

S. C. I



World

***Newsletter of the Joseph Groh Foundation
Winter/Spring 2020***

News Bytes

A Crazy Start to the Golf Season



We Can All Relate with the Mockingbird Right Now

On December 31, 2019 the Chinese government confirmed with the World Health Organization treatment of dozens of people with an unknown cause of pneumonia. That seemed, both literally and figuratively, a world away. On January 7, Chinese authorities confirmed they had isolated the pathogen causing the mysterious illness as belonging to the coronavirus family. That news didn't cause too much concern, after all, no one had perished from the

disease at that point. On January 20, the WHO confirmed other cases in Thailand, Japan and South Korea, 282 in all. On January 21, the first case was reported in the US in Washington state. On January 23, the Chinese government closed off the city of Wuhan, with a population of over 11 million people. Things were escalating rapidly, but it still seemed to be primarily contained in Asia. Three weeks later France announced the first coronavirus link death in Europe, an 80-year-old Chinese tourist. Cruise ships were beginning to see a rapid escalation of cases, but the man who was the first reported case in the US made a full recovery. Coronavirus was starting to dominate the news. Within two weeks, the disease had gone global, and countries were beginning to close their borders. By early March things were clearly escalating rapidly, cases and fatalities were rising, and the economy and stock market were falling. Against this backdrop, we announced that the May 4 Boxer Family tournament for the foundation in Dallas would be postponed.

It is our full intent to host a Dallas event later in the year, after things settle down and people's lives are on a more normal plane. We expect to make an announcement of those plans in May, based on conditions prevailing at that time. Meanwhile, there are no changes at this time for our September 14 tournament in Minneapolis, September 28 tournament in Chicago, and October 19 tournament in Atlanta. Until then, the foundation urges everyone to follow protocol as outlined, and stay safe!

The Good Side of the News



It seems as though bad news is everywhere. Print, electronic and social media are consumed with news of the coronavirus. Local nightly newscasts have been expanded to one hour to properly cover all the mayhem, and breaking news is constant, and constantly bad. It is hard to find a glimmer of hope or good news anywhere. Hence this column.

There are a lot of positive things happening around us, but few of them are seeing the light of day. The following is a list of good news items happening in recent days that you may not have heard about.

- My Pillow recently announced they are now manufacturing face masks for the hospital industry
- A team of researchers at AccuWeather unveiled the results of a new study which found that "High temperature and high relative humidity significantly reduce the transmission of Covid-19."
- Parent-teacher groups across the country are participating in a new trend sweeping the nation – that of putting a teddy bear in your front window. Inspired by a popular book called "We're Going on a Bear Hunt," it is a good reminder for us all to look for the good in the world during a time of uncertainty.
- Regulations inhibiting the provision of medical supplies are being waived. As an example, a congressman from New Jersey was able to get the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency to release \$41 million worth of medical grade gloves from Australia that had been held since September.
- Ford Motor Company is working with 3M to manufacture Powered Air Purifying Respirators. In addition, Ford is working with GE Healthcare to expand production of an existing ventilator design to support patients with respiratory failure. Ford will also begin producing more than 100,000 face shields for medical workers starting next week.
- Dyson, the UK manufacturer of vacuum cleaners, has switched over to producing ventilators in just 10 days. They expect to produce 15,000 ventilators for hospitals around the world in the next two weeks.
- PSE&G, a publicly traded diversified energy company is donating 50,000 N95 respiratory masks to one of New Jersey's largest healthcare systems.
- Fanatics Inc., a Pennsylvania manufacturer of MLB uniforms has shifted production to make masks and gowns – complete in Yankee or Phillies pinstripes.
- Vera Bradley, an American luggage and handbag design company, has shifted production to face masks and gowns for the medical industry
- The Mount Sinai Health System plans this week to initiate a procedure known as plasmapheresis. This is where the antibodies from patients who have recovered from Covid-19 will be transferred into critical ill patients with the disease, with the expectation that the antibodies will neutralize the disease.
- Doctors and epidemiologists are starting to ratchet down their expectations for the virus. Dr. Deborah Brix, who is deeply respected in Washington diplomatic circles and among public health experts according to NPR, recently talked about a report out of the UK adjusting their estimate of deaths from 500,000 down to 20,000. She

said, "There is no model right now – no reality on the ground, where we can see that 60% to 70% of Americans are going to get infected in the next 8 to 12 weeks." This statistic, along with a projection for 2.2 million deaths in the United States, had been widely circulated in the media.

In truth, we do not yet know how wide this pandemic will be in the United States. We do know however that our individual actions can make large, positive differences, just by doing things such as washing our hands, maintaining social distancing and the like. We each have a responsibility to stay informed, just don't let yourself give in to the hype. There are a lot of positive things happening right now.



