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# what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

It's been a short week, with the Memorial Day holiday on Monday, and while we all enjoyed having an extra day off, you know what that means – cramming a full week of work into four days. Still, I'll take the holiday any time, and I guess most of you would, too. Memorial Day is set aside to honor our citizens who have served in the military services, and perhaps sacrificed their lives. I hope that every member of the OJJ team who has served in our military was honored for their service and sacrifice – even if it just meant relaxing with no responsibilities for the day.

We celebrated a wonderful milestone this week with the first year anniversary of the opening of Swanson Center for Youth at Columbia. Congratulations to RD Carolyn Lewis, Director Vickie Shoecraft, Deputy Director Kim Rushing and their staffs for having a wonderful first year, and presenting a great anniversary program. The event was uplifting and festive, despite the incessant rain. All event planners have a “Plan B” in case of rain, and I was impressed that everything was moved inside effortlessly the day before the event so no one was caught off guard. The Swanson choir was on hand to entertain everyone, and I tell you, it does my heart good to see the kids enjoy performing – they are naturals. Thanks to the Columbia youth and staff for lovely decorations and a nice food spread. It was a good day, and I am proud of the work everyone is doing at Columbia, as well as at Swanson-Monroe and Bridge City.

Speaking of rain, we've had a deluge and the weather forecasters say it's not over yet. The rest of the country has been beset by cr-a-zy weather all year, and we have largely been spared, but here it is. Rising floodwaters on local waterways have caused flooding and road closures, we had some spin-off tornados, lots of problems all over the state. The new National Weather Service announcement says “turn around, don't drown” and that is good advice. Don't walk or drive into high water, especially in the roadways. But it could be worse. There are huge icebergs in the Great Lakes hindering travel and navigation. Mudslides in Colorado, it's still snowing in the Rockies and there are strong storms with wind and torrential rain up east. So I guess we can handle a little rain. Okay, a lot of rain. One of the few remaining ferries on the Mississippi River, at Plaquemine in Iberville Parish, has been docked on and off due to high water.

It is sad to note the passing of a great American literary figure, Maya Angelou. She died this week at age 86. It is safe to say that Maya Angelou had some effect and influence on just about everyone in the country, with her poetry, books, wisdom and common sense approach. Maya Angelou was a high school dropout at 14, an unwed mother at 17, holder of over 30 honorary doctorates and one of the best known and best loved figures of our time. For an incredible success story about a woman who today would be considered “at risk,” click the link <http://www.cnn.com/2014/05/28/us/maya-angelou-obit/> One her greatest quotations has so much truth in it, that it is worth repeating here and remembering that it is truly important in the work we do with the kids in our care: ***“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”***

I'll close with my wish for you all to enjoy a dry, safe weekend, with my heartfelt thanks to each and every member of the OJJ family, wherever you serve, for all you do every day and everywhere, to meet the mission by helping our young people see they can succeed.

Sincerely,  
“Doc” *Dr. Mary Livers*

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