

HERMIT HERALD

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MANAGING YOUR EXPECTATIONS- JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE TO GO IN THE WATER AGAIN:

Remember about 15-20 years ago when the first part of the above heading was sort of an elitist, pseudo intellectual, way of saying something that could be said in a less ostentatious manner. It was especially preferred by the talking heads, who, during the same period, became fixated on the word, "gravitas". They would gravely, or should I say, with great gravitas, opine on those who had it and those who didn't.

The second part of the above, obviously referring to Jaws 2.

Well, permit me to manage your expectations and tell you why it isn't safe to go back in the "water".

We keep reading from multiple sources, “hoping to be open by mid April.” “Thinking we’ll reopen by May 1st.” etc, etc. You know what, that could happen for some people and businesses in some states, but here’s the deal. If you are of a certain age, or if you have certain health conditions or a weakened immune system, those heady optimistic statements are not for you.

Everyone talks about a flattening of the curve. Gov. Cuomo thinks it’s going to peak this week. Does that mean that very soon thereafter it will be ok to go in the “water” again? For any of us in the above risk groups- no way!

You can already see the effects of the mind set, “Wow, thank goodness that’s behind us” After initial success in tamping down the level of infections, Japan and South Korea are seeing a second surge as the behavior of their citizens loosens up.

**The way I look at it for folks, in the risk categories, it’s like Russian roulette (please to only use a six shot revolver- I prefer S&W)
Let’s say infection numbers have just**

plateaued and the Governor Oks for restaurants to open again, but only at 50% capacity. At that point in the curve, to me, it would be like playing roulette with bullets in three of six chambers. As the curve slopes down and down, maybe you get to the point when you're only putting one bullet in the chamber and the risk/reward equation causes you to decide, "We're going out to dinner tonight." - better be your best known and most highly vetted restaurant.

The bottom line is that I believe it will be a very long time, 60, 90, 120 days, or more, before those in risk groups will be able to break, "Stay in place" regulations, let alone, "Social Distancing." By then, no question, but that a large segment of the, not at high risk, population will be able to enjoy many more freedoms and get back to work.

Now I have to apologize for further depressing your spirits. As my least favorite vice president of the United States, Spiro Agnew, would have said of me, "You are a nattering nabob of negativism."

Ok, guilty as charged, but I do come with some encouraging news. There are some developments that may help to shorten our jail time.

Hydroxychloroquine continues to show promising results in early tests and even though Dr Fauci, ever the conservative (as he should be) while continuing to flash his caution light, does recognize the encouraging anecdotal results.

Then there is the exciting new vaccine, and I apologize for not having the name, but it is of such promise that the FDA has shortened the entire approval process, meaning that the U.S. government will share in the cost of producing the vaccine before it has received final FDA clearance. Even so, this will still take quite a number of months- not nearly as fast as if Hydroxychloroquine were to be approved.

Then, just this morning, I read about Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG), a vaccine that has been around for over one hundred years, and very much in use today in Africa- highly effective in sharply reducing the incidence of respiratory

infections in conditions other than TB, for which it was originally developed. In Australia, they have started administering BCG vaccine to thousands of physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists and other health care workers. The Australian medical community seems to be very big on this. If results are positive, as soon as trial results are in, if positive, there is a vaccine ready to go world- wide.

THE CAPTAIN CROZIER AFFAIR:

There are only five or six of our readers who have served on active duty with the armed forces and we are all familiar with the concept and purpose of the, "Chain of Command". It is essential to the proper functioning of all military branches.

We now have the incident of the Air Craft carrier, Roosevelt's leader, Captain Crozier, having written a letter pleading for help for his 5,000 man crew, as the crew has been badly affected by Covid-19. As you have read, Capt. Crozier has been relieved of command for exercising, "poor judgement" in allowing his

plea for help to get to the press and the non-military world.

The, “optics” as they say (another buzz word) are terrible here. Captain Crozier gets a heroes send off and much of the American public is outraged. It’s going to be some time before this all gets sorted out, but the primary question is, did he properly follow the chain of command in his plea for immediate help? And, in return, did the Navy come back with the necessary very timely response. If the Navy responded in expedited fashion, then it’s time for the Captain to turn in his retirement papers. If the reverse is true, then the Navy has just received a huge black eye and acting Navy Secretary, Modly is ex, acting secretary. Hey, everyone- your opinions?

GROUND HOG’S DAY:

“Every day is Ground Hog’s day used to be a joke, right? No more. Every day during this crisis reminds me of starting off on a very long one day’s drive... “Counting the telephone poles” as the song goes.” I’m going nuts for the first hundred miles and then I suddenly shift

into a comfortable acceptance mode, helped by the knowledge that I have to get cranking on the next Hermit Herald issue.

My typical Ground Hog day starts at either 6AM or 7 AM depending which movie Marilyn was able to get me to watch the night before. If I lasted through the movie, up at 7. If not, up at 6 because I already slept through the movie. I then fix coffee for both of us and that's it- we're not breakfast eaters- you know- the new world 14 hour fasting people.

I'm not going to drag you through the rest of the day except for noting two things that are special to me (besides my dear wife, that is)

I'm sure everyone knows that when you see something pleasant your pupils dilate. Well, that happens to me when I open our door and see our three newspapers- my security blanket and road map for most of the morning. This effect is magnified when the Sunday papers arrive scaling in at 4-5 pounds. Wow! Lunch will be late today.

Now, here I ask you to indulge me, but I need to speak of Pelicans. In my mind, while on the ground, the only bird more ugly than a pelican is a wood stork. In the air, I consider the pelican the most beautiful flying creature on earth.

I sit with my coffee on a couch by a large window looking out on a beautiful lawn with the ocean in view, seventy-five yards distant. Every day, at this time of year, the pelicans fly over starting about 9AM, chasing the schools of fish moving north towards cooler waters.

I get a four second alert to their arrival as the sun throws their shadow on the lawn. What a procession. Yesterday, within twenty minutes, three formations of at least fifty each, flew over our property with barely a flap of their six foot wings, just gliding, gliding, gliding. What a sight.

Do you ever catch yourself involuntarily smiling at something? That's me, everyday at pelican fly over time.

CLARIFICATION OF ISSUE 8:

Regarding my comments about the closings ordered by Gov. De Santis, Terry O'Donnell advises as follows. "Peter, actually most of the creep you describe was at the instigation of the Palm Beach County authorities/ bureaucrats, not the Governor. For example , the DeSantis April 1 Executive Order lists swimming as an "essential activity", but the county has shut down all pools and beaches except at private homes. " Thank you Terry for that clarification.

And double thanks to Terry for this final item:

"Publix and other Florida supermarkets are announcing special early morning hours just for people 60 and over.

The other ten people in the state are thrilled to have the stores to themselves the rest of the day."

**Be Safe- your faithful scribe,
PB**

