

FORT WORDEN KITEMAKERS CONFERENCE

March 6, 2020

Greetings Kite makers,

The board has heard from several of you with concerns regarding Covid-19. After a careful review of the best available information, we have decided to continue forward with this year's Conference. We understand the concerns raised. To that end, below you will find information with which to make an informed decision for yourself. In the event that you feel it is in your best interest to not attend, we will refund those fees we are able to. Cancelled registrants will still be responsible for their class kits, as your teachers have already paid for and prepared them. We will make sure you get your kits. We are still working with Warm Beach Camp and Conference Center to address this eventuality and to determine which costs could be refunded.

Currently, there have been 80 confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Western Washington (Total population is 5.2 million). There have been 11 deaths in Washington. The vast majority of fatalities are associated with a single care center in Kirkland, all of which belonged to more than one high-risk group (80 years or older, compromised immune system, other complicating medical conditions). Warm Beach is located at the northern end of Snohomish County. Snohomish County has reported 18 cases. At least one of which (the first case in Washington) has completely resolved. Said another way, he had the virus and his body fought it off. He is now healthy. Based upon CDC criteria, our group falls under the definition of 'No Identifiable Risk'. That said, the demographics of our group include people for whom Covid-19 could be more serious (risk increases over 50 years old, for those with compromised immune system and for those with existing medical complications particularly in the heart and lungs). The most current local information available from the Washington Department of Health is available here: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/emergencies/coronavirus>

We hope that you will choose to come and enjoy a wonderful weekend of kite making and camaraderie. We would ask that common sense prevail. Let's work together to limit unnecessary inter-personal contact...bump knuckles or elbows instead of hugs and handshakes (yeah, I know....that's going to be a tough one for me). Wash your hands often. Cover your sneeze and/or cough. Consider bringing along some alcohol based hand sanitizer. Current guidance recommends against face masks unless you are experiencing symptoms, in which case, you should consider staying home.

We will continue to monitor developments and will adjust accordingly. It is absolutely our intention to do what is best for everyone involved. We are kite makers. You are all friends (or will be soon). We want what is best for you, and will continue to do our best by you.

See you next week,

Sam King
President, Fort Worden Kitemakers Conference