

Chatham News + Record

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'UNPRECEDENTED SITUATION'

COVID-19 presenting a major challenge for Chatham restaurants

BY ZACHARY HORNER
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Greg Lewis was rather blunt about what the spread of COVID-19, the novel coronavirus, and government orders to close dine-in options at restaurants across North Carolina has meant for his business.

"It's an unprecedented situation for the world," said Lewis, the owner of Pittsboro Roadhouse. "This is something nobody's ever dealt with in our lifetime."

Some restaurants have laid off employees. Some have changed their operating hours and menus. And some are trying to serve those in need during what is admittedly a strange time.

Lewis and Pittsboro Roadhouse have done all three. He said he has laid off 34 employees as his operation has lost, by his count, "basically 100 percent of our catering business" and "70 percent of our restaur-



Staff photo by Zachary Horner

Like many restaurants, Pittsboro Roadhouse is adapting to the operational constraints of COVID-19 and is providing patrons take-out service from its location downtown Pittsboro.

ant business." Additionally, all scheduled music acts for the Roadhouse for the foreseeable future have been canceled.

"We're a venue, that's a big draw for us," Lewis said. "We had music Mondays, Fridays and Saturdays and they were big draws for us. We're doing what we can to have our hole not be as deep."

But the folks at the Roadhouse have pressed on. Lewis shifted the menu to all fam-

Who's doing what? Check out our restaurant list on

PAGE B3

ily-sized meals designed to serve four, available for order and pickup at the Roadhouse.

"I can't offer my full menu because I'm not doing the amount

See **RESTAURANTS**, page A12

SCHOOLS RESPOND TO COVID-19

Technology utilized, meals served as students stay away

BY ZACHARY HORNER
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Through the first week of public schools being closed because of the spread of COVID-19, the novel coronavirus, districts around North Carolina work to adjust to a nearly-unprecedented situation.

Now that the "break" from in-person teaching has been extended to May 15, teachers and administrators across Chatham County have been trying to find a rhythm. Teachers across the county have been teaching their students via webcam, email and other digital resources, and the district has set up an "at-home learning" site with pooled resources.

"They have been as hands on as possible," Valencia Toomer, principal of Horton

Middle School in Pittsboro, said about her staff.

Horton has nearly 450 students from 5th to 8th grade, all children who still need to learn and grow academically even though they're not at the campus just outside downtown Pittsboro. While some students and their families have been able to make it to campus to pick up instructional packets, some haven't.

So on Monday, administrators and other staff hopped on bus routes to deliver those packets to kids.

"We let them know that we're coming," Toomer said. "What we've noticed is that the students that were unable to pick up the packets are some of our most at-risk kids. So we need to meet kids where they are, in this case out of the building."

See **SCHOOLS**, page A6

SILER CITY'S ZANE MORGAN

Teen shagger becoming a sensation

BY RANDALL RIGSBEE
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — If you thought shagging, the regional swing dance originated some 70 years ago in the coastal Carolinas, was in danger of becoming a relic of the time in which it was born, you'll be encouraged to know the beach music dance staple still has ardent champions — even some young ones — nurturing it in the 21st century.

One of them is 13-year-old Zane Morgan.

"He is an amazing young man," said his grandfather, Bunkey Morgan, a local businessman and former Chatham County commissioner. While a grandfather's opinion may be a bit biased, he's also not wrong.

Though still in his early teens, Zane has, for several years, been an accomplished shagger, competing in dance events throughout the Southeastern United States — including showing off his shagging moves on a stage in Florida's Disney World — and as far away as Paris, France. He's also competed in his home state (he's a Chatham County native), South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia and California.

"He's won and placed in many dance contests," Morgan



Staff photo by David Bradley

Siler City's Zane Morgan has won multiple awards for his skill as a shag dancer. He's competed and performed around the Southeast and as far away as Paris. Now 13, he will be moving to the Junior II level of competition after he turns 15.

said.

Along the way, Zane has claimed a number of prizes and trophies for his skilled footwork, distinguishing himself on the shagging circuit.

"I'm decent, but there's always room for improvement," Zane modestly allowed of his dance skills, but the many prizes and trophies he's

earned back him up.

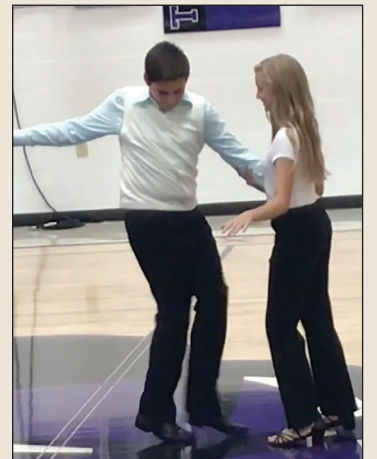
"I've won a couple of first places," Zane said. "And some second and third places."

His most cherished trophy, so far, is the third place finish he and his partner claimed in the 2019 National Shag Dance Championship, held last year in Myrtle Beach, the epicenter of shagging.

At 13, he's already a veteran dancer. He was first drawn to shagging at the age of 5.

Introduced to the dance by his older brother — 19-year-old Cody, a student at Appalachian State and a distinguished shagger in his own right — Zane immediately took to the activity.

"I tagged along with my



Submitted photo

In this screen grab from a video, Zane Morgan dances the shag with his partner Maci Walters. Some competitions pair partners picked at random, while other dance events allow a dancer to work with his or her specific partner. Competitors are judged on skill levels to win the trophy.

older brother, and that's how I got into it," Zane said.

The appeal was simple: it was fun.

"It's a lot of fun," he said. "I'm still enjoying it."

At the time the shagging bug first bit him, pop music acts

See **SHAG**, page A3

COVID-19 IMPACT GROWING

N.C. schools closed until May 15, new restrictions on businesses instituted

BY ZACHARY HORNER
News + Record Staff

RALEIGH — Gov. Roy Cooper issued an executive order Monday extending the closure of all K-12 public schools across the state to in-person instruction until May 15 as part of an extension of restrictions and guidance to try to slow the spread of COVID-19, the novel coronavirus.

"During the Great Depression, North Carolina's leaders made sure that, because education was vital to our state's future, all of our public schools stayed open in spite of tremendous funding challenges," Cooper said during a Monday press briefing. "In the spirit of that accomplishment, I am not ready to give up on this school year. However, we know that the effects of this pandemic will not subside any time soon."

An order from Cooper on March

14 had closed school facilities for two weeks, which was set to expire on Saturday. The extension includes Chatham County Schools' spring break, which was scheduled for April 6-13.

The news came alongside an announcement that the State Board of Education was seeking a one-year waiver from the U.S. Department of Education for all federal student testing and accountability requirements for the current school year. State Board of Education Vice Chairman Alan Duncan said education officials have been reaching out to state legislators about possibly seeking the same relief for state testing.

"We expect that (the federal waiver) will be granted in short order," Duncan said. "The State Board is in close contact with the General Assembly. We

See **CONCERN**, page A3



A Wilson Bros. truck with a cargo of chickens pulls up to the Mountaire Farms plant on East Third Street in Siler City.

Staff photo by David Bradley

Mountaire, food production roll on as shortage fears linger

BY CASEY MANN
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — As people make runs to grocery stores, clearing shelves, fears of a shortage of food prevails.

But in reality, workers in food and agriculture sector — that means agricultural production, food processing, distribution, retail and food service — are named as essential critical

infrastructure workers, according to guidance issued by the Dept. of Homeland Security on March 19.

In Siler City, Mountaire Farms' poultry processing plant is continuing to operate, producing 280,000 chickens per day, or 2.2 million pounds per week, according to Mark Reif, Mountaire's North Carolina community

See **MOUNTAIRE**, page A3

IN THE KNOW

'Caremongering Pittsboro' becoming a hub for help in Chatham. **PAGE A3**
Unemployment filings increasing dramatically with COVID-19. **PAGE A6**

Social Services, Council on Aging dealing with enforced changes. **PAGE A11**
In the mood for a pandemic-related movie? We've got your list. **PAGE B12**



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Events are subject to change based on closures due to coronavirus. Verify with organizers prior to events.

CLOSURES

- **Chatham County Council on Aging:** Both centers are closed at this time until further notice. If you need to pickup supplies, call the Siler City or Pittsboro location or check our website: chathamcoa.org.
- **Chatham County Historical Museum:** For the safety of visitors and volunteers, the Chatham County Historical Museum is closed until further notice. See our website: <https://chathamhistory.org>.
- **Chatham County Library:** Closed to the public at this time. Online resources are available at <https://www.chathamnc.org/government/departments-programs/library>.
- **State Employees Credit Union** branches statewide have temporarily transitioned to drive-thru only. Members who need to access safe deposit boxes, drop off tax return

information, or inquire about a loan should call the branch to schedule an appointment.

