



I'm convinced most hunters and fishermen never contemplate the outdoor world they take pleasure in. I know in my own life, without a concerted effort, I only enjoy creation without ever giving it much deep thought. I've especially noticed this truth when I speak to hunters and fishermen. It seems their eyes light up when they realize nature speaks very loudly about some things that really matter. And that sometimes we really do not see the forest, for the trees. We would be very shallow people if we only saw nature as another avenue for our personal

pleasure. The immensity of creation demands we question it. It demands we understand how our sport only touches the hem of its real value. Let's face it; we only play on the fringes of all that is out there. It is enormous. And the more we look, the more we discover. We have learned in recent years that our own galaxy is only one of about 3000 visible galaxies. And it is estimated that there are billions that are yet unseen. To put this in perspective; our Milky Way is estimated to be about 100,000 light years from one end to the other. And light travels at 186,000 miles per

second. Now multiply that by billions of galaxies.

And then there's me and you.....

In the scope of the vastness of the universe, we are less than insignificant. In import, we have no bearing on anything. We are not even a speck on the map. We do not deserve mention. If we are only an evolutionary blip, then what matters? Or who matters? Or are we all just matter? But what happens when we add God to matter? It's like adding yeast to flour. It makes it rise. It gives it fullness and texture and taste. The universe, without God, is meaningless and thus so is the actions of its inhabitants. All that we see and enjoy in nature is also meaningless without God. That is why it is so important for those of us who believe in God and who love to hunt and fish; to look more deeply into the God-made things around us, and realize they are speaking to us each day, about the nature and goodness of God.

gary@outdoortruths.org

Expanded testing part of Biden administration school plans

News Release

AP - Pushing forward with its plan to reopen schools this spring, the Biden administration is expanding coronavirus testing for teachers, staff and students and convening a summit for educators to share "best practices" for returning kids to the classroom.

"The time is now, and schools must act immediately to get students safely back into school buildings," Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said Wednesday.

President Joe Biden, who was inaugurated on Jan. 20, has pledged to have most elementary and middle schools open to instruction by the end of his first 100 days in office. The administration has been promoting the \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill recently passed by Congress as a way to accomplish that. As part of that effort, first lady Jill Biden visited a school in New Hampshire on Wednesday.

The states will share \$122 billion for K-12 schools, with allocations ranging from \$285 million for Vermont schools to \$15 billion for California, according to the Education Department.

The money can be used to reduce class sizes and modify classrooms to enhance social distancing, install ventilation systems and purchase personal protective equipment. It also can pay for more nurses, counselors and janitors, and summer school.

Also, the Department of Health and Human Services announced \$10 billion for states to support school COVID-19 testing programs.

Most public schools haven't been able to afford the robust testing seen as critical to reopening safely, said Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers.

"With this investment, help truly is on the way to aid school systems in implementing a testing system that will help keep students, educators and staff safe inside school buildings," she said in a statement.

Cardona said a summit scheduled for next Wednesday will give education leaders, teachers and students an opportunity to share their experiences in reopening schools. The Education Department said first lady Jill Biden will deliver opening remarks. Dr. Rochelle Walensky, head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, also will speak.

"We are holding this summit with the goal of sharing best practices and connecting leaders, educators and students from across this country who are navigating this challenge together and finding creative solutions to support our students and bring them back to in-person learning," Cardona said.

Jill Biden promoted the relief bill and highlighted reopening strategies during a visit to the Christa McAuliffe School in Concord, New Hampshire, attended by one of the Biden grandchildren. The first lady watched a student perform a series of exercises meant to improve emotional well-being and she chatted with students about

distance learning.

"I think it's really hard to learn on Zoom. Don't you? I think it's really hard," she said.

On a call with reporters, Cardona said he expects schools will fully open in the fall if vaccinations continue as expected, and with guidance from health authorities.

"What does normal look like? I wish I had a crystal ball. We don't know," he said. "What we do know is that this spring we're wanting to see schools reopen using the mitigation strategies and giving students an opportunity for that in-person learning."

School leaders see the flow of new money as a major factor, along with vaccines for teachers, in getting schools open and keeping them open, said Dan Domenech, executive director of a school administrators' group.

"There are a lot of districts that were desperately hoping that this would happen to prevent them from going into bankruptcy at the end of the year, which school districts are not allowed to do. They have had to borrow in order to supplement their budgets with dollars that they did not have," Domenech said.

Schools need money to fill holes blown in their budgets by unanticipated expenses such as the laptops and internet hot spots purchased for remote students, and ventilation systems, PPE and cleaning and distancing protocols for students who have returned to classrooms.

Next come the expenses to get students back on track

Health officials issue updated guidance for faith-based gatherings and worship services

News Release

JACKSON, Miss. — The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) has now issued updated guidance on safer faith-based gatherings and worship services.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the vulnerable, the safest options continue to be virtual or outdoor services.

The MSDH recommends that everyone 16 and older be vaccinated against COVID-19, even if the individual has been previously infected with COVID-19.

For those meeting indoors, MSDH recommends the following guidelines:

1) Everyone 65 years of age or older should be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 prior to attending in-person worship services (full vaccination is considered 2 weeks after the second dose of a two-dose vac-

cine, or 2 weeks after receiving a single-dose vaccine).

2) Anyone 16 or older with high-risk medical conditions should be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 prior to attending in-person worship services (two weeks after completing vaccination).

3) Indoor safety guidance:
a. All congregants should wear a face mask at all times during in-person services.

b. All congregants should maintain six feet of separation from persons outside of their household. Household members may sit together.

c. Congregants should not gather in close groups while entering or exiting the building.

d. Congregants should use hand sanitizer prior to or upon entry of the building.

e. Singing is a high-risk activity that can quickly spread viral particles. It is preferable to not

have choirs; however, if choirs are performing, they should be small in number, masked, and separated by six feet.

f. Those in classroom settings such as Sunday school or study groups should maintain six feet of separation and wear a mask at all times.

g. As appropriate, alternatives to shared cups for communion should be pursued.

h. The use of hymn books or prayer books is acceptable so long as congregants practice proper hand hygiene upon entering.

4) Additional procedures to protect congregants are encouraged based on local congregation leadership decisions.

Happy Birthday

In Loving Memory

of Our Mother

Viola McClellan Robinson



April 2, 1923 - June 5, 2003

Gone But

Not Forgotten

Your Children

& Grandchildren

Durant P.D.'s Amnesty Period

The Durant Police Department's amnesty period is in effect. The last day to take advantage of this will be April 15th, 2021. You are encouraged to come and pay outstanding fines in full before the deadline to avoid additional penalties and warrants.

CASH PLUS TITLE PLUS

205 Tchula St., Lexington, MS
(across from Double Quick)
662-834-9045

**Payday Loans up to \$400.00
Title Loans up to \$2,500.00**

**WE DO 30 DAY LOANS!!!
NO Credit Check**

Refer a friend, earn a free \$20.00!