

## Rally against future lockdowns held in Bancroft

By Chris Drost

Local activist Wilma Brethour organized a protest rally against future lockdowns on Saturday, March 13 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Station Street in Bancroft near the former railway station. Organizers estimated that approximately 75 people participated in the protest. The largely un-masked group lined the roadway waving their placards. Signs were tied to poles downtown and lawn signs were also placed in the snowbanks along the sidewalk.

"Community organizations have lost volunteers, people have lost jobs, small businesses have been impacted and kids can't play sports. I think we could do just as well [at keeping people safe] in small stores. I could stand in Stedman's with four people but go to No Frills and be with 50. It doesn't seem right. If we can go safely to No Frills, we can go safely to small businesses," says Brethour. She is concerned about how small businesses will do this year but hopes by summer it will be okay.

Some of the protesters marched around town with large placards that called for "No more lockdowns" and proclaimed that the COVID cases, hospitalization and fatalities are down and that "We have crushed every curve." Brethour said prior to the protest that she hopes the business community knows they have our support. "This is more about awareness. People have lost loved ones but we still have to consider those who live."

Brethour is also adamant that services that have been closed be opened up again so those who need them can get access.

"We want to keep this more about lockdowns but if people have other issues, they are welcome to join in," says Brethour. She hoped prior to the event that people would make signs to carry, and some did.

"We need to respect each others' opinions and reasons for the things we do in our lives," she said.