- **2020 Easter Eggstravaganza** - The Town of Siler City Department of Parks and Recreation has canceled the Eggstravaganza scheduled for Saturday, April 4, at the Bray Park Sports Complex.

- **The Second Bloom of Chatham Thrift Shop** will be closed for shopping and donations in March. We hope to re-open in April. We are in Pittsboro, on the Courthouse Circle, beside the Roadhouse. All proceeds support survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and promote community education in collaboration with Chatham County.

- The Chatham County Council on Aging - the **2020 Senior Games and SilverArts** competition will be postponed until further notice. We are working to reschedule all athletic and art events for a later date when restrictions have lifted. We will keep our participants, volunteers, venues and sponsors informed as more information about event dates, times and location that become available. We will also

keep you informed as we learn more from the North Carolina Senior Games about State Finals, traditionally held in the fall. We hope to have information to share with you in mid-April. Please check the Chatham County Senior Games website at <https://chathamcouncilonaging.org/activities/senior-games/> for updates. Once the new event calendar has been finalized, we will send an event confirmation email and letter, by mail to all parties.

THURSDAY

- **St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church** - We provide a healthy, appetizing meal at no cost to those who come to us hungry at noon on Thursdays. We provide a place of hospitality and fellowship for everyone. All are welcome, regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, religious preference, handicap, or income.

- **The Pittsboro Farmers Market** is open with seasonal items year-round from 3 to 6 p.m. on Thursdays. They are located at 287 East St., Pittsboro.

UPCOMING

- **UNC Hospice Spring**

Support program, Sharing Our Stories, will be held Wednesday, April 1 - May 20 in the sunroom of SECU Jim and Betsy Bryan Hospice Home of UNC, 100 Roundtree Way, Pittsboro. This grief support group is scheduled for eight consecutive Wednesdays to supply educational resources and mutual support to help participants explore their grief in a non-pressured environment. There is no fee, but registration is required. Contact Annie Ritter at 984-215-2650

- **Siler City Lions Club** will host a **Blood Mobile** from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 18 at the First United Methodist Church in Siler City.

ALSO HAPPENING

- **Chatham Habitat for Humanity** is seeking groups - corporate, school, neighborhood, etc. - to volunteer on their Siler City build sites. Build days are on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. For more information, visit chathamhabitat.org/volunteer, or email rachelh@chathamhabitat.org

- **Adult volunteers needed** at Chatham Hospital in Siler City, a 25-bed Critical Access Hospital located

in Siler City and part of the UNC Health Care System. All prospective volunteers must complete an on-line application, a criminal background check, an orientation and have documentation of required immunizations. To learn more go to: www.chathamhospital.org/ch/about-us/volunteer.

- **Volunteers needed** - Nonprofit agencies in Chatham seek teen volunteers to help with many projects. Teens can help at food pantries, in gardens, fundraising projects, office work, and care for animals. Chatham Connecting website lists many volunteer opportunities for youth. See where you are needed to help in the community: www.chathamconnecting.org.

- **Meals on Wheels drivers** are needed in Chatham County. Regular and substitute drivers are needed. We are looking for individuals or teams to deliver meals as a regular driver for our routes. Meals are delivered between 10:30 a.m. and 12 noon. Routes take about an hour. Substitutes will likely deliver 1 to 2 times per month. Contact Allison Andrews with Chatham Council

on Aging, phone: 919-542-4512, ext. 226. Allison. andrews@chathamcouncilonaging.org.

- **Foster and/or adoptive information** - Give children a safe place to grow. Interested in becoming a Foster and/or Adoptive parent. Call 642-6956 to learn more.

- **Alcoholics Anonymous** - North Carolina District 33, call the Help Line at 866-640-0180 for the meeting schedule for this area.

- **Motorcycle Association** - The Motorcycle Association for Chatham, Western Wake, Lee, Orange and Alamance counties meets in Pittsboro and is open to all riders. For information, call 919-392-3939 or visit www.chathamCBA.com.

- **Narcotics Anonymous** - For drug problems in the family, Narcotics Anonymous helps! Call 1-800-721-8225 for listing of local meetings!

- **Al-Anon meeting** - Pittsboro Serenity Seekers Al-Anon Family Group meets at 7 p.m. Mondays, at Chatham Community Church, in the lower level of Chatham Mill, Pittsboro.

For those at home, Chatham Libraries can still keep you connected



BY CASEY MANN
News + Record Staff

With Chatham County's public libraries closed and more residents working from home than ever, one might think accessing books from the libraries' catalogue would be impossible.

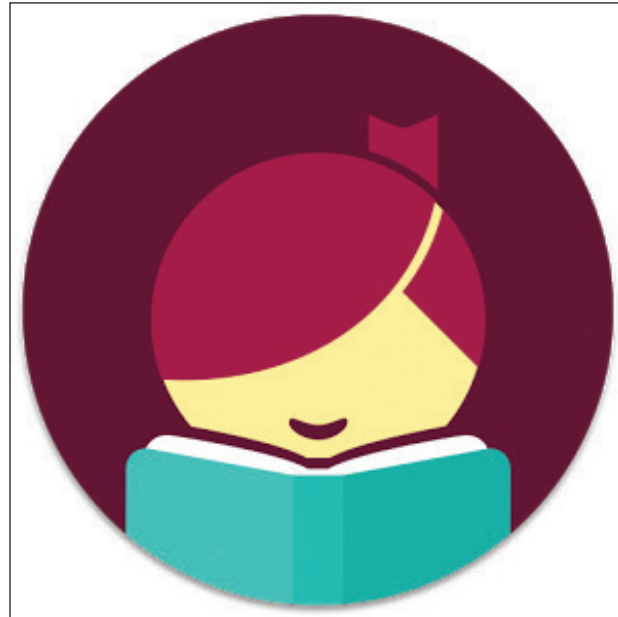
Not so. Library staff have been working to get resources online and ensure access for residents when many are living life increasingly from home, with just a Chatham County Library card, something you can now also get online.

Libby app

The Chatham County Libraries employ Libby, an application that works as an interface to the library's online repository. Libby users - whether through the mobile app or accessed through a web browser on a computer - allows library card holders to borrow e-books and digital audiobooks from the public library for free. Overdrive, the database that holds the library's collection of e-books and e-magazines, has simple dropdown menus to see what books and audiobooks are available for checkout.

Instructions how to download the application can be found on the Chatham County Library's website under the "Download e-books" tab. The database of available content is accessible by a desktop computer or laptop without downloading Libby app. But if you use a smartphone or an e-reader device, such as a Kindle, the Chatham County Library's website provides detailed instructions on loading the application.

Smartphone users should go to their application options on their phones and search "Libby." For e-reader devices and laptops, the instructions show how to access the "Overdrive" system. (Users may need to update the Adobe



software on their laptops or desktops to access the information.)

When downloading on a phone, a simple prompt will walk you through the process of accessing the materials. Most require a library card, but residents can now get a card online.

Getting a library card

Many of the digital and online learning resources are available without having a Chatham County library card. But if you need one, residents can now apply online for a library card by going to www.chathamnc.org/government/departments-programs/library. And if you've already applied for a card, but lost your number, you can call the Chatham Community Library at 919-545-8084 - the library is staffed despite being closed - and they will provide it to you.

All you need to get a Chatham County library card is to be at least 5 years old and live in Chatham, Alamance, Durham, Harnett, Lee, Moore, Orange, Randolph or Wake County. Also, anyone who works in Chatham County despite living outside the county can get a library card. Students in Chatham County Schools also have

access to the library's online accounts through their ChathamPASS program using the Power-School ID.

After submitting an application, library staff will contact you to issue you a library account number. Previously, this had been done in person. Once libraries reopen for public use, in-person access, those who applied online will be able to pick up a physical card with a valid photo ID in order to borrow on-site materials.

Other digital and online resources

The staff at the Chatham County Libraries have continued to work even as public access to the facilities has ceased. There are a wealth of resources, updated regularly, to provide the public with services. Some require a Chatham County library card while others are free and open to public access. These resources, which can be found on the Chatham County Library's website, include movies, arts and culture, reading and education sites. Sites for resources are updated regularly and available for use - some require a library card, while others do not.

Each of the libraries in Chatham - Wren

Library in Siler City, Chatham Community Library in Pittsboro and the Goldston Library - should have internet access for residents from their parking lots. But access to online materials doesn't stop with internet. Internet access should be labeled with "guest" and available for public use.

