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# what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

Goodbye winter, hello spring, or is it hold on, spring is coming, really it is, keep watching.... The calendar said yesterday was the first day of spring, but the thermometer begs to disagree. To me, it is not "spring" when we are still wearing coats and temperatures are still in the 40s. Looks like the polar vortex trumps the spring equinox. Not an azalea is blooming here at the Independence Blvd. complex, although the ornamental pear trees are in full bloom and their falling blossoms look like snow. Fortunately, the mockingbirds here in the complex did not get the memo that spring is delayed and they have been serenading us every day.

Monday was St. Patrick's Day when just about everybody was Irish for the day, or at least found it a good excuse for wearin' of the green. It was fun to see a lot of folks decked out in every shade of green imaginable. And, everyone was here, no one was missing, so I assume that none of our folks won the big lotto.

We are marching through March faster than a pig jumping out a hot pot. March has really been "mad." You know what that means – if it's March the legislature must be in session. And it is! And our first budget hearing is coming up Monday. My staff has been working night and day, literally, on my briefing book, (which I appreciate) and I have been studying that thing like I am cramming for an exam. Which, in truth, I am – it's one of most important examinations that OJJ has to endure every year. There's always a lot riding on it, and I can tell you, the executive team will be by my side, gettin' my back, ready to jump in with obscure facts and figures when needed. You can watch the hearing on your computer at 9 a.m. Monday, by going to [www.legis.la.gov](http://www.legis.la.gov) and clicking on the "in session" link. Maybe I'll take the briefing book home this weekend and sleep with it under my head, so some of the data in it will be magically transmitted into my brain. Or maybe flashcards....

This week an important piece of legislation sailed through the Senate and was sent to the House for consideration, to make the mayhaw tree the official state fruit tree, because Louisiana does not have an official state fruit tree. This bill would correct that, a legislator said, complimenting the flavor of mayhaw jelly. Another lawmaker was concerned that the mayhaw is not a tree, but a vine growing in trees, leading some to believe he does not know a mayhaw from a muscadine. Next up, consideration of the paint horse as the state horse of Louisiana. Former Gov. Jimmy Davis, whose palomino horse "Sunshine" was a fixture at the state Capitol, would take exception. I always look forward to the close of the session and an end to the madness, but that's not until June, which is when the year is halfway over. Seems like the new year just got here and we're already looking forward to the halfway mark.

Well, I'll close now, wishing you all a wonderful weekend, despite predictions of temps in the 40s and possibly lots of rain....with my sincere thanks to each of you, in every OJJ location, for all you do, every day, to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

"Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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