
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

As you all know, Monday was a holiday, but everyone is so busy it feels like a full week. We did have a day to reflect on Martin Luther King's contributions to our country. MLK Day gives us an opportunity to educate our kids about a great American and what each of us can do change things for the good. Jetson had a program in the school where youth presented speeches Dr. King had given. In the New Orleans-Metro Region, PPOs and staff and youth from Bridge City visited the area Louisiana War Veterans Home and presented an MLK event. I'm happy to know that educational and restorative justice events are taking place - aren't those some of the important things that Rev. King stood for?

For some of our staff who are "long in the tooth," (do you know what that means?**) you might remember the old Alka-Selzer commercial "plop plop, fizz fizz, oh, what a relief it is!" What a relief it is to have such gorgeous weather after the cold, nasty drizzly days we had for weeks. But don't look a gift horse in its mouth** - we better enjoy it now, because it's likely to cool off again, with that Arctic front moving south. Although I doubt that we'll see wind chill factors of 50 below zero in Louisiana! I've actually been able to get out and walk my dog, Daisy, a couple of nights this week.

Speaking of dogs, **Director of Education Kim Mims** might need to change her medication, as she reports seeing a dog honking the horn of a car as she walked into a grocery store. I guess that dog was really hungry and was ready to go home and eat.

Today I had planned to leave for the ACA mid-winter meeting in Houston, where I was to be sworn in as President-Elect. Notice the past tense. I am no longer going to ACA or anywhere else for a while. Yesterday **Asst. Sec. Sean Hamilton** and I were involved in an automobile accident...not our fault, for the record...and he sustained a minor injury to his hand, but Yours Truly now has a broken knee. Of course, it's the leg I broke in four places last spring, so it's back to limited mobility again for a while. As with that type of wreck, I'm also "stove up" and sore all over. The state vehicle doesn't look so good, either. I'm grateful we were in one of the SUVs instead of something small. Thank goodness for airbags - they really do save lives and mitigate injuries. Just not knees.

Here at central office, **Angela Bridgewater** has been assigned as lead person and liaison with the Behavioral Health Partnership. She stepped right in, picking up those duties very well. Baton Rouge **PPO Yolonda Latimer** has been detailed to work with DHH as our "feet on the ground" person. I've been saying, and will continue to say, that major initiatives take time to develop, and we all know the devil is in the details. I want our staff to continue to provide feedback on the ways the system was designed, so that we can identify the gaps as we work out the kinks. I am still very supportive of the managed care behavioral health system that is the core of the CSoC initiative. I believe we will start to see the benefit to the youth in our communities over time. This is definitely a positive move in the right direction. We need to learn to make it work for us - my thanks to everyone out there for making it work. Please continue to provide the needed feedback to your regional manager.

Well, it's another beautiful sunny day and I hope the beautiful weather will hold out for the weekend, so we (well, the rest of you!) can get outside and soak up the sunshine. Wishing each of you, in every OJJ location, a wonderful weekend, with my thanks for all you do every day to meet the mission.

Sincerely,
"Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*



**Long in the tooth means "old" - especially horses or people. Horses' teeth, unlike humans', continue to grow with age. They wear down with use, but may grow long, and it is possible to make a rough estimate of a horse's age by examining the teeth. Savvy buyers check the teeth to see if unscrupulous sellers are truthful about the age of the horse. Which is why you don't look a gift horse in its mouth. The term came into use in the 16th century.

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