



Parade! Many community members turned out to cheer on the Bronte High School Class of 2020. The senior class members loaded up and drove through the streets of Bronte to be honored by Bronte residents in light of the uncertainty regarding graduation ceremonies. See the next page for more photos.

...Coronavirus Update
(Continued from front page)

In Texas, 7.56% of all people tested are confirmed to have the virus, and of those confirmed cases, 2.71% result in death. Worldwide, the rate of death of those confirmed to have Covid-19 comes in at 7.00%, a slow climb up from the 6.95%, 6.90% and 6.32% of weeks prior. For the United States, the death rate is 5.86, also a steady increase of 5.73%, 5.37% and 4.13% in weeks prior.

Regulations remain the same as last week, with non-essential retail and dine-in restaurants able to open at 50% capacity in Coke County.

loved ones for preventative reasons.

This is not to say that we didn't "appreciate" these workers before. When I read that these workers weren't appreciated before now, it sometimes feels like a straw man to serve an author's preexisting agendas. I believe the average citizen, if asked, would acknowledge that many workers are vital to keeping our society running. The reality is that don't actively NOTICE them enough, because these folks do such an effective job. You don't notice when the shelves are full. You DO notice when the shelves are bare.

On April 23, 1920, Theodore Roosevelt gave his legendary "Citizenship in a Republic" speech at the Sorbonne in Paris. This speech includes one of Roosevelt's most famous quotes, about the "Man in the Arena," but it also discusses the virtue of work. Roosevelt extolled the importance of all types of work, observing that each type of work was important to society. However, mere work alone was not enough to distinguish a productive citizen. With a concern that holds true today, Roosevelt worried about people who sought to divide society by valuing people based on class, occupation, or wealth. Roosevelt criticized both sides of this problem, both the wealthy man who "exploits and ruins" the less fortunate and the "violent and greedy demagogue" who riles up the less fortunate against the wealthy. Roosevelt saw these divisions as the "gravest wrong" a

man could place on his society, because these same divisions had caused the fall of numerous republics dating to antiquity.

Roosevelt stated that the true test of a man's worthy was his conduct in society. When I think about the value our society places on various occupations, I think about this line from Roosevelt's speech: "ruin looks us in the face if we judge a man by his position instead of judging him by his conduct in that position."

Blue collar workers are vitally important. White collar workers are vitally important. Creatives are vitally important. Each type of worker contributes to society in ways that are irreplaceable by other types. Each should be celebrated for their conduct in their position, whatever it may be.

I close with a story from American social scientist Arthur Brooks that highlights the importance and value of work. Brooks told of a man named Rick who, after a life of crime and drugs, was released from prison. Rick first got a job sweeping streets, then went to work as an exterminator. Several months in, Brooks asked Rick how life was going. Rick showed Brooks an email: "Rick, emergency bedbug job, East 65th Street. I need you now."

Brooks asked, "so what?" Rick said "read it again. 'I need you now.' That is the first time in my life that anybody has said those words to me."

It doesn't matter what we do for a living. It matters how we conduct ourselves in those jobs and in society. As we learn from

this shared COVID-19 experience, I hope we take that idea to heart. Instead of valuing ourselves by class, occupation, or wealth, we should unite ourselves by our conduct in society. We should notice and value every worker - blue collar, white collar, or creative. When we do, each person will have that same feeling that Rick must have felt when he received that email. Each of us are needed.

James Decker is a lawyer, farmer, and mayor in Stamford, and the creator of the forthcoming "West of 98" podcast and website. He may be contacted through Facebook at [facebook.com/james.decker](https://www.facebook.com/james.decker).

Bronte student inducted to honor society at ASU

Angelo State University's chapter of the Alpha Chi national honor society has inducted 18 new members, included Orville Davis of Bronte, for the spring 2002 semester, despite not being able to conduct an on-campus induction ceremony.

Alpha Chi is one of the nation's most prestigious honor societies and is open to students majoring in any academic discipline. To be eligible, students must rank in the top 10 percent of graduate students or seniors at their college or university, or in the top 7.5% of juniors.

Davis is studying Computer Science at Angelo State University.

State Parks have reopened for day-use

Texas State Parks reopened for day-use only on April 20 as part of a broader effort to begin reopening the state of Texas. Per Governor Abbott's direction, new restrictions in effect include requiring visitors to wear face coverings and maintain a six-foot distance from individuals outside of their party, and prohibiting the gathering of groups larger than five.

"As we navigate through these challenging times, it is essential that outdoor experiences and opportunities are available for Texas families. We have been diligently working with our partners in local communities across the state to help safeguard our state park visitors, volunteers and staff when they return to Texas State Parks," said Carter Smith, Executive Director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). "During the temporary closure, our State Parks team has been cleaning and sanitizing park facilities, addressing routine maintenance projects, and ensuring requisite safety protocols are in place to ensure visitors have the best possible experience."

Due to limited staffing, weather conditions and continuing construction projects, some state parks will not be open at the current time. Park visitors should check the Texas State Parks Alert Map regularly for the latest information about the status of individual parks. The resumption of overnight



To Be Needed

by James M. Decker

We are a different society than we were three months ago. We all know that. We're different in negative ways - death and illness, economic suffering, the loss of special moments. We're different in neutral ways - things that are not necessarily good or bad, just different. We're also different in positive ways.

One positive change is greater appreciation for essential workers who keep America running. Those of us who work in office settings can alter daily routines to protect employees and clientele. Others do not have that flexibility. Retail and foodservice workers, farmers and ranchers, truck drivers, industrial workers, and many others persevere forward, not knowing when they might encounter this virus. As seen in America's meatpacking plants and elsewhere, many workers have suffered as a result. That's before we even discuss healthcare workers - doctors, nurses, aides, first responders and more - who work every day knowing that encounters with the virus are likely and who have often been separated from

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