To follow updates on what the Chatham County Libraries are doing, follow their social media sites at: Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ChathamCommunityLibrary>, Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/chathamlibrary/>, and Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ccplib>. The Chatham County Library website is: <https://www.chathamnc.org/government/departments-programs/library>.

Casey Mann can be reached at CaseyMann@Chathamnr.com.

The Chatham PTA Thrift Shop would like to thank all of our loyal customers, employees and volunteers for your continued support as we navigate through this unusual time in our country. It has been a difficult decision, but for the health and safety of our employees, customers and volunteers we decided to close all three locations on Saturday, March 21 at 5:00pm until this pandemic subsides. As always, we appreciate your donations however during this time that the stores are closed we are asking you to please keep your donations at home until we are back to normal hours. Please DO NOT leave them outside of the store or drop boxes during this time!

Thank you for all your community support throughout the years and we look forward to being back to normal as soon as possible.

Chatham PTA Thrift Shop

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'Caremongering Pittsboro' becoming a hub for help

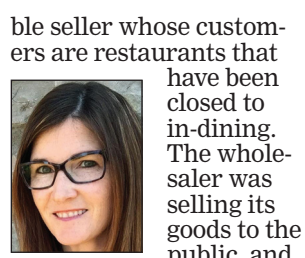
BY CASEY MANN
News + Record Staff

When Pittsboro residents and real estate agents Yvonne Beal and Lisa Skumpija started the Facebook group "Caremongering Pittsboro" last week, they did not realize how far it would reach.

Caremongering — a purposeful verbal antithesis to fearmongering, according to Beal — was created as a platform for "sharing and organizing community resources in response to Covid-19." And despite its name, Beal and Skumpija said the goal is for it to serve all of Chatham County, including Siler City, Pittsboro, Goldston and all surrounding areas.

For Beal, it all started with worry about the virus and its potential impact on Chatham County residents. Unable to sleep one night, and stressing about all the uncertainty of the world right now, Beal got on Facebook, where she noticed a caremongering movement that began in her native Canada.

It was called about the same time Skumpija saw a Facebook post about a Raleigh wholesale vegeta-



Beal

ble seller whose customers are restaurants that have been closed to in-dining. The wholesaler was selling its goods to the public, and Skumpija began

thinking about the local farmers who are in similar circumstances. The next day, Beal and Skumpija — who work together at Realty World — created the Facebook page in hopes of helping to connect local businesses, farms and residents who were struggling. Within the first hour, the page had 100 followers and in just over 24 hours, there were 1,000. As the page grew — there are more than 1,700 members now — so did its mission.

"It started with food and went to everything," Skumpija said. "We were concerned about kids who were at home they rely on schools for meals and how to connect with local food. Then came homeschooling ideas. And then there was the bread shop giving away excess bread connecting to a Siler

City daycare. And then it was pharmacy mobile services. It all came together in one avenue."

"We're not a 'for sale' site," Skumpija said.

"There's plenty of sites for that. We are about helping each other and helping local small businesses and farms survive. This is more of a neighborhood, community place."

It's also not a page for COVID-19 updates, news or other information; the pair urges residents to seek out reliable news sources for that type of information. Instead they want the page to be used for the "redistribution of resources in the case that stockpiling prevents people from accessing basics" as well as requests for aid or support. It has also become a hub for residents to organize to help in community efforts in some way.

For example, a local resident posted that they were immunosuppressed and needed a face mask to go to the doctor. Quickly, local residents

volunteered to give their spares and deliver on the person's front porch. It also includes homeschooling options, updates of food and supply availability from local stores, restaurants that are serving take-out and delivery and ways to support food banks. There is also a significant effort for those with the ability to make homemade masks for local hospitals.

"It's been unbelievable," Skumpija said. "It's been rewarding to see the community come together."

"I think it's been heartwarming," Beal said. "I'm not super-involved in the community though I love living and working here and all this community affords me. This is a big county, people are losing their jobs and this is a good way to bring people together. It's been great to see all the people willing to chip in and help each other."

Facebook users can visit the page by searching for "Caremongering Pittsboro."

Casey Mann can be reached at CaseyMann@Chathamnr.com.



Submitted photo

Lisa Skumpija and Yvonne Beal started the Facebook group Caremongering Pittsboro to help Chatham residents find resources during the COVID-19 epidemic.

MOUNTAIRE

Continued from page A1

relations manager. The company, Reif notes, "immediately created a Coronavirus Task Force to prepare," which includes leadership from every department. The group meetings regularly "to coordinate and communicate our response."

"As a critical part of our nation's food supply, we must be prepared for situations like this because families across our nation and around the world depend on us for food," Reif said. "We are proud of how our employees have rallied around this company and our mission. They are working long hours to make sure people have food on the table."

The Food and Drug Administration notes on its website there are "no nationwide shortages of food, although in some cases the inventory of certain

foods at your local grocery store might be temporarily low before stores can restock. Food production and manufacturing are widely dispersed throughout the United States and no widespread disruptions have been reported in the supply chain."

The FDA also notes that all food production facilities are required to follow "current good manufacturing practices" which include use of sanitizing practices and disinfectants. In addition, currently "there is no evidence of food or food packaging being associated with transmission of COVID-19."

Under normal circumstances, the Mountaire plant undergoes required cleaning and sanitation every night before starting operations every day. With the spread of COVID-19, the plant is expanding its cleaning practices and has introduced new policies to ensure production can continue, according to Reif. Mountaire has changed its travel policy, banning teams from all international travel and domestic travel

through airports for the next 30 days. And they are encouraging the use of technology for meetings to avoid groups having to get together to do business.

For workers on the production line, the company has installed additional sanitation stations and increased the frequency of deep cleanings of common areas at all facilities, especially restrooms and cafeterias.

"We've encouraged all our employees to stay home if they're sick, and we've adjusted our attendance policy, so they don't have to fear losing their jobs if they do so," Reif said. "We are working with high-risk employees and allowing them to work from home if their job allows."

Reif also noted that each plant has trained medical staff at its facilities and Health and Wellness Centers on site with doctors who are trained on how to recognize the signs of COVID-19 and actions to take to prevent the spread of the virus.

"We've been in communication with the State Health Departments and are following CDC guidelines in everything we do," Reif said. "We've increased how often our employees can purchase chicken at discounted prices, so they don't have to find empty shelves at the grocery store when they get off work. And we are working with our food vendors in our cafeterias so employees can take food home with them to their families."

While working to keep food production going, Reif notes that the company is continuing to look for other ways to serve the communities where they operate.

"We know our communities are in need, so we're also reaching out to help," Reif said. "We've been in touch with community groups, churches, food pantries and more to see where we can donate chicken to those in need."

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SHAG

Continued from page A1

like Beyonce and Rihanna ruled the airwaves and inspired folks in their own contemporary ways with their own contemporary rhythms to take

to dance floors, but Zane was drawn to a dance that moved instead to the coastal-influenced sounds of more venerable musical acts like the Chairmen of the Board and General Johnson and other purveyors of the "beach music" that inspired folks on the North and South

Carolina coast a few generations back to begin partnering up and moving together in the dance that came to be known as shagging.

Akin to the Jitterbug, and inspired by several popular African-American dances, shagging is a partner dance; and as dances go, shagging isn't very complicated, Zane said.

"It depends on the moves," he explained. "Some are harder than

others. But it's mostly in your legs."

While shagging doesn't necessarily require great athleticism, to excel at it — like one would with any undertaking — requires practice.

Zane has a regular dance partner — his friend Maci Walters, also 13, who lives in Trinity; they met at a regional shagging competition a few years ago — and the two get together routinely, usually at her home, to practice. Their practice schedule intensifies a week or two in advance of any upcoming dance events, but they practice together year-round.

It's a commitment, but it offers rewards, too.

"It teaches maturity," Zane said. "You have to show up for all the practices. You have to be committed to it."

Once the young man realized shagging was something he was serious about, Zane was tutored in the dance moves by professional instructors. "I went to private lessons," he said, "and I just kept at it."

Now, eight years after first recognizing shagging's allure, the Siler City teenager's interest in it isn't abating.

Just a couple of weeks ago, he competed in a shagging event in South Carolina, the unofficial epicenter of shagging. The Palmetto State made shagging its official dance in 1984. North Carolina, likewise, officially embraced shagging in 2005 as the official state popular dance. (Clogging was selected the same year as North Carolina's official folk dance.)

When he's not dancing, Shane is an "A" honors

student at Chatham Charter School in Siler City, where he is also a member of the school's tennis team, and a clarinetist with the school band. He's also a voracious reader and a pianist.

