

COVID CHRONICLE

John Maybury

When a few weeks of sheltering-in-place turned into months and then a year, my partner and I quickly learned to deal with a whole new way of life: playing word games with friends on Zoom, conducting our business meetings on Zoom, shopping for groceries and take-out food online with contactless delivery or pickup, spending many hours on jigsaw and crossword puzzles, endless discussions about vaccines and viruses, all of it punctuated by the surreal spectacle of a sore loser reluctantly leaving the White House after watching his mob storm the Capitol but failing to capture the flag.

Now after our second shot of Moderna vaccine (thanks for not hurting us too much, Mister Paramedic), we are serving out our sentence, a two-week pause for the vaccine to take full effect, then long-delayed visits to the barber, the hairdresser, the dentist, and favorite indoor haunts with family and friends. The only one who will be sad to see us out of the house is our indoor cat Sadie, who has loved having us around so much this past year. Sorry, Sadie, but life goes on. We can only hope.

Recently, my neighbor Jim was waiting patiently in line at the county's mass vaccination site at SFO, when his truck battery died. Ever alert and on the ball, the Orange Vests scrambled to charge Jim's battery and get him back in line. He got his shot on time and now joins the rest of us in waiting to return to a somewhat normal life. Kudos to Carbon Health and San Mateo County Health for running a smooth operation at the SFO long-term parking garage.

Living through the pandemic has made us appreciate the hard work and sacrifices of essential workers: security guards, delivery people, grocery clerks, nurses and doctors. While many of us isolated at home in relative safety, essential workers had to go out and risk their own health to do their jobs, many of which involved being more exposed to coronavirus infections. So here's another kudos to those folks who allowed us to stay safe in 2020 and 2021.

As the COVID-19 statistics seem to show, San Mateo County is looking better and better every day. Hospitalizations, cases, and deaths are declining, as the rate of vaccination picks up. Meanwhile, we all need to keep wearing our masks, social distancing, and washing our hands until the experts tell us we have achieved something akin to herd immunity and full vaccination. We cannot let our impatience with being cooped up all year make us give up and throw caution to the wind. Freedom may not come on any one day in particular, but it is coming soon. Just ask

Dr. Fauci. It feels like we are seeing a faint light at the end of the tunnel, and hoping that it isn't a train coming the other way!

(John Maybury is a freelance copy editor and writer who has wrangled the pandemic by continuing to work at home as he has always done for the past 20 years. He is the editor and publisher of the blog PacificaRiptide.com, which covers the Coastsides.)