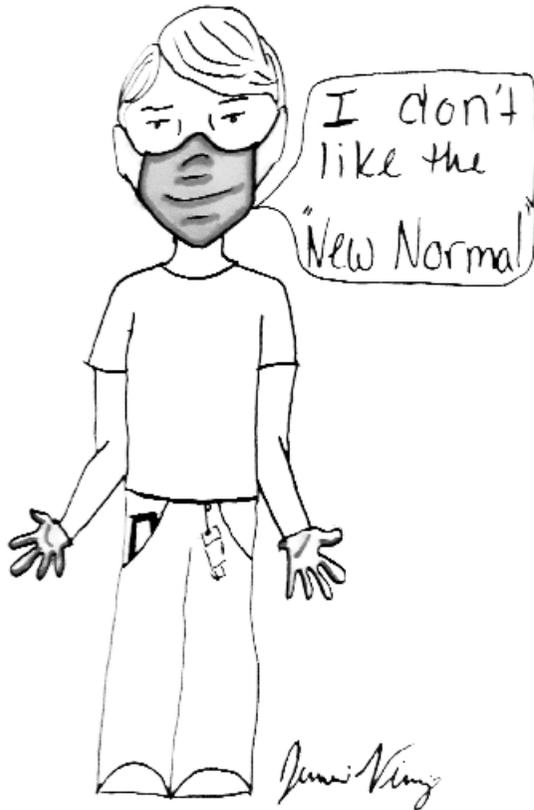
~ Jenni Vinje



UPLIFTING SONGS

From My Generation to Yours, and Future Generations:
Positive songs of Hope that inspired us in the 60s and 70s.
Corny? Some, but they made us feel good during sometimes
troubling events in our country.

A World Of Our Own ~ The Seekers
Daydream Believer ~ The Monkees
Do-Wah-Diddy ~ Manfred Mann
All You Need Is Love ~ Beatles
Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da ~ Beatles
Get Together ~ The Youngbloods
Good Morning Starshine ~ Oliver
I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing ~ The Seekers
If I Can Dream ~ Elvis
It's A Beautiful Morning ~ The Rascal
Let's Live For Today ~ The Grass Roots
Let's Think About Living ~ Bob Luman
Listen To The Flower People ~ Spinal Tap
Love Is All Around Me ~ The Troggs
Our House ~ Crosby, Stills & Nash
Out In The Country ~ Three Dog Night
Put A Little Love In Your Heart ~ Jackie Deshannon
Teach Your Children Well ~ Crosby, Stills & Nash
The Air That I Breathe ~ The Hollies
The Most Beautiful World In The World ~ Harry Nilsson
What A Wonderful World ~ Louis Armstrong
What The World Needs Now
(Is Love Sweet Love)~ Dionne Warwick





"Willoughby next stop, Willoughby next stop ..."

“Live long and prosper.”

~ someone famous