"Yes, I'm very proud of him," said his granddad.

Temporarily practicing social distancing in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic while his school is temporarily shuttered, Zane's dancing is understandably on hold. But it's not something he plans on giving up.

"I'm staying in shape, or trying to," the teenager said.

And once conditions allow, he said he's looking forward to getting back to the dance floor.

Randall Rigsbee can be reached at rigsbee@chathamnr.com.

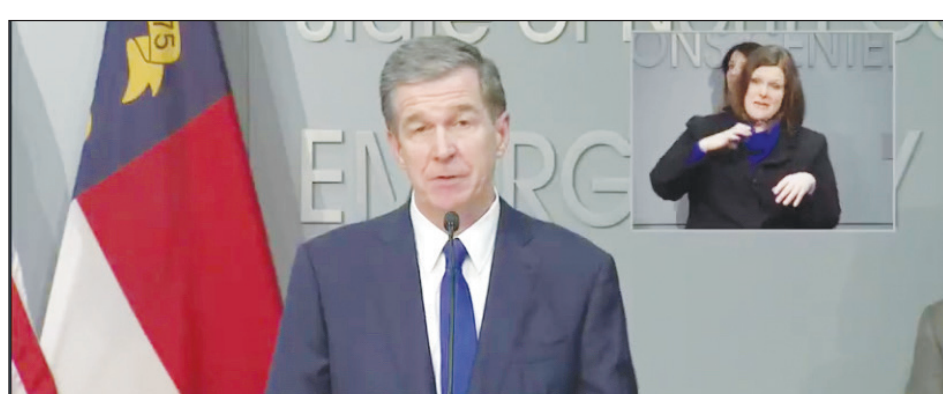
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Screengrab from Twitter

Gov. Roy Cooper speaks Monday afternoon during a press conference where he announced the closure of all K-12 public schools until May 15 due to COVID-19.

CONCERN

Continued from page A1

will continue to collaborate to address any policy and legal issues that arise during this time."

Cooper's order Monday also lowered the mandatory threshold of mass gatherings to no more than 50 people and mandated the closing of gyms, movie theaters, sweepstakes parlors, health clubs, hair and nail salons, barbershops and massage therapists, effective Wednesday. He added that at least 8,438

people have been tested, with 297 confirmed cases in more than 40 counties, and around 10,000 more tests "waiting to be run."

Mandy Cohen, the state's Secretary of Health and Human Services, said North Carolina has reached a point of "community transmission," meaning that not all cases have a known origin.

"This is the role testing should play in the first phase of an outbreak has helped us understand the virus," she said. "Confirmed community transmission signals that we need to move into the

next phase of our response."

Additionally, new guidelines from the CDC indicate that there were more people groups at risk, including people 65 and older, those with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma and people with severe obesity, and added that some studies have shown a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 among infants.

Reporter Zachary Horner can be reached at zhorner@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @ZachHornerCNR.

VIEWPOINTS

GUEST EDITORIAL | CHUCK FULLER

COVID-19: An opportunity for leadership

Without question, the United States of America and countries around the globe face tremendous pressure to withstand the seemingly inevitable economic threat posed by COVID-19.

Business leaders must ask themselves: Where do we, our company and the State of North Carolina stand, and what needs to happen going forward?

The fear across our state and nation is palpable. We live under uncertain government actions, disheartening media coverage and overwhelming financial difficulties — and that fear is understandable. According to an NPR/Marist poll conducted last Thursday and Friday, nearly one in five (18 percent) households already reported someone being laid off or having hours reduced because of the coronavirus outbreak, with women hit harder (21 percent) than men (16 percent), and people who earn less than \$50,000 hit harder (25

percent) than those earning \$50,000 or more (14 percent).

But amongst the dread of something going awry and the sense of being out of control, the opportunity for real leadership arises.

Monetary efforts to combat this pandemic are already on display, nationally and locally. Bank of America has pledged \$100 million for relief. Truist Financial Corp., the result of the BB&T/Sun Trust merger, has pledged \$25 million, and will be giving \$3 million to local United Way organizations. Facebook is giving employees an extra \$1,000 and plans to provide \$100 million in cash and advertising credits to small businesses. The City of Winston-Salem will be donating \$1 million to local nonprofits, and Carolina Panthers owner David Tepper has made a \$1 million donation straight to Charlotte-area hospitals.

Medical advancements are being made daily. A French

study found an anti-malarial and antibiotic combo that could reduce COVID-19 duration. Our local universities, Duke and UNC, are currently working on possible vaccines and cures that hold much promise, and others have announced progress on testing.

The energy on the ground to combat this pandemic is encouraging — a true display of faith and resiliency. The unfortunate reality, however, is that shutdowns across the country mean millions of small and mid-sized firms are under threat of closure. A Goldman Sachs survey found that 51 percent of small business owners say their business will only be able to continue to operate for 0-3 months.

There is a distinct balance between mandated action to reduce the spread of this virus and minimizing economic pain. Each decision made by officials carries implications far greater than perhaps understood.

Overreactions that restrict the hands of businesses looking to solve issues may only make the situation worse and prolong economic distress.

We stand with President Trump and Governor Cooper in their call to “flatten the curve” for a 15-day period. Afterwards, however, the shackles on businesses and our battle tested American resiliency must be released. Now is the time for strong collaboration between the public and private sector. Executive orders and policy must incorporate the valuable knowledge of the business community. As stated by James Freeman in the Wall Street Journal on Friday, “The magic of the markets and the can-do spirit of Americans can solve many problems if only we will liberate them.”

There is still hope among Americans — a majority approve of the White House’s management of this crisis, and a strong majority trust

what they hear from their state and local governments. That said, there is an urgent call for leadership during these truly trying times. Today is a new opportunity. Let each of us lead with the hopes for what is not yet visible. Let us rely on the friendships we cherish. Let us show the faith we have in each other and the resiliency of our great country, America.

We’re standing with each of you in this time.

Chuck Fuller is the president of The Results Company, the Raleigh-based consulting business he founded in 1992. Fuller has more than 30 years of experience in managing people and resources. The Results Company creates winning communications and outreach strategies for businesses and organizations at the local, state and federal levels. This column was originally written for an e-newsletter The Results Company produces for state business leaders.

Keep sight of the silver linings

Very suddenly, I felt it. And it felt something like...despair.

I’m not used to that. We were in the middle of watching the evening news — something I’m doing every night now, in addition to the many other ways I’m constantly keeping up with rapidly moving COVID-19 developments — when I relaxed my tense body and sunk deeper into the recliner, took a long breath and exhaled slowly, and felt throughout my being as I performed these physical

actions an overwhelming sense of hopelessness. I don’t think it was any one aspect of this overall horrible situation we’re all of us dealing with — no particular moment in the news coverage that night — that cemented this feeling. It was more likely the totality of everything, all the grim news piled on top of all the other grim news.

As I remained in this reclined state of what, to any casual observer, would be considered comfort, inside my resting body my mind was anything but settled and still.

It reeled with scenarios of how this pandemic might play out and with questions to which the only answers I could reasonably supply only increased my anxiety.

Anxious isn’t an adjective I’d normally use to describe myself.

But these aren’t normal times.

Not even close.

So, anxious I’ve been, at least a bit.

And at that moment on the couch, I felt depleted. I went to bed a few hours later, the feeling largely still present.

Anxiety can be can’t-get-out-of-bed paralyzing, but fortunately overnight my brain seemed to work things out.

The next morning — we’d set our clock for an early a.m. alarm to make a grocery run — and after coffee, I was back in git-r-done mode, or something closer to it, because that’s what we have to do.

Until we can’t, we will continue to do because, again, that’s what we have to do, even if we’re doing it while sheltered in place in this war that all of mankind wages against COVID-19.

Maybe it’s to keep that terrible feeling from recurring that I’ve been looking for silver linings.

Thankfully in my scanning the horizon, I’ve observed a few.

One is that in the span of only a few days, I reversed my wasteful habit of using too many paper towels. A month ago, a year ago, five years ago it would have been normal for me to routinely wash my hands and pull two paper towels off the rack, dry my hands, and throw the damp paper towel on the counter along with a pile of paper towels already used for the same purpose. Eventually, I would re-use them (to clean the counter, or wipe up a spill), but that doesn’t mean I wasn’t using too many paper towels too frequently.

Now, with a supply that is no longer easily replaced with a routine trip to the store, I’m using a mere fraction of the paper towels I once used to conserve.

It’s a personal silver lining that I’m being less wasteful.

I’ve read about aquatic life returning to the now-clear-water canals in Venice as tourism came to a halt in the midst of Italy’s overwhelming COVID-19 troubles.

