

HERMIT HERALD

VOL 1 ISSUE 53

AUGUST 5, 2020

QUOTE FOR THE DAY:

“Just when you thought it was safe to go in the water again.”

LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY:

For all you folks frolicking in the east coast ocean surf, the great white are back in large numbers this year – scary photos of these creatures in surf that appears to be only three feet deep. Cuidado!!

As a metaphor, the quote refers to the amazing thing about covid- 19 (CV),Yesterday’s “facts” are not today’s “facts”. What you accepted as true no longer is.

It was less than two weeks ago that we were informed that children under the age of ten were extremely unlikely to get, carry or transmit the virus. Then, last Thursday comes

a troubling new report. “Infected children have at least as much of the CV in their noses and throats as infected adults. Indeed, children younger than the age of five may host up to 100 times as much of the virus in the upper respiratory tract as adults.”

And then, we have the new news on masks, which is good news. I could never understand the previous accepted mantra, which was. “wear a mask, in case you are infected, to help prevent others from contracting CV.” It was never said that the mask would help prevent the wearer from contracting the disease. I always thought this was counter- intuitive, and sure enough, finally, it has been found that masks are a good defensive measure. Anything to filter out germs, even if only partially, has to help, right? There would have been millions of more mask wearers if this had been the selling point from day one.

And finally, Hydroxychloroquine. A study that had concluded it caused heart problems has been totally discounted. The doctor who wrote the report had not done a peer reviewed study and was subsequently found to be a highly

discredited professional by many who had worked with him over the years. On the other hand, the drug does remain under investigation, but there is substantial anecdotal evidence that it has been helpful as a therapeutic, and many doctors and hospitals are still prescribing it.

This disease has had so many twists and turns, and so much is still unknown. How can those on the front lines be criticized by the press and politicians who all claim they would have handled it much better? So, whether your name is Cuomo, Fauci, DeBlasio, Trump, DeSantis, Redfield, Birx, etc. – perhaps the reader should hearken to the words of Theodore Roosevelt, “It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man/woman who is actually in the arena.”

VACCINE DEVELOPMENT UPDATES:

Johnson & Johnson has had such success with the vaccine they are developing based on

testing on monkeys that they are predicting they will come up with a single shot vaccine, whereas most other developers will require a two shot process.

The Serum Institute (SI) in India is privately owned by a billionaire family, the Poonawallas. Each year they already turn out 1.5 billion doses of vaccines to counter a large number of viral diseases. SI is arguably the largest vaccine producer in the world. Partnering up with the previously reported AstraZeneca/Oxford University discovery, SI plans to have 300 million doses of this vaccine available by November awaiting final approval from the authorities. But that's where the risk comes in. Will they get final clearance?

Russia- not to be outdone, the Russians are proceeding this coming fall with vaccinations of a vaccine that has had favorable early trial results, but has not gone through the entire required protocol. Eager to be the first to market, the Russians are playing a high- risk hand. "Is too good comrade, vaccine work on six monkeys. Is good for whole country, da?"

Discouraging news on CV survivors; recent reports state that up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of survivors may have lasting damage to their hearts as well as other vital organs, (lungs, kidneys, liver, etc.), especially for those who were ill to the point they had to be hospitalized, as reported in earlier issues.

And, now, a real downer. With all the rush to find a vaccine, only about one half of Americans say they would take a CV immunization shot. 42 % of blacks agree with this statement, “The CV is being used to force a dangerous and unnecessary vaccine on Americans.”

On top of this Dr. Fauci has stated that if a vaccine was effective for 60% of the population that would be considered a successful vaccine. Wow! Wait a minute folks. Let’s run the numbers here. Let’s say we are 330 million in number, but only 165 Million will take the shot. Therefore, 99Million out of 330 million wind up being immune to the CV.

Conclusion- CV will be with us for a very long time.

REPUBLICAN VS DEMOCRAT CV PERCEPTIONS:

SurveyMonkey asked people of both parties if they would feel very safe or somewhat safe engaging in the following activities. The thing that struck me in these percentages was the extreme variation in responses.

Eating indoors at a restaurant:

Republicans, 73% Democrats, 21%

Eating outdoors at a restaurant:

Republicans, 89% Democrats, 55%

Flying on a commercial plane:

Republicans, 51% Democrats, 15%

Going to an indoor concert:

Republicans, 48% Democrats, 6%

Going to a movie:

Republicans, 55% Democrats, 10%

UNANAMINITY AND WISE JUDGEMENT:

Prior to the opening baseball game between the Washington Nationals and the NY Yankees both teams took the knee for 60 seconds in a

show of support, cajoled or not, for BLM. Then, both teams stood, cajoled or not, for the National anthem.

