

# The Bandera PROPHECY

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Surviving the Coronapocalypse

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The Bandera Prophet

The hush has settled over our community like a soundless, white descending fog, the same blanket of isolation that cloaks our country, and many others. Fiction becomes fact as the core storyline of an apocalyptic film reaches into reality and grabs hold with tentacles. The difference is people need not fear the contagion of a zombie's bite, but rather the breath of their neighbor, or a friend's touch, lest they catch the virus that seems to replicate faster than a wet gremlin fed after midnight. COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) is a disease caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2. Ground zero seems to be in Wuhan, China, and the disease has gone global. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on Jan. 30. It was categorized a pandemic on March 11; and on March 13, the U.S. President declared a national emergency.

The latest count of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the U.S. is 4,226 - of those, 229 are travel-related, 245 are from close contact and 3,752 are under investigation; 75 Americans have died.

Worldwide, 179,112 cases are confirmed. Of those, 7,426 people have died, according to the WHO. According to Johns Hopkins University, 81,000 cases are in China; a notable point is of those, 77,300 people have recovered.

As of March 17, the Texas Department of State Health Services reported 64 confirmed cases and one death in the Lone Star State. Three of those cases are in Bexar County. Experts have speculated that more cases may be present in Texas, however due to lack of testing how many remains

unknown. Testing is increasing, and thus far 1,268 tests have been conducted statewide; the results of many are pending.

In Bandera, schools, daycares and community sites such as the libraries, Bandera Sports Complex and the Silver Sage have temporarily shut their doors or limited hours. Some restaurants have decreased their hours and limited menus due to supply problems, others have closed. Lowes and other local stores are struggling to keep up with demand on numerous items, namely paper products such as paper towels and toilet paper, as well as disinfecting items like Lysol and bleach. Management has put a limit per customer on these items when they are in stock, in an effort to curtail hoarding and stockpiling.

The most recent event cancelled locally is the Carson & Barnes Circus, which was scheduled for Friday, March 20. Sponsored by the Optimist Club of Bandera, the show will be rescheduled for some time between September and November, according to Robert Wayne Pike.

Still on as of Tuesday is the Thunder in the Hills biker rally, set to take place March 26-29 at Mansfield Park. Biker rally owner Bill Taber said pre-registration stands at 850, about 150 people less than last year. He said participants are from all over the country, but mostly from Texas.

In response to the government's advice to stay away from groups larger than 10, Taber said "that's a suggestion, not an order."

Taber said he has ordered port-a-potties with sinks inside and outside and gallons of hand sanitizer. He said as long as county commissioners don't cancel the event, the rally will proceed.

"As of March 17, we have no cases of CoViD-19 in Bandera County," Emergency Management Services posted on Facebook. "We are still recommending washing your hands, sneezing into your sleeve or tissue, stay at home if you are sick and social distancing."

A panel of health experts on Monday in Medina discussed COVID-19. Dr. Scott Hopkins clarified that Coronavirus is an old virus that is transmitted person-to-person, and he speculated 15 to 25 percent of people are asymptomatic.

"Symptoms include fever, dry cough, body aches and fatigue. More serious cases can include shortness of breath," Hopkins said, adding

physicians are narrowing down the incubation period, which appears to be anything from two to 14 days, with an average of five days. “Not everyone who is exposed and even has the virus reproducing in their body has symptoms.”

Hopkins said nasal congestion, nausea and diarrhea are not associated with this disease. Further, he said this virus is very infectious, “more so than flu and the potential for bad outcome is greater...it does its worst work on your lungs.”

Of confirmed cases, he said 80.9 percent are mild; 13.8 percent are severe and require hospitalization; and 4.7 percent are critical needing intensive care.

“There’s no question that this illness is more severe than the common flu,” Hopkins said.

People most at risk are over 60 years, “but that’s dependent on whether you’re a young 60 or older 60,” Hopkins said. In China, hypertension seemed to be a high risk factor, but he said hypertension is not as vigorously treated in China as it is in the U.S.

If infected, Dr. Debbie Hopkins advised staying home, having a working thermometer, keeping the equivalent of Tylenol and Motrin on hand, and hydrating until urine is light yellow. She said to call medical personnel if symptoms seem to worsen or suddenly change, including shortness of breath and coughing up green sputum with high fever.

“Call your doctor with serious symptoms, but not routine ones,” she said. “There is no COVID treatment, but secondary bacterial pneumonias can be treated, as well as worsening oxygen.”

Both doctors recommended boosting your immune system with adequate nutrition, sleep, exercise and fresh air. They both also said no smoking or vaping.

Addressing how long the pandemic may last, Hopkins said emergency workers are closing down the last temporary hospital in Wuhan, three months after the outbreak.

Referencing flattening the curve and social distancing, Hopkins said every epidemic has a typical curve that peaks as the number of people infected rises. The curve flattens after more people have been infected,

exposed or recovered. Comparing this 2020 pandemic to the 1918 Influenza Pandemic, Hopkins said the flu appeared at almost the same time in Philadelphia and St. Louis. Both cities had large citywide parades scheduled. St. Louis cancelled, Philadelphia did not. They basically did what we now call social distancing, Hopkins said, adding the curve was flattened and many fewer people in total in St. Louis came down with the disease.

“[But] social distancing doesn’t mean social isolation,” Dr. Debbie Hopkins said. “We’ve got to keep in touch with other. Let’s keep the social media positive. Let’s send cards and keep in touch with each other. Cards don’t transmit this virus.”

Online COVID-19 resources include [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov); [WHO.int](https://www.who.int); [hub.jhu.edu/novel-coronavirus-information](https://hub.jhu.edu/novel-coronavirus-information/); and [36READY.com](https://www.36ready.com)