

Only 2,182 days until the big 4-0, but who's counting

Birthdays are special. I celebrated my own birthday last week—another year older and another year wiser (maybe); big #34.

It is important to make the biggest day in one's life fun and memorable. I don't usually love celebrating my own, but more so of loved ones around me.

However, I *do* have my own share of favorite birthday memories.

A lucky kiddo, my January 18th birthday has often fallen on a three-day weekend which celebrates Martin Luther King, Jr. (actually, January 15 was also my Grandpa's date of birth, so it's a special day all the way around.)

My 6th birthday was celebrated in school at Summersville Elementary. My mom sent homemade cupcakes with little blocks of a Hershey's bar on each one. She also sent me a stuffed animal, a gray kitten, attached to a helium balloon sporting my absolute favorite—Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (don't judge—Michelangelo was [is] the coolest). My excitement was



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Record-Herald Staff

ruined when a bratty little boy, whom I will not name, popped the balloon with his jumbo red pencil (remember those?). That was the first time I can recall seeing red and wanting to punch a boy in the face (definitely not the last time).

I will likely never forgive him. However, I think he is in jail now...and no doubt for a more serious offense than my trivial helium balloon. Karma.

Someone shared a photo of the memorable 1994 snowstorm on Facebook last Monday.

The storm included freezing rain, record snow AND cold temps... and it wreaked complete and utter havoc on my 7th birthday party.

I'm still not over that.

I had big 7-year-old party plans; plans that ended with what seemed like an equal amount of snow AND cupcakes, all to myself.

Four years ago, thanks to Facebook Memories, I was shown a glimpse of my sweet girl singing a 2-year-old's rendition of "Happy Birthday," complete with something about "tic-tac-toe" and "America" thrown in, from the top of the ottoman.

And three years ago, my kiddos (then 3 & 7) sweet-talked me into taking them for ice cream. When we arrived at Dairy Queen, they had a certificate from Grandma for an ice cream cake, which they excitedly chose, and had the DQ employee write, "Happy Birthday Momma!" They were so pleased with themselves and I will remember those precious, satisfied smiles for the rest of my life.

Usually, my birthday weekend is spent at the Galt House with my Fair Board family at the Kentucky Association of Fairs and Horse Show Convention, celebrating big. Two years ago I was treated to an overly priced meal at a fancy restaurant [I prefer simple], and celebrated with some of

my favorite people in downtown Louisville late into the night. (If you've never been out with Mel and Crickett Smith, Donna Horton, etc., well, it's memorable!)

Covid canceled the convention for this year, of course, but all is well and the weekend was lowkey and wonderful.

Instead, the weekend prior, I was taken to my favorite restaurant in Lexington and treated to my all-time favorite meal with great friends.

On the Monday of my actual birthday, before heading to work (no holiday for me!), I was greeted with the sweetest treats from my [growing-way-too-fast] babies.

Cayden had left me a handmade card in front of my coffee-maker. The red polka-dotted scrapbook paper caught my eye pretty quickly, "Happy Birthday Momma." And inside, my sweet boy had taped a \$5 bill and drew me a cake with, "Happy 34th Birthday!"

Tears. And the little girl who is always a bit 'extra,' was not to be outdone.

A dough-molded glittery unicorn greeted me surrounded by Hershey's kisses, a handmade envelope with a letter she'd been working on since Dec. 29 (it was dated), cut-out snowflakes and a card complete with a colorful cake and "*exactly 34 candles because that's a WHOLE LOT of candles to draw!*"

The notes and cards continued throughout the day, from my windshield to my desk. I received countless texts, phone calls, emails and wishes on social media. My family and friends took it upon themselves to post old photos and other fun and sweet reminders for the occasion. I received all kinds of treats and flowers and other birthday sentiments.

I celebrated with my sweet family and of course, my husband and kiddos made me the best chocolate cake ever... complete with a homemade icing to die for.

I'm a lucky gal and

this year will definitely go down as one of my favorite birthdays—my precious kiddos made sure it was special.

I often wonder if someone notices if I've missed their birthday. I'm horrible at sending birthday greetings myself—unless it is special enough to be written on my never-looked-at calendar. Ha. Nevertheless, birthdays are indeed important. If I've missed your special day, I'm truly sorry...

Happy [early/late] Birthday!

And I can assure you, if you have sent a wish my way—a message a year ago or a card 3 years ago—it's appreciated.

After the year we have all had, I think I can speak for most when I say, *Birthdays are special.*

To year #34: I hope you're my favorite year yet... and please, **PLEASE** let the next 2,182 days go by super slow; 40 doesn't sound appealing at **ALL!**

First hand: Emotional Effects of COVID

"You tested positive for COVID-19; I'm sure you're not surprised," the health-care worker gently told me as she handed me the test results.

I had registered a temperature the night before, preceded by a cough and respiratory irritation. "Maybe it's just my yearly sinus infection," I told Lori.

I was wrong.

Getting into my car with the test results, I thought about the few people with whom I had interacted for the past several days. I immediately had a sense of responsibility for them. And that invited feelings of anxiety and guilt.

The first thing I did was call my wife and apologize. "Why are you apologizing?" she asked. "You're the one with COVID."

I immediately countered with, "But what if I have given it to you?"

Then there was a co-worker I thought I might have possibly exposed.

Part of the problem is not knowing the effects this infection has for ourselves or others. In addition to the immediate threat it poses, survivors face unknowns.