I have objected to the conflation of any political, religious or social issues with respect to the national anthem. You want to send a message? – find a different means. The Yankees and the Nationals found an acceptable compromise.

THE SUMMER MIGRATION:

Due to the virus your scribe and lovely wife found themselves departing Florida two months later than usual. So, apologies for the delay in getting out this issue. Knowing our loyal readers must be fascinated to learn of our journey (ha, ha), a few notes from the road:

Boy, do I have this thing planned – no restaurant or service center stops. Iced cooler stocked with a nice bottle of wine and a deli sandwich for lunch every day. Well it worked perfectly day one, except eating lunch in the car at a Jacksonville rest area was not quite as

romantic as I had pictured. On to our fabulous B&B in Savannah, Ballast Stone, (been there many times) No social distancing necessary as we are only customers. For dinner, we go to our old favorite, The Olde Pink House. We get to sit at a bar for the first time in over four months (a 30 foot bar, set up for only three twosomes and we are the only patrons)- great chicken Pot Pie. The next morning- a torrential rain storm as we leave town. You have all heard the proverbial, but horrific tales of cars colliding with cement trucks (loaded they weigh 66,000 pounds – I looked it up) Anyway, our right passenger window is fogged up and I can't see the side view mirror. I do put on my lane change blinker and, thinking I'm safe, move to the right hand lane – right in front of a speeding cement truck. He sits on his air horn for about ten seconds and I am, like, traumatized. My navigator/passenger follows up with her own version of corrective messages. We are unscathed, but what a start for the day. No sandwiches available at Ballast Stone, so our romantic lunch is in a McDonald's parking lot enjoying (not) our first double Mac Cheeseburger in 30 years.

On to our much anticipated stay in Pinehurst at the Carolina Hotel, founded in 1895. Great staff, beautiful grounds, but what a tired hotel. Rooms date from the 1980s and the dining room, tavern and bar areas are so drab as to be appealing only to someone who has played 36 holes of golf, and all he wants is a burger, a beer and bed. Other dining options in the area are universally terrible until we find the barely advertised Magnolia Inn where we have a fabulous meal at their Villagio Restaurant. Turns out that the Carolina Hotel is the HQ hotel for “The Kids World Golf Championships” during this same period, and we observe a zillion youngsters with their helicopter parents coming and going. The age groupings must be all over the place as we see kids as young as seven and as old as sixteen. As we walked down the hall leaving the next morning, I could swear I heard as we passed one of the bed- rooms, “Daddy, please don’t hit me again. I promise I’ll do better today.” smile. So glad to depart the Carolina. \$595 for a one night stay- what are they thinking, or more to the point, what were we doing staying there?

Back on the road – we had never travelled these highways in North Carolina- some of the most beautiful in the country and, while we were still in the state, we frequently went miles without seeing another car. Our destination is the Ritz Carlton in Tyson’s Corner, Virginia, but around noon we are starving and the next exit- Richmond. Got to be a lot of nice stop off places there. We find ourselves on one of the city’s major roads, W. Broad St and wow! What a tribute to those violent protestors who, following the thought process of the woman in Oakland, Cat Brooks, who I quoted in the last issue, said, and I paraphrase, It’s not violence if the target is inanimate- windows, stores, police cruisers. None of that meets her test of violence. Well, folks take a look at about a mile of W. Broad in Richmond. Yes, the glass and trash has been cleared, but dozens and dozens of stores destroyed and boarded up. Tell me again, what was the goal here? Needless to say, we quickly exit Richmond and several exits later find ourselves, once again having failed to achieve that fabulous little French picnic lunch, eating an indigestible Wawa’s Hoagie parked next to a smelly tanker delivering fuel- parfait!!

Closing in on our Tyson's Corner address, I can't help but wonder about the many signs I see for Lee Highway. Well, unless that's named after Howard Lee, a well respected local butcher, I guess some major changes are coming from the Cancel Culture crowd.

We finally arrive at the Ritz Carlton- uncrowded, fabulous and one half the price of Pinehurst. Great meal in socially distanced setting at the hotel and first live music we have heard in four and a half months.

Our last day on the road – only four and a half hours, but the most boring- beltway, MD, DE, NJ and home and, don't you know – no box lunches available from the Ritz, so, once again, a perfect Parisian picnic lunch, an "Impossible Burger King" burger, parked in front of the dog park, watching our four legged friends poop and run about. Now, a final question for our readers: What do Joyce Kilmer, Vince Lombardi and Woodrow Wilson have in common? They all have NJ Turnpike service areas named after them. I have made a note to let the Cancel Culture folks know.

Your faithful scribe, PB

