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Rallies During A Pandemic? Really?



Despite the rain this weekend, the weather was really nice, especially on Saturday. So, like many locals in the Bay Area, I headed out into the sunshine. Yes, we're still in a pandemic. And, yes the City of San Francisco's shelter-in-place order still remains in place. I think? But, hey, we have a new President and Vice President. And, with the dream team they're putting together, and of course, with Dr. Anthony Fauci, I'm sure America is going to conquer COVID-19,

this year. At least I hope so. Plus, we're all tired of being cooped up in the house. So, off I went to do my Saturday morning errands.

With my ever so popular "surgical mask," along with a face shield and my trusty pair of rubber gloves, I headed downtown to run a few errands. But, what I ran into was a rally. A noisy, pretty large and loud PRO-LIFE rally. It was smack in the middle of Market Street!

What caught my attention first was the police escort. Although it was a peaceful rally, it was a very noisy one. I could hear someone on a megaphone screaming at the top of his lungs leading the crowd in chants. You could hear the crowd chanting for blocks. Did I say it was a nice size crowd? At least 200 people of all ages, sexes and races. But, aren't we in a pandemic? To make matters worse, everyone in the crowd, walking, chanting and carrying signs that read, "REMEMBER THE UNBORN," or "PEACE BEGINS IN THE WOMB," was walking shoulder to shoulder. There was NO social distancing and some of the protestors weren't even wearing a mask. So, of course, I took pictures because I couldn't believe it. What disturbed me more than the police stopping traffic to escort the group right down the middle of Market street, was the fact that there were many children in the group of protestors, as well. And, some of those kids, who in my opinion shouldn't have even been there, didn't have on a mask.

I thought to myself, are these some of the same children that might be heading back to the classroom soon if some parents and the San Francisco Unified School District decides to return to in-person classrooms this year? If so, I'm very concerned for teachers and other students whose parents are smart enough NOT to expose their kids to a public rally where there's no social-distancing or masks worn by everyone.

To make matters worse, when I got home that evening, I saw on the news that there was another rally that same day. This one was at the Chinese Consulate and at this rally, anti-racism protestors actually clashed with Police. Fortunately, there were no kids there. But, local TV stations reported that several people were arrested. Apparently, these protestors

believed that the Proud Boys were in town and were headed to the Chinese Consulate to protest. So, these protestors showed up and ended up clashing with police instead of the Proud Boys, because the white supremacists group wasn't even there.

Scenes at both rallies got me thinking. What issue is so important that we have to ignore the social distancing recommendations by local, state and federal authorities, and gather in large groups at a rally, during a pandemic? Be it white supremacist, gun control, pro-life, and yes, even Black Lives Matter, I don't think it's worth risking our health, especially our children's health, to be a part of a large crowd. And, if we must take part in these types of activities during a pandemic, then we must wear a mask and social distance.

With more than 400,000 deaths in America alone right now, and the number of available hospital beds dwindling every day, people are still refusing to wear a mask and stay out of crowds. And, I don't get it. Is it because of the mixed messages we've been getting over the past year from our former President and his entire administration? Or is it just because people don't believe COVID-19 is real.

Well, I'm here to tell you that COVID-19 is very real. The latest statistics from the CDC tells us that this month in California alone, more than 2,100 people have lost their lives to COVID-19. And, even though the number of deaths across the country is decreasing, people continue to die from the disease every day.

So, for me and my family, rallies will NOT be a part of our lives for a while. And, the next time the weather is nice and I want to head out into the city, I'll head to my rooftop instead and lay out in one of the lawn chairs and pretend I'm on an exotic island sipping a cool one. That's at least until the new administration has kicked COVID-19's butt and vaccinated the masses. Well, one can only continue to dream.

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