



RENEWNEWS

RENEW helps people who juggle work, family and community commitments sustain (or regain) their



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All Together Now!
Linda Hawes Clever, MD

Years ago, I read a *Life Magazine* story by a journalist whose son had autism. The father wrote “When one person in a family is sick, everyone is sick.” 2020 has verified that. No one is in great shape in the entire human family. “It’s 2020” explains almost every adversity. Actually, of course, some troubles go way back. Racism, for example, dates back to the beginning of time, accelerated and institutionalized by slavery. Desperate people have been forced to migrate for eons. Democracy dates back to Athens 6th Century BC and it has always been difficult to do it justice. Climate change goes back to the Industrial Revolution.

What about COVID? COVID has brought unique danger, fear, and uncertainty. Rosy assurances – “It’ll be over soon” – wilted and disruption rules schools, jobs, and plans. We have lost good people and relationships. One friend, unable to visit a loved one in assisted living said, “COVID has stolen whatever good time I was going to get with my beloved.” We have to scramble to do almost any task and we have to work hard at not being miserable. We’re tired, and winter’s impending darkness doesn’t help.

If asked about silver linings, however, most of us can find some, however. People are in better touch with family and friends. Zoom links Spain, Texas, and Los Altos. Many welcome the opportunity to slow down and examine their lives. One friend, formerly chained to an office, was surprised to discover that leaves fall in waves and swirls. Reading brought another to the martial artist and philosopher Bruce Lee who said, “What you habitually think largely determines what you will ultimately become.”

While some admit adding girth made even sweatpants snug, others claim to be in the best shape in their lives. (It is not too late to start on fitness. We have a long haul ahead.) We have loved reading aloud with our daughter and grandtwins in Baltimore, books opened in each home. I’ve noticed abundant forgiveness, kindness, and patience. For example, almost no one flies off the handle no matter how often s/he has to say, “Unmute yourself”.

Back in the 70s the book, *I’m OK, You’re OK*, launched a landslide of self-approval. Recently, Brother Toby of the Starcross Monastery added a communal spin, “If we are OK, I am OK”. I would ask, “If you aren’t OK, how could I be OK?” *because we are connected*. We are all in this together. We can enjoy each other. We need each other. Groups have gathered to address racism. Art programs have been started for under-resourced children. Zoomers to Boomers shop for elders. Volunteering shows our response to others’ needs. Doing something for someone else lifts us as well. One woman, whose vision is severely impaired, thought she would at least try to write some get-out-the-vote letters. She wrote hundreds. She said, “I haven’t felt so good, so useful in ages.”

COVID has shown us how important we are to each other. Every word of Meira Miram’s award-winning COVID haiku signals that we are all a community.

“We isolate now
So, when we gather again
No one is missing.”

I am glad we are all together, now.

Like the Energizer Bunny, RENEW keeps going . . .

RENEW has been on the move during the past 6 months. In July, Linda spoke at Leading Age, an advocacy group for aging, with a membership of businesses, non-profits, state agencies, consumer groups, foundations and research organizations.

Her webinar, *“Thriving, Not Just Surviving, Even Now,”* for members of the Town and Country Club generated positive feedback and invitations to other women’s clubs; and her two-session course, *“Reaching the Goals, you Really Want—Barriers, Boosters and Baby Steps,”* for the Stanford BeWell program attracted faculty, staff and community members from the North Bay.

“During such trying times, the relief that came over me through her comforting words and philosophy was an incredible feeling. She helped us think about solutions and choices in ways we had never thought of before.” Nancy Longo , Director of Marketing and Events, Town and Country Club

RENEW mounted a marathon nine hour, two-day webinar with music, breakout rooms, and graphics, for the Center for Excellence in Nonprofits’ kick-off session of its Leadership Institute. The second presentation in a series for the Alameda Contra Costa County Medical Association, *“When You’re Going Through Hell, Keep Going”*, prompted a letter from [Katrina Peters, MD, ACCMA President](#): *“. . . We enjoyed listening to your entirely new content and learning about available resources, which included the concrete steps we can take for self-care. Participants also appreciated sharing their experiences through your thoughtful questions, hearing all the stories, and laughing at your sense of humor, as well as the lovely poem at the end. . . the feedback from the attendees was very positive.”*

Meanwhile, Linda has continued to convene Conversation Groups via Zoom. Two of them at Sequoias Portola Valley continue to keep veterans and attract newbies. The other, *Conversing About Nursing*, is in its 17th year. She has also continued working on the urgent and innovative analyses and recommendations of the National Academy of Medicine’s Action Collaborative on Clinician Well-Being and Resilience, and consulting with the San Francisco Marin Medical Association and the East Bay Clinician Wellness Consortium.

Inside RENEW

Brittany Imwalle joined the RENEW Board of Directors in March and immediately put her Stanford BA in Human Biology and MBA from Columbia, her connections and her high level health care and nonprofit experience to work for RENEW in careful listening, strategic thinking and bright visioning.



In December there will be a change in RENEW’s program management, as Caroline Caufield, whose experience, energy, clarity and diplomacy have made key contributions to RENEW, will leave to pursue some long delayed projects and interests. As of now we are still looking for a replacement, so if you know of anyone who would like to work part-time helping continue RENEW’s important mission, please email Linda at lhclever.renew@gmail.com.