

# **HERMIT HERALD**

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**QUOTE OF THE DAY BY GOVERNOR CUOMO  
IN ANSWERING THE, " WHEN IS THIS GOING TO  
BE OVER?" QUESTION:**

**"I say, personal opinion, it's over when we  
have a vaccine. It's over when people know,  
'I'm 100 percent safe and I don't have to worry  
about this.' ". The follow on question, "When  
does that happen?" The Governor's answer,  
"When we have a vaccine." Then, the last  
question, "When we get a vaccine?" And, the  
Governor's final response, " Twelve to 18  
months."**

**SPORTS AND REALITY:**

**So referring back to commentary in issue 14,  
just who is going to fill the football stadiums or  
go to the tennis matches, baseball games or  
golf events without having every expectation  
they are safe? I say, not many.**

**The NFL and MLB are a bit ahead of the curve here in that they are seriously considering games with no fans.**

**Generally speaking the players are younger and therefore less susceptible. They would be tested weekly and would have the right to opt out of any game.**

**Oh great!! Playing the game without the fans would be like being in the Indy 500 with electric cars. And, as for the absent fans? Well, they'll all gather in the local sports bars, right? Sorry, still all closed. Ok then, big parties in the apartment, and the hell with social distancing. Sounds like a plan.**

### **SPORTS ACROSS THE SPECTRUM:**

**Major League baseball: wonderful nationwide project to regularly test players and employees (10,000 in all) in 30 different areas of the country to determine who is developing, or has, immunity to the coronavirus and to better understand how people in various parts of the country have become infected.**

**The US Tennis Association is starting a \$15 Million assistance program, which is just that, a start, because the USTA receives about \$400 million in revenue from the U.S. Open every year which may be cancelled this year. Even if it isn't cancelled, Tennis pros around the country and USTA pros outside the top 100 are literally starving and they need help now. Interestingly, Wimbledon has Pandemic business interruption insurance, the U.S. Open does not.**

**NCAA: The five conferences cited in the last issue have petitioned the NCAA for relief from a number of existing requirements such as, those colleges participating in in the Football Bowl Subdivision must sponsor at least 16 sports and must average at least 15,000 attendees for home games. A tough year ahead for college sports and a tougher one for all colleges- more on that later.**

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, (WHO):**

**There are efforts afoot to drop our \$500 Million a year support for the WHO. Regardless the merits, this is absolutely not the right time**

**to do it. The WHO is essential to helping quell and deter the virus around the world. That said, the WHO should not get a free pass and after this is all over a lot of questions need to be answered.**

**The WHO stated on January 14<sup>th</sup> that the Chinese government had found, “no clear evidence of human to human transmission of the novel coronavirus.” In mid February the WHO went on to praise China for using the correct approach. The WHO is criticized for being too willing to accept information supplied by China, which is well known to have hidden the extent of their problems from the rest of the world. Most damning of all was the announcement by the Australian prime minister last Wednesday that the WHO had issued a statement to allow the reopening of so-called “wet markets” where the virus is reported to have first spread to humans. These are the live animal/reptile markets that are beyond obscene- I’ve seen them. What was the WHO thinking?**

**At a coronavirus task force meeting last Friday, all the medical professionals gathered**

**(including Dr. Fauci, Dr. Birx and Dr Robert Redfield, director of CDC) all agreed the WHO has a “China problem.”**

**Yes, at another time this must be more fully investigated, but this is no time to pull the plug on the WHO.**

**NOW’S THE TIME TO APPLY FOR THAT “STRETCH” COLLEGE:**

**Wow, a great many of the 4,000 2 year and 4 year colleges in the U.S. are having a rough time of it. A higher education trade group is predicting a 15% drop in enrollment this fall, that is, if physical enrollments will be permitted at all. Many students are changing their plans, An acceptance from a top NY college is turned down in favor of a much closer Arizona college for a Phoenix high school senior. Foreign students- greatly sought after because they are frequently full pay students, are staying away in droves. Spring semester refunds have to be paid and endowments? Gulp!! Very fee happy stories here. Not to pick on Colby, but a typical example, saw its endowment shrink from \$900**

**million to \$770 Million. It has come back a bit since, but what financial pain has been inflicted to colleges across the spectrum. The only upside may be that it may be easier to get into some of those “stretch” schools than it was four months ago.**

### **WHAT GOOD CONTROLS CAN DO:**

**Bnei Brak, Israel, an Ultra-Orthodox community, has been a hot bed of corona virus infection. Their living conditions are crowded to start with and large social and religious gatherings are a part of their traditions. As many as one third of their 210,000 residents were expected to get sick.**

**Mayor Araham Rubenstein realized the situation was getting out of hand and notwithstanding the preference of the Ultra-Orthodox to have little to do with outsiders, Mr. Rubenstein enlisted the help of the Israeli army, in the person of Maj. Gen. Ronny Numa. There followed a state of the art visualization system to map the sick and elderly, the city was essentially shut down- no shoulder to shoulder worship, no public gatherings.**

**Infected families were 100% quarantined, with active duty soldiers delivering groceries, cooked meals and medicines.**

**Two weeks later, Bnei Brak still has the highest concentration of cases in Israel, but the crisis is rapidly coming under control. The rate of new infections has been cut in half and the number tested per week has tripled. The sounds of prayer can still be heard, but now from balconies and roof tops.**

#### **VODKA- HERE AND THERE:**

**Notwithstanding a national effort to reduce consumption of that favorite Russian beverage, the coronavirus, not surprisingly, is getting to the man/woman on the street. A 65% increase in vodka sales has been reported in Russia in the last half of March. Sad that so many are lost in the sauce, but much sadder that there has been a marked increase in domestic violence.**

**In the U.S. however, and I can't figure this one out, it is reported that alcohol sales have increased only 25%. So that would be sales in**

**retail liquor stores, but of course that's going to happen – all the restaurants are closed. Therefore, I calculate there's been negligible increase in consumption in America – maybe a good time for our grandmaster to play their grandmaster in chess.**

### **LAST BEAR STANDING:**

**This just in from Neumunster, Germany. The zoo there, Tierpark Neumunster is home to the largest polar bear in Germany, Vitus.**

**Vitus is a big boy, standing at nearly twelve foot tall. Seems there is a looming serious, if not deadly, problem at the zoo, tangentially, but not directly caused by the virus.**

**The zoo had to be closed because of the virus, so there is no longer the revenue stream from visitors. On top of that, Neumunster finds itself in difficult economic times so it's time to make contingency plans. The major worry is, what if there is no money left to buy feed/meat for the animals? Well, zoo director, Verena Kaspari has a plan."I would slaughter animals to feed other animals." She said. The zoo has about**



**700 animals and apparently Verena has already drawn up her hit list as she has made it clear that Vitus would be the last to go. Kind of interesting to contemplate how long it would take Vitus to go through the list. A muskox would probably take a week to consume, but five peacocks wouldn't even be enough for a bed- time snack.**

**So let us all do the St Vitus' Dance in supplication for the zoo to reopen enabling Vitus' zoomates to live a full and happy life.**

**AND FINALLY:**

**A timely note from one of our readers:**

**"My husband and I have decided we don't want to have any children.**

**We will be telling them tonight at dinner."**

**Your faithful scribe**

**PB**