A silver lining for our great Earth.

Social media, which I’ve grown increasingly less engaged with in the last few years, has a renewed meaning and purpose, keeping us connected as the very necessary practice of social distancing keeps us physically apart.

A silver lining that this gift of social media is giving better than ever now.

China, birthplace of the COVID-19 pandemic, is returning to normalcy as new cases of the virus slow.

A silver lining for us to see there is an end.

There are many silver linings if we look for them.

But silver lining means there’s still a cloud looming, and from here at this moment the cloud is still growing and there’s more darkness than silver.

No one promised us that life — with all its ups and downs, joys and pitfalls — would be easy, and right now it isn’t.

But there are silver linings and it’s important — vital, even — to keep them in our sights. The alternative, which is that sinking feeling I felt in my recliner the other night, isn’t a viable option.



Some lessons in life require getting all wet

Sunday night, I sat at my desk beside the window and listened to the rain.

Nice...and it sure beats \$80 an hour for a therapist.

I like rain. I like to hear it hitting the windows, to smell the air when it first starts, to feel it... except when I’m having a bad hair day or have just washed the car, which isn’t all that often.

When I was a child I wasn’t all that crazy about too much rain because it made the grass grow and mowing the yard was under my jurisdiction. Simply put, the more rain, the more the grass grew — and the more I had to cut it. Now that I’m trying to feed a few cows I like it because the more it rains, the more the grass grows and the more there is for the cattle to eat.

Funny how things change through the years, isn’t it?

The poets tell us we ought to run barefoot in the rain. That sounds like something that could hurt your feet, depending on where you frolic, as in the gravel driveway. But I think I get the point. We

So what do we do? We can’t turn back the clock to those thrilling days of yesteryear. And we can’t stop the world and get off. Dropping out is also not really an option. And now that a vicious virus threatens us all, there is a “new normal” to consider.

might do better, they’re saying, if we were a bit more spontaneous, would a bit less tightly. So what if your hair gets wet? Dry it when you come in.

Just don’t run around outside when the lightning is about.

Lately as I’ve become more conscious of my age and the fact I am not immortal — at least on this side of the Great Divide — I’ve wondered why it took this long for me to get this smart. Lest you think that last statement was too much ego, let me explain by saying what I mean is that finally I’ve learned some life lessons, things I think I would like to have known, say, about 47 years ago.

Of course, upon further reflection, I think the reality is I — and all of us — had to go through the learning experiences to gain the insight and wisdom and understanding. But still, I think it would have been nice. The old adage “We get too soon old and too late smart” fits more and

more.

So what do we do? We can’t turn back the clock to those thrilling days of yesteryear. And we can’t stop the world and get off. Dropping out is also not really an option. And now that a vicious virus threatens us all, there is a “new normal” to consider.

The answer, it seems to me, is multi-fold. First of all it behooves us to keep on trucking. And secondly, as we truck or run or whatever, to take those insights and bits of wisdom with us. And thirdly, as we go, resolve to do better, to take more risks (but not stupid ones like lying on a railroad track) — to love more deeply, to say one more kind word or do one more good deed.

And last, but certainly not least, to keep on working at it all by running — or at least jogging or even standing — in the rain.

What’s the forecast for the next few days?



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Each letter must contain the writer’s full name, address and daytime telephone number for verification. Letters should be no more than 400 words in length. Letters selected for publication may be edited and all letters become property of the Chatham News + Record.

To submit a letter: Mail it to the News + Record at P.O. Box 290, Siler City, N.C. 27344; or email to bhorner3@chathamnr.com; or drop by our office at 303 West Raleigh Street in Siler City.

VIEWPOINTS

GUEST COLUMN | ANDREW TAYLOR-TROUTMAN

One human body: a metaphor of healing

(For Drs. Sally Wood, Rosanne Jones, and Eli Tiller, three of my heroes.)

Words matter. This is especially true in a crisis. How we talk about the coronavirus impacts how we think and react to this pandemic.

I say we should avoid all language that evokes the metaphor of war.

I realize people often use this imagery in reference to disease — she battled cancer, he fought to the end. Certain people are courageous when facing their own mortality. I also believe that doctors, surgeons, nurses, and other healthcare workers are heroes in every sense of the word. They are “in the trenches” and “on the front lines.”

But the metaphor of war is problematic. It is violent. It evokes fear.

I do understand the urgency of our times and that, in some

cases, people in (so far) less-affected areas may treat such practices as social distancing with a cavalier attitude. Such naivete will cost lives. I understand that people evoke the war metaphor as a means to rally the troops and instill the deadly seriousness of this crisis.

But we can motivate people more positively and more effectively with a different metaphor.

The body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body (1 Cor. 12:12).

You may recognize this verse from the New Testament, but the metaphor is even older than the first millennium. Today, when we speak of the body politic, we are evoking the ancient Greek idea of citizenship. When we speak of anything that is “corporate,” we draw on the Latin root for “body.”

The metaphor for a group of

people as one body is found in a variety of world religions and indigenous cultures. The idea that we are all connected and reliant upon one another is trusted wisdom that has stood the test of time.

How, then, could this body metaphor change how we talk about the coronavirus?

If one member suffers, all suffer together with it (1 Cor 12:26).

Each person is aware of his or her own personal health, whether it is good or bad, and no one is immune to suffering. Not everyone is sick or hurt in the same ways, yet a person can relate to the experience of illness. During a national and global pandemic, we need to cultivate these powers of empathy.

My wife and I have three young children. In my nuclear family, I know that if one person suffers, then we all suffer

together. But the bodily and spiritual connections are not as readily apparent with people, say, in China or in Seattle or even in my own neighborhood. Despite all of our social networking technology, we Americans are increasingly isolated. Recently, poet Sherman Alexie diagnosed our culture:

Maybe the true pandemic is the loss Of a shared and common decency.

War is, at best, a necessary evil. “A shared and common decency” is one of the first casualties. Yet, if we conceptualize ourselves as part of the same body where another’s suffering is actually our own, then empathy can lead beyond mere decency to compassion — literally “suffering with” others. And compassion is a form of love.

The passages I have quoted from 1 Corinthians precede the

famous love poem in Chapter 13: Love is patient, love is kind... This “kind” of love, however, is not only familial or romantic. It is also sacrificial love, meaning that individuals care for others even at the expense of their own health. This is the true heroism of healthcare workers. An ancient rabbi went so far as to claim that there is no greater love (John 15:13).

For all of us, words matter. Rather than talking as though we are war with an invisible illness, we must inspire healing care for one another — the one human body in the one, shared world.

Andrew Taylor-Troutman is the pastor of Chapel in the Pines Presbyterian Church and author of *Gently Between the Words: Essays and Poems*. He is currently working from home with his wife and three children.

Pandemic tests our institutions

The COVID-19 outbreak has already taken lives, disrupted families and communities, and



JOHN HOOD
John Locke Foundation

inflicted significant damage on our economy. Will it also inflict significant damage on the core institutions of our free society?

It need not. Indeed, I think many of our institutions are holding up surprisingly well. I see hospitals and other medical providers doing stressful and sometimes dangerous jobs with skill and grace. I see charities and community groups mobilizing, families pulling together, neighbors helping

neighbors. I see businesses struggling to make good choices among horrible options — trying to deliver necessary goods and services and keep their workers employed while also coping with public-health mandates and declining revenues.

As for government, I see many public officials working tirelessly to gather information, communicate it effectively, eliminate bottlenecks, expand testing, and protect the public without imposing unbearable costs.

However, I also see public officials taking advantage of the situation to score partisan points or to convert short-term panic into enough votes to enact permanent policies. And I see public officials who may be acting in good faith but who are letting their anxieties overwhelm their better judgment.

Our core institutions of self-government were never intended to apply only when convenient. They weren’t designed only for “normal” situations. We enjoy free speech in wartime as well as peacetime. We enjoy freedom of the press and assembly at stressful moments as well as relaxed moments. We enjoy the right to own and dispose of our own property during economic recessions as well as economic expansions.

None of these rights is, strictly speaking, absolute. Free speech in wartime doesn’t extend to the right to leak sensitive intelligence to the enemy. Freedom of assembly doesn’t extend to forming a mob to engage in vandalism, larceny, or violence. Our property rights do not shield us from paying taxes or obeying regulations that have been properly enacted by the proper authorities to ensure the delivery of true public goods — very much including public health, as we are seeing right now.

But under a federal system of republican government, there are rules that must be followed in such cases. Discarding them in the interest of speed or expedience is unwise and unconstitutional.

