

...Agrilife Extension

(Continued from previous page)

Unfortunately, the highest percentage of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes are often motorcyclists. In 2018, motorcyclists accounted for 25 percent of these fatalities, with 4,985 motorcyclists killed - compared to 21 percent for passenger cars, 19 percent for light trucks, and 3 percent for large trucks. Of those motorcyclists who died in single-vehicle crashes, 39 percent were alcohol-impaired.

The 2018 Labor Day holiday was especially dangerous for riders, who accounted for approximately 25 percent of the alcohol-induced motor vehicle fatalities. Therefore, AgriLife Extension's Watch UR BAC program is working with NHTSA to remind motorcyclists that drunk riding is not only illegal, it is a matter of life and death. As riders head out to Labor Day festivities, remember: Ride Sober or Get Pulled Over.

Motorcyclists should be aware of other drivers on the roads, too, and that motorcycles can be difficult to spot. Per vehicle mile traveled, motorcyclists are about 27 times more likely than passenger vehicle occupants to die in a motor vehicle crash, and five-times more likely to be injured. Furthermore, improper use of a vehicle's rear-view and side-view mirrors contributes to collisions, particularly with smaller vehicles like motorcycles. With roughly 40 percent of a vehicle's outer perimeter zones hidden by blind spots, improper

adjustment, or lack of use of side-view mirrors can have dire consequences for motorcyclists.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Family and Community Health Agent, Milissa Wright recommends these safe alternatives to drinking and riding:

- Remember: It is never OK to drink and ride. Even after only one alcoholic beverage, designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation or a ride service to get home safely.

- Know a friend who is about to drink and ride? Take their keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.



Peace Among the Storms

By James M. Decker

Last week, I reprised an essay from the spring on the origins of the phrase "this too shall pass" and the importance of its message during difficult times. That messages encourages peace among the storms of life, to know that no matter how hard it seems in the current moment, each such moment will pass.

2020 has been full of storms. Sometimes, this year has felt like a driving hailstorm pounding a

dumpster fire. Recently, a nationally prominent college football writer whom I respect wrote that 2020 feels like a year's worth of news each day. Some of that is the instantaneous news cycle that we live in - everything seems more dramatic, and it may or may not be, but it still beats us down to hear and read it. It is having a deleterious effect on us all—as individuals and as a people. That same college football writer penned an apology to his readers this past week. As he observed, his writing had gotten progressively more snarky and condescending over the past six months - the COVID pandemic and associated anxieties had worn on him to the point that it simply caused him to steadily lose control of his words. He asked his readers for a "reset," to acknowledge that he had not been his best and that he wanted to start fresh on the rest of the year.

I will be honest. It feels like we could all use a good reset. Whether it is our writing, our interpersonal relations, or our relationship with our self and our mental wellness, 2020 has not done us a lot of favors. We have societal strife and many of our political and cultural leaders are contributing to it. We have economic uncertainty. The pandemic and associated quarantine that have hurt our small business, stripped away many parts of our routines, and limited our interactions with friends and loved ones (especially older folks). COVID

is not healthy, but the side effects are not healthy either. And if that all was not enough, we have a potentially nasty presidential election season winding up.

I recently read a report from the CDC that was a gut punch for our collective societal well-being. The CDC reports that, in late June, 40% of Americans reported struggling with mental health or substance use, due to the pandemic. People are reporting more feelings of anxiety, depression, and trauma or stress-related disorders. A saddening 10.7% of survey respondents reported suicidal thoughts in the prior 30 days. That number jumped to over 25% of adults aged 18-25. Folks, let that sink in. One in four young American adults has reported recent suicidal thoughts. This is staggering and deeply concerning. First and foremost, if you are struggling right now, please please seek help. If you do not have anyone to talk to, please reach out to me.

Like that college football writer, those statistics suggest that a whole lot of us are causing us to struggle and to be in need of a reset. If you feel that way, you are not alone. It would be nice if we could each just escape, unplug, and recharge for a few days, but that is not always possible. I hope that we can all find ways to hit the reset button, though. It is clear that 2020 is breeding struggle and despair in our people. Maybe one strategy to improve our well-being is more fresh air. Fresh air is undeniably

good for the body and good for the soul (as a brief aside, studies during the 1918 flu pandemic showed tremendous results for patients who were treated in the fresh air, in outdoor facilities). We all need strong doses of fresh air. Some of your work outdoors and you are ahead of the rest of us that work in office jobs or are otherwise cooped up indoors too much. We all have different interests, but there are fresh air pursuits for everyone—gardening, exercise, physical labor as exercise, playing with kids or grandkids, fishing, hunting, hiking, boating, adventure sports, the list goes on. Whatever you enjoy, there are ways to do it in the fresh air.

The storms of 2020 are likely not over, but we all need to find some peace amidst those storms. As I have written before, we cannot control others or the world at large, but we can absolutely control ourselves. If each of us finds peace for the rest of 2020, it will impact everyone around us in incredible ways and impact our entire society. This fall, I encourage you to do just that. Let us all put a fresh spin on the end of 2020. Let us all trust more in God, not mortal men. And if you can, let us all find a way to get a little more fresh air. It will be good for you and good for us all.

