



News column for week of August 17, 2020

Barbara Stockebrand
Southwind Extension District –Yates Center
Family and Consumer Sciences

A Snippet of the Future After the Pandemic

We're continuing our way through the Covid pandemic. Some of us are starting to venture out and 'testing the waters' so to speak.

We know that staying home is the safest for our physical health -- especially for our senior adults. As we look down the road to what the future holds beyond this pandemic, there are likely some additional precautions our older adults (and many others) may take – even after a vaccine becomes available.

The handshake may be gone forever. Increased handwashing, disinfecting, mask wearing will develop into standard protocol in many establishments. Businesses and restaurants will elevate their hygiene standards and will make that a key piece of their advertising strategy to their customers. Look for other forms of greeting while social distancing that you can use to show your enthusiasm in meeting someone.

Many have already moved into the more isolated economy where online shopping has become the norm. Some older adults are having to make a big jump into the realm of online shopping, not having used the internet a great deal in the past. Yet, shopping from the comforts of home enhances the safety reassurances older adults are seeking. Shopping from home and picking up curbside or by mail will bolster those assurances. Those exploring or wanting to brush up on internet safety precautions may want to visit <https://ksre.k-state.edu/tuesday/announcement/?id=47047> for internet usage tips.

Local small restaurants and businesses may find their way again as residents restrict their travel to the city to shop and eat. Those in their smaller communities will likely do more business locally since they know and trust the owners.

Travel will change. Overseas travel will decrease. More vehicles will be on the road for longer drives, which may have been by air in the past. When flights are required, extra seats may be purchased to assure a more comfortable social distancing experience. Future travel plans are most likely to focus

around visiting family. With more wheels being on the road, renting an RV may become an attractive alternative for multi-generational travel for families.

Travel to visit family may not be as necessary in the future as in the past. Families are more apt to move closer together. A trend may develop where older family members that were leaning toward assisted living situations may be moving in with family members. The trust level of family members looking over the care and contacts of loved ones versus strangers taking that charge, may override many of the usual deciding factors for external health care.

Looking at health care, telemedicine will continue to surge ahead as an appealing option to monitor personal health. My recent experience with telemedicine options has been refreshing when conducting follow-up with a specialist. While my situation was not serious, it was a nice opportunity to visit with the doctor from my own home and getting mine and his questions answered without having to travel out-of-town for a 5-minute conversation. Obviously those visits requiring procedures need to be face-to-face. However, telemed options can save time, not to mention allowing for safe social distancing.

Change is ever-present. As we age, change is often not as welcomed as it may have been when we were younger. However, pandemic has mandated many changes in how we go about our daily lives. Many of those changes will be here for the foreseeable future.