
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

This WUD comes to you from Monroe, where I was able to participate in the 19th annual Red Mass at the historic St. Matthew Catholic Church (built in 1851) that asked for blessings on the opening of the Fourth Judicial District court and on the administration of justice. It was attended by many members of the judiciary, local officials, law enforcement, etc. The formal name of the event is the Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit, and it dates back to the 13th century in Europe. The Rev. Judson Brown gave a wonderful homily, and there were two things I took away from his message: recognize that we are able to listen with the ears of our heart, and, have the humility to know that we don't know it all. It reminded me of the old saying that God gave us two ears and one mouth for a reason. The Swanson Choir performed the National Anthem at the official opening of the court, and the youth represented us well. Thanks to RD Carolyn Lewis and the staff at Swanson for working with the youth on their fine performance. I want extend a special thank you to Judge Sharon Marchman and Chief Judge Wendell Manning for allowing OJJ to be part of their official opening of court. It was a privilege and a pleasure to be able to attend this uplifting event, and I truly enjoyed the experience.

Last week I talked a little about fall being the beginning for some activities, and just a few days later, a national publication printed a story about "autumn resolutions." While the idea has not exactly "gone viral," it is being talked about, and there are some interesting observations that I wanted to share. The Atlantic article said, "Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall," Fitzgerald wrote in *The Great Gatsby*. It's true: Fall is a time of renewal. Labor Day comes and goes, and things suddenly feel, even in the lagging heat of late summer, fresh. School starts again...football games start again September...asks us to get serious about things again. Summer ends, and life takes on its familiar rhythms and routines...What better time to make resolutions for self-improvement? Autumn resolutions, let's call them." I like that. The school year has always started in fall, not January. Tradition says that centuries ago when fall arrived, farm kids were no longer needed to help bring in the harvest. Our whole society still revolves around a fall school-starting cycle, even when we no longer go to school or send our kids. Fall is when we naturally get a little more serious – we eat healthier, dress a little differently, get down to business. It's finally cool enough to get back outside to spruce up the house and yard, weed flowerbeds and plant a fall garden. A blogger recently said, "...take advantage of the fall to resolve, to write a new list, to be who you couldn't be all summer because it was too hot or you were too busy having a good time. Fall is the ideal time to make resolutions, to begin anew, to re-think and re-invent, to create, design, and to live." I couldn't have said it better. I think that we all actually do some of those things informally, it just comes naturally. I hope we can all make some autumn resolutions and be better for it.

Well, we've had a quiet hurricane season so far, but other areas have had some activity. Right now I'm thinking about Hurricane Norbert causing gigantic waves in Baja California and that area of the Pacific. I have just one observation – the announcers insist on calling him "Norbert" instead of saying it the right way like we do here in Louisiana – "Nor-BEAR." Weather people, if you are going to give a storm a good Cajun name, pronounce it right, cha!

You may have seen some news about a disturbance at a juvenile detention center in Nashville, Tennessee – there was an incident there Wednesday, following an escape Monday night involving 32 youth. All but a few of the escapees were quickly apprehended, but that was a huge breach in security. Let's always remember to rely on our training – eyes-on/ears-on supervision, as well as LAMOD and SCM. We are well trained, and if we perform as we were trained, we will continue to meet our mission. All of you are doing a great job with our young people - keep up the good work. Always remember eyes-on/ears-on supervision. You are the key to our success. The strength of our safety and security has always been about our staff. No fence will ever take the place of excellent supervision. Take care of the little things –little things unattended become big things.

With that, I'll close for now, with my heartfelt thanks to every member of the OJJ team, in every office and facility, for all you do every day to take care of our young people, and to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

"Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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