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## COVID-19—there is a silver lining



**THESE ARE UNSETTLING TIMES,** and the last thing we need is one more reason to worry. For this reason, I thought I would use this month's column to point out some silver linings in our current dark cloud.

What are some positive things that we can focus on

right now?

For one, I think we have a newfound appreciation for things we have taken for granted.

Putting a boat in the water or heading to the beach was a nice way to spend a day before, but when we lose that ability for a little while, it really makes you realize what a wonderful luxury that is. If you are like me, when you got a chance to enjoy the newly reopened boat ramps and beach accesses, you took a moment to just soak in the environment and say, "Thank you!"

What about the grocery stores? As I'm writing this, you still must get to the store pretty early if you want to pick up some essentials (like toilet paper!). It's inconvenient, sure, but the fact that we take for granted that those essentials should always be readily available should make us all realize what a wonderful country we live in.

These temporary shortages we have dealt with over the last few months are normal life for citizens in many other countries.

How about a hug? Humans are social creatures. Most of us like to shake hands, pat someone on the back, and hug. When everyone needs to start remaining six feet away from everyone who is not

part of your household, it makes you appreciate a hug from a loved one a whole lot more.

I don't know about you, but I appreciate fresh air a lot more than I did before this virus. From everything we see, being outside—in the sun, where you can spread out—is the best thing for you. Never have your mother's words, "Go outside and get some fresh air!" meant so much.

One real bright point for me is the time I have been able to spend with my wife and kids.

All my normal business travel has come to a halt. My children—teenagers who are normally each playing two sports a year—now have no games, no practices, and no evening homework (since they did all of their work during the day). My wife and

I am cooking a lot more at the house. We all play cards together, we play volleyball together, and, at least once every weekend, we cook over a little fire pit and listen to music most of the night in our yard together. We take turns controlling the music, and we talk a lot.

In a few short years, my wife and I will be empty-nesters, and I know we will look back on this time with fondness.

Whatever your situation, let's all try to focus on the bright spots. I hope you have a wonderful month.

**ROBERT G. ARDIS III**

President and Chief Executive Officer