



Borough of Ben Avon

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Dear Neighbors,

As we begin a week unlike any we have known before, I am thinking of our community and how we manage hardship. We have had our share of difficulty over the years and in each case, I have watched neighbors support each other, grieve together, uplift, encourage and do little & big things to let neighbors know they are cared for. We are a community and we will continue as community, caring for each other and coming out better for the effort.

Here are some basics. <https://benavon.com/coronavirus-covid-19-information/>

Our Council President, Jennifer Bett, has created a page on our borough website with CDC and Health Department links to keep you updated on the latest news and information, which I encourage you to stay abreast of. The borough office is still reachable by phone and email and we continue to do business during regular hours, just not in person. Our March Council meeting has been cancelled. Police, Fire, EMS and garbage collection services continue to operate normally. However, our Ohio Township officers will be handling reports for non-emergency calls via phone and email as much as is reasonably possible.

We know that Ben Avon will not be immune to the emergence of COVID-19, however our perseverance and proactive behavior will bond our community and show our resolve. I ask that everyone continue to remain steadfast. I ask that all residents take the guidance of health officials and the CDC seriously and adhere to social distancing practices, including no gatherings over

While we are blessed with some of the world's best healthcare institutions here in Pittsburgh, their capacity is limited. This pandemic is particularly dangerous to our seniors and those with compromised immune systems or underlying conditions. We have plenty of folks in Ben Avon who fall into that category. Therefore, we must realize that each of us has a role in the health and well-being of ourselves, families, friends, and community. Please take that responsibility seriously.

Here are some other thoughts.

I want to encourage you to share your wisdom & experiences, even your difficulties, with each other. Ben Avon is full of intelligent, thoughtful, caring people. We each have a wealth of knowledge and life experience that can lend itself to this situation. How do we get through this time of separation without separating from our good sense?

- Stories from your grandparents about how they made due during war time limitations? Share them!
- Are you a teacher with online resources for parents & kids?
- Mental health professional with tips or online resources for dealing with the stress & social distance?

- Avid reader or librarian with good book recommendations?
- Knitter or crafter with patterns folks might like to try?
- Musician or music lover with links to tunes that can calm, uplift or inspire?
- Physical fitness guru who can share some workouts you like, so we can stay fit & healthy?
- Baker or cook with yummy recipes for stuff in our pantries?
- Gardener with experience composting, growing vegetables or flowers to brighten our day?

We'll take them all. In the days ahead, we will need ideas and new distractions. We each will approach this with our own plans for how to maintain a healthy household, in every sense, but none of us will think of everything. It will be good to hear what others have done, to spark new ideas, get us out of our mental fog, reconnect with the thought that households around the borough and around the world are going through the same things we are.

I know news like we are seeing now isn't easy to receive, but I know that we will overcome this difficulty, the boredom, the fear, and will celebrate together once we can safely gather again. We are a community of gatherers. Our porches will once again be full of friends, we will greet each other happily in the shops & streets, meet with our clubs, teams and friendly support systems soon. But until then, be wise, be vigilant, be careful for the sake of our community.

I am creating a page on our borough website for resource or tips you would like to share. Feel free to leave them here or email them to me at holcomb@benavon.com

Thank you for all that you do and continue to do for your families and for our community.

Be well,

Melanie Holcomb

Mayor, Ben Avon Borough