

Another new month began today, and anyone who believed Trump's blather about the end of the coronavirus pandemic—a notion the President touted week after week, month after month—should finally realize that November, just beginning, will very likely be the most deadly month for this country so far. Usually, we humans tend to believe in new starts, that each month, season, or year will bring something better.

That has not happened. So, what is a good plan for this month ahead, given that we can't just think: "Well, everything will be back to normal in no time."?

Health professionals have continued to tell us something that nobody wants to believe, that the coronavirus that causes Covid 19 is not nearly done with us. Just because we wish to have nothing more to do with it, it doesn't care.

It seems to me that those of us who have the option of staying very isolated from other people, and who are prepared for the long haul, should do just that, not only to protect ourselves, but also to lessen the impact on the health care personnel and facilities. If we live carefully and mindfully, those limited resources will be available for those who don't have that choice.

It is not just that we do not wish to expose ourselves to this virus in hopes of not becoming ill that we stay home and limit as much as possible contact with the greater world. It is also the idea that medical treatment, nurses and doctors, and essential workers (people like delivery folks and grocery store employees, NOT the V.P. of the United States!) are not an infinite source. We need to conserve our health care system and the people who make it work. And the workers who bring us deliveries, or who work in stores where people buy their food—these folks would be less vulnerable if we thought more about others than about our own convenience and our own petulant wishes for a more social life.

And, to be sure, a lot of Americans are doing just that. We know that our location and situation are conducive to living simply and away from other people. With an open world around us, we usually do not see another person all day long. But, this does not keep us from the cares and knowledge of the world. We are so much more fortunate than folks were a few generations back when it comes to communication. Telephones, internet services, and the older, reliable method of contact—personal letters—give us great flexibility in maintaining friendships, doing business, and learning.

So, what does November look like here on Coe Creek? Like most months, it will be filled with routine tasks, projects, books, letters, and ideas. There is no better time to explore a new activity than in the dark month of November. I have a weaving project that I can wrap up in a few weeks, a writing assignment that needs completion soon, regular baking and food preparation plus the beginning of holiday baking. There are books to read and re-read. And there are end-of-the-year cards and letters to begin. We will stay at home except for the most necessary outings, we will wear masks when we are in the vicinity of other people, we will socially distance, too, in those situations, and we will be thankful for the solitary lifestyle we have chosen, a

way of living that makes this pandemic—so devastating on a national and international scale—so much like regular life here at home.