For example, in the first few weeks of the COVID-19 crisis, a number of media figures, activists, and state and local politicians demanded that the federal government “take over.” They wanted Washington to set uniform, nationwide closures and operating times for all public and private entities.

Washington has no such authority. Americans have never wanted Washington to have any such authority. States are the proper level of government to exercise such “police power,” which they can either employ themselves or extend to local governments as provided for by their respective state constitutions.

For the most part, I think America’s governors and legislatures have exercised their powers appropriately during the COVID-19 outbreak. I see no reason why all 50 states and thousands of local communities should have exactly the same policies and responses. Their needs and circumstances differ.

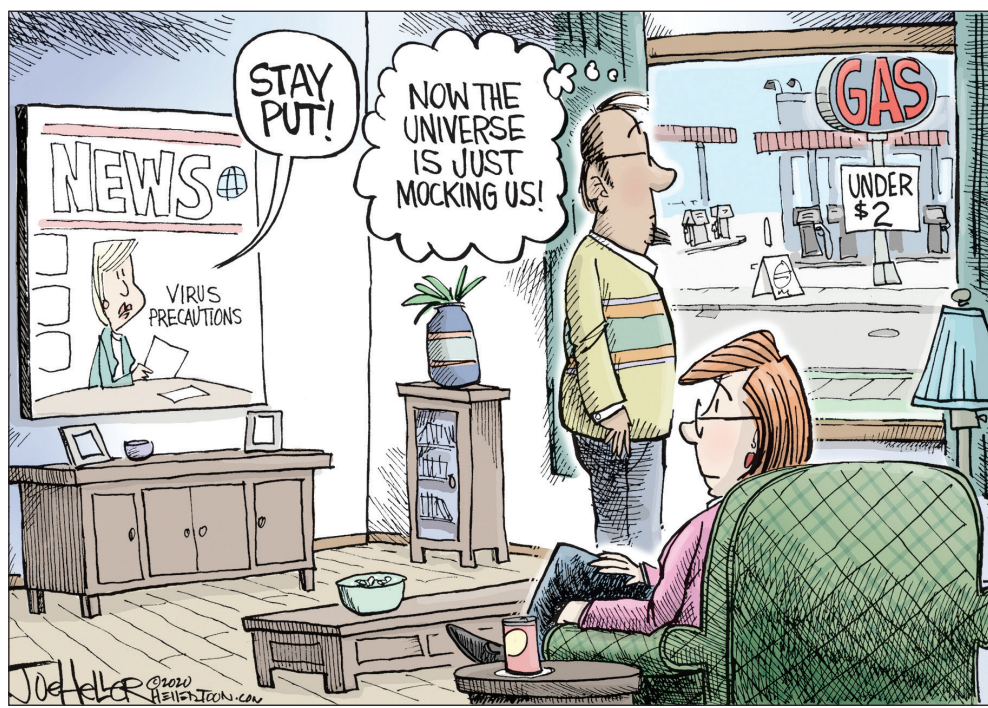
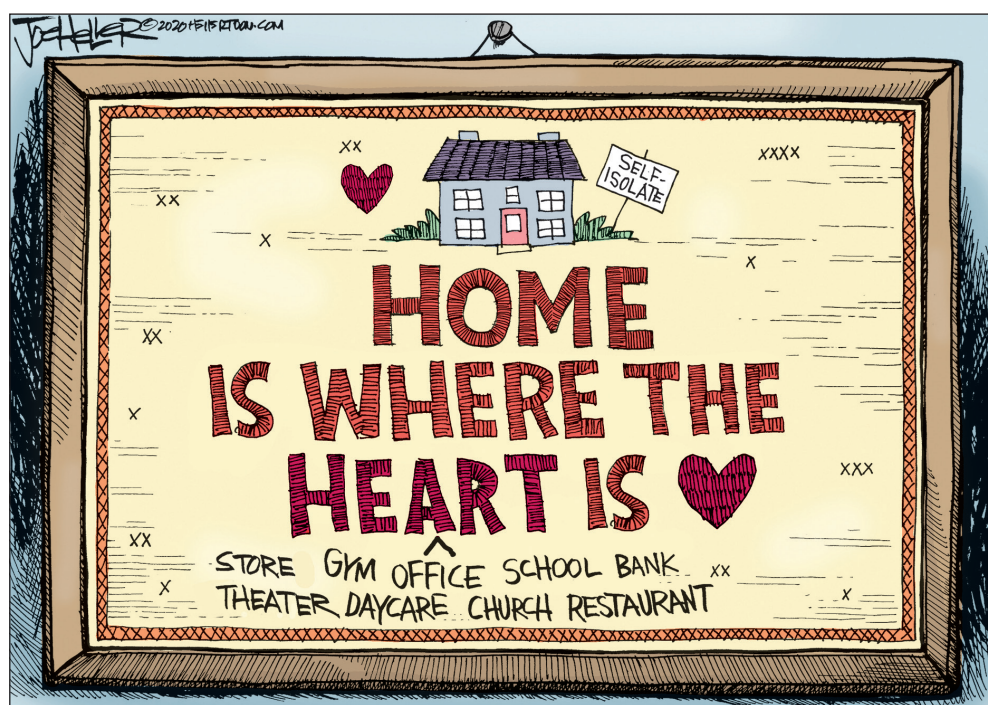
Here in North Carolina, I would count Gov. Roy Cooper and his team among those who have exercised their power well, for the most part. A glaring exception would be the executive order Cooper issued on March 14.

It prohibited “mass gatherings” of more than 100 people. Many institutions were excluded, however: transportation infrastructure, medical facilities, libraries, factories, offices, even shopping malls and other retailers. What wasn’t excluded? Houses of worship.

Cooper’s order was patently unconstitutional. The government can’t shut down church services while leaving malls open for business. I suspect he never expected the order to be enforced on churches. And, indeed, I think churches and other religious institutions should move their services online. But the governor cannot compel them to with an order that exempts other organizations.

Pandemics, wars, and other disasters have always tested the durability of the institutions that form free societies. If they are to pass the test, we must all do our part — and keep our heads.

John Hood (@JohnHoodNC) is chairman of the John Locke Foundation and appears on “NC SPIN,” broadcast statewide at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and 12:30 p.m. Sundays on UNC-TV.



Fight virus confinement boredom with these books

“Smart people don’t get bored,” my friend announced when I told her that a lot of people were getting bored from the home-confinement imposed by the ongoing pandemic.



D.G. MARTIN
One on One

“Smart people can find all kinds of things to keep them occupied. Like reading,” she continued.

My friend is correct. In my case there are shelves of books I need to read or read again.

Then I thought about you. Just in case you might ask, I have assembled a few recent books about North Carolina history that will entertain, educate, and keep you from being bored while you are staying home during the pandemic.

1. “The Secret Token: Myth, Obsession, and the Search for the Lost Colony of Roanoke” by Andrew Lawler.

Every North Carolinian should be familiar with the state’s founding myth, the story of Sir Walter Raleigh’s Lost Colony and the unsolved puzzle of what happened to Virginia Dare, the first child of English parents born in America. But most do not know the details of the colony’s founding, the struggles English colonists faced, and the different ideas about what really happened to Dare and other colonists. In gripping detail, Lawler tells the story and the 430-year search to determine what happened.

2. “A Delicious Country: Rediscovering the Carolinas along the Route of John Lawson’s 1700 Expedition,” by Scott Huler.

In 1700, English-born John Lawson was a newcomer to North America. Almost immediately upon arriving, he set out from Charleston to explore the endless forests of backcountry Carolinas. His travel notes became the basis of “A New Voyage to Carolina,” first published in 1709 and still a classic for its rich descriptions of flora and fauna and the conditions of the native peoples.

Durham author Huler followed Lawson’s footsteps across the modern-day Carolinas. His book gives a good summary of Lawson’s findings and the challenges faced by today’s people who live along that pathway.

3. “The Tuscarora War: Indians, Settlers, and the Fight for the Carolina Colonies” by David La Vere.

John Lawson’s book enticed a group of Europeans to settle near today’s New Bern. Their growing community threatened the Tuscarora Indians and their allies. In 1711, the Tuscaroras attacked the settlers and began a conflict that ended in a battle that devastated the Indians at their stronghold in Neoheroke, near present day Snow Hill in Greene County.

4. “The Lumbee Indians: An American Struggle” by Malinda Maynor Lowery.

When North Carolinians read newspaper reports about Lumbee Indians, they wonder — who are these people and where did they

come from? Lowery answers these questions. As a member of the Lumbee Tribe with deep family roots in the community, she brings more than scholarship to explaining her people’s origins and history. She weaves her family’s experience with the defining events in Lumbee history. The main characters turn out to be a fascinating blend of heroes and scoundrels, preachers and bootleggers, lawyers and lawbreakers, and farmers, all deeply attached to the swampy lands along the Lumber River in Robeson County.

