

Hurricane Good Neighbor Program

See page 6

Beach Safety

See page 7

Strategic Planning Committee Seeks Members

See page 23

COVID-19, 2022 Version

By Ken Wilkins, MD

My last article for *The Shoreline* is now woefully out of date, and though I have not re-read it, I'm sure it's full of information that turned out to be wrong. This is an attempt to describe the state of the pandemic as of May 2022, with thoughts about how to live with it, and what the future might hold. It must be said at the outset, however, that no one really knows what will happen next. So, take all this with a grain of salt.

New variants seem to arise almost monthly, if not more rapidly. We started with Alpha, which predated vaccines and was a really serious illness. Vaccination began in December 2020, and shortly thereafter there was a dramatic fall in cases, fueled by the large numbers of people getting vaccinated. Then Delta reared its head, and last summer we saw, not only in eastern NC, but the state as a whole as well as the US in general, a dramatic surge in cases. Delta proved to be a serious disease in the unvaccinated, and hospitalizations occurred almost exclusively in unvaccinated folks. Delta also proved to be deadly, and at CarolinaEast Medical Center in New Bern, only one patient that required mechanical ventilation survived!

Delta subsided, thank goodness, but then Omicron took its place. We had a great uptick in cases caused by this highly transmissible variant, and many of the cases were in people who had been vaccinated. Fortunately, the vaccine continued to protect against hospitalization and death. The BA.2 subvariant supplanted Omicron, and now we are seeing almost only the newest, BA.2.12.1, as the cause of cases. Each of these Omicron variants is very transmissible, but so far we have not seen a large increase in hospitalizations or deaths.

Some are predicting a fall/winter surge, presumably by some other new variant, but what will actually happen remains to be seen.

We are definitely seeing, if not a true surge, a significant rise in cases in eastern NC. Hospital numbers, so far, remain gratifyingly low. If I had to predict, I would say that we can expect a decrease in cases during the summer, but what will happen in the fall and winter remains unclear. What, then, to do in our daily lives? Mask mandates have all but

(Continued on page 6)

Gala and Auctions a Huge Success

By Jean McDanal

The DoubleTree was hopping

Thank you to all who came to the DoubleTree on May 14 for our Warrior Gala and Auctions. What a fun evening. It was nice to dress in something other than sweats that we have been used to for two years. Everyone looked so elegant.

After a social hour, guests were treated to dinner of either flank steak or mahi, finished off with Atlantic Beach pie. During cocktails and dinner, Bob Laverty from Swansboro provided music. Following dinner, Bill Stafford took the mike to begin the live auction, which was lively and fun.

Our silent auction began online this year a week before the Gala and proved to be highly successful as folks from anywhere could bid. Bidding for the live auction items was limited to those in attendance at the Gala. While we didn't have a final figure at press time, the proceeds from the silent and live auctions exceeded \$17,000.

Following the auction, Bryan Mayer and his I-42 Band took the stage and got everybody up and dancing. It sure looked like everyone was having fun.

There are many folks to thank for making this evening such a success. Our brain trust includes:

- Celeste Lindley, captain of the event who kept us on the straight and narrow
- Donna Fountain, who single-handedly put the silent auction together and kept up our presence on social media
- Cindy Moeller, our jack of all trades whom you can ask to do anything (and she never says no)
- Linda Langheld for putting our Wine & Dine basket together, among other tasks

(Continued on page 7)