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	8-1	8-2	8-3	8-4	8-5	8-6	8-7	8-8	8-9	8-10	8-11	8-12	8-13	8-14	8-15	8-16	8-17	8-18	8-19	8-20	8-21	8-22	8-23	8-24	8-25	8-26	8-27	8-28	8-29	8-30	8-31
Counties w/Covid-19	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251	251
Confirmed Cases	430,485	436,175	442,014	451,181	459,887	467,485	474,524	481,483	486,362	490,817	500,620	506,820	513,575	520,593	528,838	535,582	542,950	550,232	557,256	562,559	567,580	573,139	577,537	580,384	586,730	592,137	597,737	601,768	606,530	610,354	612,969
Active Cases	141,044	147,261	137,576	137,658	136,738	135,878	134,760	134,797	133,058	133,504	133,598	139,808**	128,526	127,274	125,732	125,487	127,099	124,079	122,012	119,806	117,704	115,843	114,391	111,807	108,604	107,911	106,915	104,622	101,189	98,326	92,934
Fatalities	6,837	6,979	7,016	7,261	7,497	7,803	8,096	8,343	8,459	8,490	8,710	9,034	9,289	9,602	9,840	9,983	10,034	10,250	10,559	10,793	11,051	11,266	11,370	11,395	11,576	11,805	12,070	12,266	12,420	12,510	12,536
Hospitalized	8,969	8,610	8,819	8,674	8,455	8,302	8,065	7,872	7,437	7,437	7,216	7,028	6,879	6,632	6,481	6,267	6,200	6,210	5,974	5,635	5,566	5,274	5,186	5,019	4,907	4,806	4,489	4,422	4,273	4,172	4,203
Tested	4,028,066	4,078,363	4,143,342	4,178,213	4,221,329	4,263,342	4,306,978	4,329,258	4,379,446	4,400,049	4,421,806	4,549,474	4,611,777	4,657,625	4,774,992	4,816,487	4,845,105	4,869,164	4,901,136	4,937,231	5,004,384	5,033,894	5,063,576	5,063,576	5,135,385	5,168,745	5,220,052	5,281,377	5,306,731	5,345,631	5,418,724
Recovered	282,605	***	297,422	306,262	316,652	323,804	331,668	338,343	344,845	349,833	358,312	367,354	375,760	383,717	393,266	399,572	405,817	415,903	424,685	431,960	438,825	446,030	451,776	457,182	466,550	472,421	478,752	484,880	492,921	499,518	507,499
# Daily New Cases	9,539	5,690	5,839	9,167	8,706	7,598	7,039	6,959	4,879	4,455	8,913	6,200	6,755	7,018	8,245	6,204	2,713*	7,282	6,474	4,923	4,651	4,943	3,493	2,754	6,091	5,045	5,059	3,972	4,732	3,759	2,374
# Daily New Active Cases	-142	6,217	-9,685	82	-920	-860	-1,118	37	-1,739	526	14	6,210***	-11,282	-1,252	-1,542	-245	1,612	-3,020	-2,067	-2,206	-2,102	-1,861	-1,452	-2,584	-3,203	-693	-996	-2,293	-3,433	-2,863	-5,392
# Daily New Fatalities	268	142	37	245	235	306	293	247	116	31	220	324	255	313	238	143	51	216	309	234	258	215	104	25	181	229	265	196	154	90	26
# Daily New Hospitalizations	-367	-359	209	-145	-219	-153	-237	-193	-435	0	-221	-188	-131	-247	-151	-214	-67	10	-236	-339	-69	-292	-88	-167	-112	-101	-317	-67	-149	-101	31
# Daily New Testing	38,036	49,397	64,979	34,871	43,116	42,013	43,636	22,280	50,188	20,603	21,757	127,668	62,303	45,848	117,367	41,495	28,618	24,059	31,972	36,095	67,153	29,510	29,682	0***	71,809	33,360	51,307	61,325	25,353	38,900	73,093
% Confirmed of those Tested	10.68	10.69	10.66	10.79	10.89	10.96	11.01	11.12	11.10	11.15	11.32	11.14	11.13	11.17	11.07	11.11	11.20	11.30	11.36	11.39	11.34	11.38	11.40	11.46*	11.42	11.45	11.45	11.39	11.42	11.41	11.31
% Active	32.76	33.76	31.12	30.51	29.73	29.06	28.39	27.99	27.35	27.21	26.68	26.36	25.02	24.44	23.91	23.43	23.40	22.55	21.89	21.29	20.73	20.21	19.80	19.26	18.51	18.22	17.88	17.38	16.68	16.10	15.16
% Hospitalized	2.08	1.97	1.99	1.92	1.83	1.77	1.69	1.63	1.52	1.51	1.44	1.38	1.33	1.27	1.22	1.17	1.14	1.12	1.07	1.00	.98	.92	.94	.86	.83	.81	.75	.73	.70	.68	.68
% Fatal	1.58	1.60	1.58	1.60	1.63	1.66	1.70	1.73	1.73	1.72	1.73	1.78	1.80	1.84	1.86	1.86	1.84	1.86	1.89	1.91	1.94	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.97	1.99	2.01	2.03	2.04	2.04	2.04
% Recovered	65.64	***	67.28	67.88	68.63	60.26	69.89	70.27	70.90	71.27	71.57	72.48	73.16	73.70	74.78	74.60	74.74	75.58	76.21	76.78	77.31	77.82	78.22	78.77	79.51	79.78	80.09	80.57	81.26	81.84	82.79