5. “Tar Heel Lightnin’: How Secret Stills and Fast Cars Made North Carolina the Moonshine Capital of the World” by Daniel Pierce.

Some of Lowery’s Lumbee family were accomplished bootleggers. Pierce tells the story of many other Tar Heels from every region of the state who made us number one in moonshine production. That story began in colonial times, with farmers using techniques their families had learned in the British Isles to distill their corn and fruit into whiskey and brandy.

Read just one of these books during your COVID-19 confinement and you will have a richer understanding of our state’s history. Read them all and you will be an expert, and an un-bored one.

D.G. Martin hosts “North Carolina Bookwatch” at 11 a.m. Sundays and 5 p.m. Tuesdays on UNC-TV. The program also airs on the North Carolina Channel at 8 p.m. Tuesdays and other times.

Unemployment filings increase dramatically with COVID-19

BY CASEY MANN
News + Record Staff

As the country grapples with controlling COVID-19, the novel coronavirus, a growing number of workers are finding themselves out of work as businesses close and travel restrictions increase.

Silk Hope resident Zoila Rauda is one of them. Last week, Rauda was informed that both of her employers were laying her off. One of her jobs, a greenhouse that grows microgreens, had a dramatic reduction in orders. The greenhouse typically sells to restaurants and its "biggest clients stopped ordering," Rauda said.

The next day, the City Tap, a restaurant and bar in Pittsboro, told her they needed to let her go for similar reasons.

Rauda said that both of her employers had all of the paperwork for its employees to file unemployment claims at the ready and were hopeful that they would be able to bring their staff back on "when the time comes." She said both of her former bosses were "preparing us for what's happening."

"Many of my friends are having to go through this as business owners and I'm sure it's heartbreaking for each one of you," Rauda wrote in a Facebook post about the layoffs. "For yourselves and your employees."

David Choi, an economist for the American multinational investment bank and financial services company Goldman

Sachs, wrote in a research brief published March 20 suggests that "U.S. employment claims could surge by 700 percent and hit 2.25 million" for the week of March 15-21. Jobless claims may end up at their "highest level on record," even surpassing those during the 2008 financial crash.

Last week, Gov. Roy Cooper announced that COVID-19 would be added as an accepted reason for seeking unemployment benefits, whether for total work loss or reductions in hours. Within the first 17 hours of the option being available, the state received 4,721 unemployment claims related to the virus, according to Larry Parker, a public relations officer for the Division of Employment Security. Those numbers have continued to increase, rising to more than 140,000 by the end of Monday.

"This is an unprecedented situation and we are experiencing extremely high call volume and website traffic," Parker said. "That has put a strain on our system. To give you an idea of volume, last week the average traffic on our online claims system was 6,000 people a day. On Tuesday, we had 39,395 people accessing our claims system. On Wednesday, that number increased to 68,572 people accessing our claims system."

The actual numbers of unemployed workers in Chatham County so far is unclear. Chatham Economic Development Corporation President Alyssa Byrd said she has reached out to local businesses to help



Submitted photo

Zoila Rauda of Silk Hope is one of the tens of thousands of North Carolina residents who have been laid off with the spread of COVID-19. She lost two jobs, including one at this greenhouse that grew microgreens for restaurants, in two days.

"track layoffs" asking for companies that have "laid off any employees due to COVID-19," to let the Chatham EDC know how many.

Unfortunately, Rauda initially filed for unemployment when the first job separation occurred and before COVID-19 was an option. After receiving the second notice and the option was available, she strug-

Unemployment filing basics

Where can I file for unemployment?

The fastest way to file a claim for unemployment insurance benefits is online at des.nc.gov. The majority of people are able to successfully file a claim online.

For assistance with filing a claim, you can call the DES Customer Call Center at 888-737-0259. However, due to a large number of calls related to COVID-19, the center is currently experiencing long wait times.

How long will it take to get my unemployment benefits?

After you file your claim, your employer has 10 days to respond before payment can be released to you. However, waiving the wait week, as was directed in the Governor's order, will speed up how fast you'll be paid for your first week of benefits. Additional FAQs can be found www.des.nc.gov.

gled to find ways to edit her application. She said she spoke with local employment folks to seek assistance in updating her application and was told to reach out to the state. She then spent four hours on two unsuccessful calls to the N.C. Division of Employment Security Commission. The next day she tried again, only to find the system so overwhelmed that it wasn't taking calls.

Parker said that the state was working to improve capability by increasing server capacity to handle more traffic, has added a "frequently asked questions" listing on its website to reduce phone traffic and is taking steps to increase staffing and extend work hours including posting 50 available jobs on Thursday to help process claims with an expectation that more positions

will be posted.

Though she is still navigating her way through the system, Rauda said she is remaining positive.

"If I do get unemployment insurance, that's going toward my health insurance and my bills," she said. "Everything else? I have started my garden and it's coming along and I'm hoping to rely on that. And I have some dry goods."

She hopes that, if things get too dire, she can ask her parents for support and has already heard from many members of the community offering assistance.

"If it wasn't for the community and my family I don't know what I would do," Rauda said.

Casey Mann can be reached at CaseyMann@Chathamnr.com.

SCHOOLS

Continued from page A1

She added that the school will also be taking its "fuel-up" food packets to some of those homes as well. That's just one part of a statewide effort to provide meals to students who rely on their schools serving breakfast and lunch during the school week.

Gov. Roy Cooper said during a Monday afternoon press conference that public school systems across N.C. have served more than 1 million meals in the past week. According to Chatham County Schools Public Relations Coordinator John McCann, the district served 9,384

breakfasts and lunches from Tuesday to Friday last week — growing from 305 on Tuesday to 4,676 on Friday. Additionally, the schools are beginning to serve weekend meals on Friday, and the district's website will post updated locations and mobile sites.

"The turnout grew and grew each day," McCann said. "Families are inconvenienced. We understand that. We're glad to fill in some gaps."

Jennifer Özkurt, CCS' school nutrition director, added, "Every day, we're doing more and more to increase our reach."

That reach extends beyond food for many educators, Toomer said. Teachers at Horton have daily office hours for students to get in contact, and Toomer herself has a weekly staff

meeting, just like they do when classes are in session.

But the reality now is that class is "in session," even though the building is closed to students and will be for at least another month and a half. That leaves teachers worried, Toomer said, and wanting to do more to stay in touch. She said Horton staff is planning to write "thinking of you" cards to students and drive around neighborhoods to stay hello.

"School is one of the safe spaces for kids," she said. "We worry about kids if they're not in the building — we wonder if they're eating, we wonder about their social-emotional needs. This is the rea-

son we got into education, for the kids.

"We're teachers at heart. Everybody wants to do what they can to make sure they reach the kids. Right now with the kids being at home, the teachers are doing as much prepping on the front end so they can get works to students as much as possible."

It's important, Toomer added, to continue that relationship-building between students and staff as if the bell was still ringing and teachers were teaching students face-to-face.


Reporter Zachary Horner can be reached at zhorner@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at [@ZachHornerCNR](https://twitter.com/ZachHornerCNR).

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Pandemic got you anxious, depressed or uncertain? You're not alone

BY KRISTIN KRIPPA
News + Record
Contributor

Editor's note: Kristin Krippa, a Pittsboro-based psychologist, reached out to the News + Record to share some helpful tips on managing anxiety, depression and other mental health issues during a pandemic.

The certainty and predictability of our daily lives has suddenly become unpredictable, uncertain, and chaotic thanks to COVID-19.

Every day we awaken to new information that changes or limits choices of how we live our lives. Expectations of our present and immediate future have clashed with the cold hard reality of an unseen virus and social isolation. Fear of getting sick has suddenly taken on a new meaning. Worrying about your children and teen's behavior or academic performance has suddenly become a constant companion. If you are feeling stressed out, anxious, depressed and uncertain about the future, you are not alone.

Experiencing unpredictable change can lead to irritability, anger, frustration and sleep problems. Children may report nightmares and teens may experience increasing moodiness and angry outbursts. They may be sleeping more than normal or significantly less. They may develop anxiety about health concerns. Given the uncertainty of the situation, anxieties and fears are increasing even in people who are typically unfazed. Here are some

tips for dealing with these feelings.



Krippa

Get outside every day.

Being outside can help you feel calmer and reduce depression. Exercise daily. Even housebound individuals can exercise with the aid of a YouTube video or old school body weight exercises. Get creative and use a video platform like Google Hangouts to exercise with a friend or coach.