Plymouth, Michigan Ford employee Making Face Masks

Ann Mcclamrock – Someone You Should Know

Our lives are experiencing unprecedented disruption these days. One thing is almost certain however, our present dilemma won't last forever. That cannot be said of the events from the story you are about to read. I invite you to think about this story in the coming weeks and perhaps months, as you seek to find perspective in our topsy-turvy world. If you haven't read the article written by Skip Hollandsworth in the May, 2009 TexasMonthly publication, you absolutely must do so as soon as you have finished reading this. These are simply the cliff notes version, and if you don't read Skip's entire article, you will miss one of the most powerful pieces of journalism I have ever read. I have provided a link at the end of this article for reference.

On the morning of October 17, 1973, John Mcclamrock eagerly got out of bed to face the day. A 17-year-old senior at Hillcrest High School in Dallas,

Texas, John was a favorite with Hillcrest girls. That morning he sat restlessly through his classes, and at lunch drove to the nearest Burger King to grab a Whopper. On the way back to school, he cranked up the volume to the Allman Brothers' "Ramblin Man" on the radio in his El Camino. He walked excitedly toward the boys locker room to put on his football uniform, because that afternoon the junior varsity was playing Spruce High School, and John was looking forward to showing his coaches what he could do. He was 5'11" tall and weighed 160 pounds, and was the wedge buster on kickoffs, assigned the task of breaking up the other teams front line of blockers. John was determined to make varsity, and this was the week he planned to do it. On Hillcrest's opening kickoff, John burst through the first blockers and headed for the ballcarrier. He lowered his head, and as the 2 collided, John's chin caught the runner's thigh. The sound, one teammate later said, was like "a tree trunk breaking in half."

John's head snapped back, and he fell face first to the ground. For the next several seconds there was nothing but silence. As there were no cell phones in that era, a coach had one of the players run to the high school's main office to call an ambulance. When it arrived 15 minutes later, John was still on the ground, his body still. "You've got some pinched nerves," a referee told him speaking into the ear hole of his helmet. "You'll be up in no time."

As soon as he was wheeled into Presbyterian Hospital, doctors knew differently. They took x-rays, and gave him a complete neurological exam. A Hillcrest administrator called John's mother Ann, a 54-year-old striking woman with strawberry blonde hair. When she arrived at the hospital, a doctor quietly asked her if she had any religious preference. Looking bewildered, she told the doctor she was Catholic. "Maybe you should call your priest, in case you need to deliver your son his last rights," the doctor said. "We're not sure he's going to make it through the night." The doctor informed Ann that John had severely damaged his spinal cord, and was paralyzed from the neck down. The circulatory system had been disrupted, causing his blood pressure to fluctuate wildly, and he could not lift his head without blacking out. "It couldn't be any worse," the doctor said.

While it looked like Ann had taken the diagnosis calmly, in reality she was simply unable to comprehend the full meaning of what the doctor had told her. She stood at her son's bedside until her husband, Mac, arrived with her other child, Henry, a quiet lad who was a freshman at Hillcrest. With the whole family together, Ann felt the tears coming. Turning toward the doctor she said, "my Johnny is not going to die. You wait and see. He is going to have a good life." With her voice choking, she fell into Mac's arms.

John made it through the night, and then through the next day. Friends flocked to the hospital, and one night nearly 100 of them were in the ICU waiting room. There were so many phone calls coming into the hospital about John that extra operators were brought in to work the switchboard. Local newspapers jumped on the story, and soon, just about everyone in Dallas was following John's struggle to stay alive. Dallas Cowboys coach Tom Landry and star defensive back Charley Waters came to see him. "Buy a Drink for Johnny" booths were set up in shopping malls all over the city, with proceeds from the one dollar soft drinks going to the family. At Hillcrest, numerous benefits were held to help the medical fund. After one of the national wire services ran a story about John, letters began pouring in from all over the country. In November, a letter arrived at the hospital from the most unlikely place of all, the White House. Pres. Richard Nixon, who was in the midst of the spectacular downfall from the Watergate scandal, had read about John and stopped what he was doing to write a sympathetic note. "Mrs. Nixon and I were deeply saddened to learn of the tragic accident which you suffered," he began, "but we understand that you are a very brave young man, and that your courage at this difficult time inspires all who know you. You have a devoted family and many friends cheering for you, and we are proud to join them in sending warm wishes to you always." In December doctor suggested that John be moved to the Texas Institute for Rehabilitation and Research in Houston, (TIRR) which specializes in spinal injuries. When he left Presbyterian, there were nearly 4000 names listed on the guest register. At TIRR, John went through 2 hours of physical therapy every day, but by the following March he was still too weak to blow out the candles on his 18th birthday cake. Nevertheless, he told a Dallas morning news reporter that he would walk again, and probably would go back to playing football. "I will never give up," he said. In late spring, doctors met with John's parents and told them that not a single muscle below John's neck had shown any response. He still couldn't raise his head without losing consciousness, which meant there was almost no chance he would be able to sit in a wheelchair. "We found that 95% of the families who try to take care of someone in this condition cannot handle it," one of the staffers told them. "The families breakup." She handed them a sheet of paper. "These are the names of institutions and nursing homes that will take good care of him."

