

Groceries are too high. The only things that don't seem to be skyrocketing upward are wages and our quantity of free time. Legendary songwriter James McMurtry wrote a song in the early 2000s called "We Can't Make It Here" that is something of a protest against everything wrong in America: economic globalization, hollowing out of rural and industrial communities, maltreatment of veterans, drug addiction, the struggles of single mothers, and more.

difficult place to be. Despair comes from a lot of places. Sometimes it is the chemical makeup of our own brain. Sometimes it comes from the external struggles in our life, like some of the things I just mentioned. Sometimes it is a combination of factors. Regardless, it is a bad place. It causes us to make rash and often unhealthy decisions. It leads to substance abuse and addiction, taking a coping outlet too far until it becomes a problem itself. At its worst, despair leads you to believe there is no solution but to exit the stage altogether.

Rural communities are too small to survive without our love for one another. Check on a friend. Send an acquaintance a random text or social media message to wish them a good day. Buy somebody a drink. Commit a random of kindness. People need to know they are loved.

Note to my readers: if you are struggling, please seek help. If you do not have a safe outlet for help, then call or text 988 or visit the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988lifeline.org. Trained counselors are available 24 hours per day to help.

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On This Day in Texas History September 20, 1967

On this day in 1967, Hurricane Beulah, the third largest hurricane of the twentieth century, struck South Texas. It battered the state for two days. The storm hit Brownsville with winds estimated at 140 miles an hour, moved northwest across South Texas to the vicinity of Alice, then turned southwest, crossed the Rio Grande between Zapata and Laredo, and finally blew itself out in Mexico. Tornadoes spawned by Beulah did extensive damage to South Texas and northeast Mexico. On September 28, President Johnson declared twenty-four counties in South Texas a disaster area. Official estimates in these counties set the number of dead at 18, the injured or sick at 9,000, and the number of homes destroyed or heavily damaged at 3,000. Property damage was estimated at \$100 million, crop damage at \$50 million. Some 300,000 people were evacuated during the storm and subsequent flooding.

Dadgummit, friends. There are a whole lot of things in life that drag us down and make us feel like the weight of the world rests exactly right on top of our shoulders. If you are feeling that way, I see you. I am here for you. Sometimes, life can suck or feel way too hard. Those are acceptable feelings. But today, I ask you not to despair. Do not go down that dark path of despair and all that it might lead to. Reach out to someone. Ask for help if you can. The world is a better place because you are in it, even if you don't feel like that. People love you and admire you, even if you do not realize it. You are loved and needed.

Be well, friends. Love one another. Love yourself, too. It is hard, nay, impossible to love others in a difficult world if you do not love yourself. Life is hard and the world can be a mean and ugly place. We need to uplift one another at every chance.

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Special Government Section
Coke County Courthouse - Robert Lee
Coke County covers 928 square miles on the Edwards Plateau in west central Texas. The county was founded in 1856 and named for Richard Coke, the 13th governor of Texas. As of the 2010 census, its population was 1,320.

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Year in Review Issue
The Observer/Enterprise... the year... the year... the year...

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Confirmed Cases of Covid-19 in Texas
217 of 254 Counties

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