Based on current es-



David Whitlock

Columnist

timates, about 10% of Covid-19 patients develop lasting symptoms, one of the most common being a condition strikingly similar to chronic fatigue syndrome. Dr. Anthony Fauci said back in July: "They just don't get back to normal energy or normal feeling of good health."

Other long-term effects may include headaches, brain fog, sleep problems, a racing heart, joint and muscle pain, and fatigue. Some also experience a relapse of fever, muscle pain, and exhaustion, known as "post-exertional malaise," if they exercise beyond their capabilities.

A heart condition called myocarditis has also been linked to COVID. It leads to inflammation of the heart muscle, which can affect its ability to pump and may have been the cause of Keyontae Johnson's physical collapse, just 21 years old, who fell face down on the basketball court, unconscious, back in mid-December 2020.

"What if I exposed someone? What if they not only get sick now

but have to live with even a few of those long-term effects?" I thought.

And though my symptoms have been comparatively mild, what about these unknowns. What if...

As I let my mind hover over all those scenarios, feelings of anxiety and guilt multiplied, occupying way too much space in my mind.

Everything I was concerned about began with the word "if." I know the rule: about 85% of the things we worry about don't happen. I can "if" myself into a room occupied with fear and anxiety. So, I had to make a choice: drop the "ifs" immediately. Then leave them with the Lord.

Taking action can help avoid the perception of being a victim. I stay upstairs while my wife stays downstairs. It's inconvenient; it's not fun; I miss her. But I am protecting her.

Admitting our feelings to another person is beneficial, too. Some find writing their emotions out to be helpful. It works for me. As Christine Carter said of fear: "Name it to tame it. Instead of denying that you're afraid, look fear in the face. Give it a name."

My feelings of guilt and anxiety may be COVID induced, but I must still own them, and therefore address them, acknowledging them for what they are: perceived threats to the well-being of those I love or to myself. Protecting ourselves and those we care about is a natural instinctual response to danger, a built-in protective mechanism that nonetheless can subtly transform into a host of emotional maladies, like fear and anxiety.

Many of you have tested positive for COVID. Others live close to someone who has contracted it. I want to invite you to name your fear, guilt, or remorse with me. Writing it out can help. Try it, then send me your thoughts to my email address, drdavid@davidwhitlock.org. I'll read it, keeping it confidential, of course, and then I'll do my best to respond to you personally.

For all of you who have tested positive, I'm hoping and praying that your recovery will be swift and that you will not experience any long-term effects from COVID; for those who haven't: may you remain COVID free.

And may God use the vaccine to halt this horrible pandemic.

Crossword Puzzle Answers

R	E	A	P				F	R	G			R	A	H	
A	R	I	E	L			L	A	R			R	A	B	I
D	A	N	A	E			O	V	A			A	C	E	S
	S	U	S	U	S		W	I	N			G	E	L	S
					A	D	E	N	O	M		A	S		
P	R	E	M	A	T	U	R	E	L	Y					
R	E	T	I	R	E	D		S	A	O					
E	V	A	D	E							P	A	S	C	H
					N	A	M		F	A	I	L	U	R	E
					A	B	O	M	I	N	A	T	I	O	N
			R	E	S	O	N	A	N	T					
M	O	A	B			L	O	G			A	A	H	E	D
E	L	B	A			I	C	Y			A	O	T	U	S
N	E	B	N			S	L	A			R	A	C	K	S
D	A	I				H	E	R				R	H	E	E

Crossword puzzle found on page 9A

Send a Get Well Card!

Greensburg
Jane Todd
Crawford Hospital
202 Milby St.
Greensburg, KY 42743

Green Hill
213 Industrial Drive
Greensburg, KY 42743

Columbia
Westlake Reg. Hospital
901 Westlake Dr.
Columbia, KY 42728

Elizabethtown
Hardin Mem. Hospital
North Dixie Ave.
Elizabethtown, KY 42701

Campbellsville
Taylor Regional
Hospital
1700 Old Leb. Rd.
Campbellsville, KY 42718
(270)465-3561

C-ville Nursing & Rehab
1980 Old Gburg Rd.,
Campbellsville, KY 42718

Grandview
640 Water Tower By.
Campbellsville, KY 42718



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THURS., FEB. 18 @ 3:37 PM EST

LOCATION: Hart Co., KY. Magnolia Community — From Magnolia, take US 31E South, Approx. 1.9 miles to the intersection of Hammonsville School House Road & US 31E — turn right into Hammonsville School House Road and go 0.9 miles to property — **SIGNS POSTED - NOTE:** Sale will be held at The Nest Venue, 195 Lee Oak Dr. Hodgenville, KY. 42748. (Right off Lincoln Parkway)

REASON FOR SALE: By order of the Honorable Judge Joan A. Lloyd — United States Bankruptcy Court—Western District of Kentucky, Case #19-11177-JAL, David C. Owen and Mary A. Owen, Debtors in Possession, have commissioned Harned Auctioneers to sell the following described property under the hammer!! **REAL ESTATE:** See Our Website For Complete Details. (www.billyfrankharned.com) **TERMS:** 20% down day of sale in the form of cash, cashier's check, or personal check with current bank letter of credit addressed to Harned Auctioneers, LLC. -Balance on or before 60 days w/ delivery of deed. A 10% Buyers Premium will be added to all winning bids. **TAXES:** Pro-rated to scheduled closing date. **POSSESSION:** w/deed. **OWNERS:** David C & Mary A Owen, Debtor's in Possession. **In an abundance of caution, the CDC protocol for the COVID 19 virus, will be followed throughout this auction. Inspections: Wednesday Feb 3 & Saturday Feb 13—2 to 4 pm EST**

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