This is the amazing and uplifting story of John, his indomitable spirit, and his incredible loving mom, Ann. Whatever you are doing right now, stop! Follow the link below to read the rest of this article – right now. The power of this story will stay with you!

<http://www.texasmonthly.com/the-culture/still-life/>



Ann and John McClamrock

A Day in the Life

This feature is a sometimes humorous, sometimes offbeat, and sometimes irreverent look at life as seen through the eyes of a severely disabled person. Management takes no responsibility for these ramblings.

Lessons Learned about Bad Days, Adversity and Hope

Who hasn't ever had a bad day? You know the type, you spilled coffee on yourself on the way to work, or you spent your whole Saturday on a home improvement project that you thought would only take 30 minutes – and it is still not complete. We have all had these kinds of days, perhaps a spat with your spouse, a nasty cold or even dropping your smart phone in the toilet! These kinds of days clog your mind and sour your attitude, and turn you into Mr./Ms. Grumpy Pants. Typically however, you wake up the next morning and start a new day, while letting the previous days problems fade in the rearview mirror.

Then there is adversity. How is that different than a bad day? Webster's defines adversity as "a state or condition of serious or continued difficulty." Serious or continued, so we're not just talking about the fender bender your offspring surprised you with last week. We're talking about life altering situations, the kind that really get your attention. Perhaps it takes the form of a divorce, or being let go at work, the sudden loss of a parent, the shocking diagnosis from the doctor or, in my case, a debilitating spinal cord injury at the age of 53. We all either have or will face adversity in our lives, some more than others and some worse than others. So as unwelcome as these situations are, the question is not whether we will face adversity, the question is how will we deal with it when it comes.

A very common and natural reaction is to ask yourself, why me? What could I have done differently to avoid this? How am I going to make it through this? It's just not fair! In these times of trial and tribulation, we don't want to hear it – but life isn't fair. We all know that bad things happen to good people, so instead of focusing on "why us," we might consider things from a different perspective. No matter what our situation is in life, there is always someone worse off than ourselves! For example, a lady on our block who is not that much older than me has ALS. When she and her husband moved in five years ago, she could walk, albeit with a good deal of assistance. Today however, she is confined to a wheelchair and can't move or speak. Without much effort, I'm sure each and every one of us can pretty quickly bring to mind someone whose plight in life is worse than ours. Someone we would never want to change places with. Thinking of this maxim can help begin the process of healing. Once we realize our situation may not be as bad as it presently seems, we can stop looking back at what we cannot change, and start looking forward toward the hope of future change.

Life altering situations might make us feel hopeless. An early inclination might be to just give up. We might even start to question our worth as an individual. I think the life of Abraham Lincoln is a great example of why we should never give up. As a young man of 26, Lincoln fell in love with an attractive and intelligent woman whom he had intentions of marrying. Life intervened however in the form of a typhoid fever epidemic, and she passed away. Lincoln was deeply depressed, and he severed what we would call today a nervous breakdown. In the meantime, two of the businesses which he started failed. When he later married, he and his wife had four children – only one of which lived to adulthood. At the relatively young age of 51 he was elected to preside over a nation deeply torn. The subsequent conflict claimed the lives of 2% of the country's population. Just imagine, today that would be like losing 6.4 million Americans from combat, accidents, starvation and disease. Totally unimaginable! How was he rewarded for a lifetime of overcoming life altering situations? We all know the answer. One hundred fifty years later however, he is almost universally held in esteem as our greatest leader ever!

In researching the stories of individuals who have been confronted with any number of life altering situations, one thing stands out in common with all of them. Individuals who best overcome life's biggest roadblocks are those who look outward toward others, and away from their own situation. Putting our situation in perspective and resolving to never give up puts us in position to begin moving forward. It allows us to start focusing on our assets, not our liabilities. Focusing on what we are passionate about gives us the energy and drive that we need to tackle whatever is in front of us. None of

us has any control over the things that can happen to us in life, but we all have a choice in how we will deal with it!

SCI World is a newsletter production of the Joseph S Groh Foundation