Enjoy time with family and reconnect.

Take time to play board games with your children and teens. Read to young children and bake cookies or do crafts together.

Limit social media coverage.

Take in what you need to know and then turn off the scroll.

Set up a daily routine but enjoy flexibility as well.

Know that the world will not end, and your kids will not fail to get into college if you let them play outside for several hours a day right now. Worrying about not spending seven hours a day perfecting school at home? It's OK to learn without assignments and worksheets. Read, write and practice living math. Khan academy has many great lessons for free. Know that your children will learn the most useful lessons from how they see you handle this crisis.

Practice mindfulness techniques.

Take slow, deep breaths, inhaling through

'A shift in mindset can be the difference between feeling depressed and anxious to feeling calm and capable of coping with your present situation. Examples of mindset shifts: Instead of thinking 'I'm stuck at home,' try, 'I get to stay safe at home with my family and enjoy doing things together.'

KRISTIN KRIPPA, owner and clinical director, Krippa Family Psychological & Wellness Services

your nose. Notice what you are feeling as you inhale. Does the air feel cool or warm as it enters your nose? Notice your chest rising as you inhale. Do you feel any places of tension? Just notice them and move on. Notice how your body feels as you exhale through your mouth. Can you feel tension leaving your body? Continue this for 5-15 minutes.

Another breathing technique I like is 4-7-8 breathing; inhale to the count of 4, hold your breath to the count of 7, and exhale to the count of 8. Do this for several rounds until you feel the tension leaving your body.

Another mindfulness technique that works very well is 5-4-3-2-1. This technique is great for someone experiencing anxiety, even acute, intense anxiety or panic. Look around the space you are in and find five things you can see and name them. I like to find five things of one color. For instance, find five blue things. Next identify four things you can feel. This might be the chair under your legs, your shoes, or your clothing. Next identify three things you can hear. Can you hear a clock ticking,

a fan, or someone talking in another room? Next, notice two things you can smell. Smell your clothing, a flower, or perhaps a favorite scent. Finally, notice one thing you can taste. Take a sip of water or even brush your teeth. You can do this for several rounds to help bring down your anxious feelings.

Hum or sing.

The act of singing or humming can stimulate our vagus nerve which can reduce anxious feelings.

Try...

...slowly rubbing one palm over the other starting at the heel of your hand and stroking toward your fingertips. Or cross your arms as if you were giving yourself a hug. Stroke from your shoulders to your elbows. Do this for 5-10 minutes while focused on the feeling of your hands on each other or your hands on your arms. This action increases delta wave production in the brain which is normally present when we are in deep sleep. This can be deeply calming.

Identify potential cognitive distortions and change your mindset.

Cognitive distortions are thoughts and beliefs

that we hold that may not be accurate. Common cognitive distortions include:

- Negative predictions: Overestimating the likelihood that an action will have a negative outcome.
- Underestimating your ability to cope with negative events.
- Catastrophizing: Thinking of unpleasant events as catastrophes.
- Assuming current feelings will stay the same in the future: For example, "I feel unable to cope today; therefore, I will feel unable to cope tomorrow."
- Worry and overthinking: The belief that worry and overthinking will lead to problem-solving insights. Actually, overthinking can impair problem-solving ability and may lead to avoidance.

A shift in mindset can be the difference between feeling depressed and anxious to feeling calm and capable of coping with your present situation. Examples of mindset shifts: Instead of thinking "I'm stuck at home," try: "I get to stay safe at home with my family and enjoy doing things together."

Instead of "I am going to get sick!" try: "I am washing my hands and taking needed precautions to keep myself safe and healthy."

Instead of "I will run out of things that I need!" try: "I have prepared well, and I have what I need right now".

Instead of "I don't know what to do, I can't handle this!" try, "I am doing everything that I can to stay safe. I can use mindfulness skills, practice breathing techniques, exercise, use calming

techniques, connect with people through phone or video, and enjoy some relaxing down time. This too shall pass."

In the event of symptoms that are severe, persist longer than two weeks, or do not respond to coping strategies, seek support from a licensed clinician who can provide assistance via video sessions during this current crisis.

Despite these unpredictable and worrisome times, there is solace in knowing the whole world is experiencing this. It is a very rare time in which we all truly are in this together and we can overcome together.

Kristin Krippa, M.A., LPA, HSP-PA ICST, is the owner and clinical director at Krippa Family Psychological & Wellness Services located at 200 East St., Pittsboro. Krippa has an MA in Clinical Psychology from Radford University and has been a Licensed Psychological Associate for 28 years treating children, teens, and adults. She is an Internationally Credentialed Sandtray Therapist and is a Sandtray therapy trainer. She specializes in treating anxiety, trauma, PTSD, and children and teens with behavioral concerns. The practice specializes in treating children, teens and couples in individual and group settings. Kristin is also the Director of Healing Hearts Healing Minds, a non-profit focused on meeting the needs of children and teens who could not access services otherwise. To reach her: (919) 893-9444; info@ncpsychologist.com; www.ncpsychologist.com.

The Bread Shop's big giveaway



Staff photo by David Bradley

Co-owner Paula Toogood pulls out a loaf of focaccia bread from the vast array of baked goods at The Bread Shop's recent giveaway in Pittsboro. Her customer, Jacqueline Farrar, picked up sub rolls, multigrain bread and burger buns as part of the free giveaway to the community. Farrar said that she had been to the grocery stores for bread, but 'there's not much there.'

BY DAVID BRADLEY
News + Record Staff

The "staff of life" is in short supply.

Grocery stores in the Chatham County area are experiencing a run on bread, and restaurants have drastically reduced their need for it in this time of COVID-19.

So when The Bread Shop, a commercial baker located on West Salisbury Street in Pittsboro, switched its bread-baking schedule to twice a week, they found themselves with an oversupply of already-baked bread.

"We had lots of bread we were unable to sell," said co-owner John Toogood. "We didn't have to dump it — we put out to the local community to pick up, to help them-

selves."

The bakery made a social media post to let people know that free bread would be available for pick-up last Thursday. Scores of people came to The Bread Shop and carried away bags of the fresh-baked bread.

Some customers were specifically looking for submarine sandwich bread, others just for multi-grain bread. Pizza-sized focaccia bread loaves were available too, as long as they lasted.

"It's important," customer Jacqueline Farrar said about the bread. "In grocery stores there isn't much [bread] there. It's nice to have people in the community helping [those] that really need it."

"I've been to all kinds

of grocery stores," another customer, Bridgett Mitchell, said. "I can't find it [bread] anywhere." Mitchell was wanting the extra bread for her growing family.

Toogood estimated that The Bread Shop gave away about 500 loaves of bread, 500 dozen burger buns, focaccia bread, and an array of bread products such as rye, sunflower, sun-dried tomato and sourdough.

The shop bakes dinner rolls, sub sandwich rolls, multi-grain bread and other products for sale across the Triangle and Triad. Because no preservatives are used, the bread doesn't have the shelf life of many grocery store brands.

The bakery's future depends on the demand for its bread from its customers, but Toogood and his staff are still baking — just on a smaller scale.

"We usually bake based on predictions," Toogood said about the shop's normal schedule.

The shop has stopped baking on Fridays, but hopes to go back to a normal schedule in six weeks or so. Much of that will depend on demand from local restaurants.

"After six weeks, I think we should be able to come out of it," Toogood said. "Our customers may say, 'Forget it, I'll do something else.' If they do, it will be hard to continue."

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Chatham News + Record

Leader of the mac

I always offer a bit of advice for the uninitiated at my mother's dinner table. If you're really hungry and want a lot more, tell her you want a little more. If you only want a little more, tell her you don't want any more. And if you really don't want any more, you have to get up and flee the house — and she'll likely meet you on the porch with a huge plate of food, "for a snack when you get home."

DEBBIE MATTHEWS
The Curious Cook

My mom is an Italian girl from Jersey. She makes two dozen rolls for six people and 10 pounds of potato salad for four. Growing up there wasn't only enough food for an extra place at the table, there was enough for the entire cast of Ocean's 11, 12, 13, and most of 14. Growing up watching this messed me up. When Petey and I were

married, I had not the slightest clue on how to cook for two (to be honest, I didn't have much of a clue about cooking at all). I couldn't figure out why we always had so many furry leftovers crowding our fridge. Who knew four pounds of meatloaf and six or seven pork chops was a tad excessive for two diners?

The other night was my Dad's birthday. We went up to Greensboro to celebrate with him.

I brought up his favorite treat of mine, pecan shortbread with toasted white chocolate glaze (recipe to come). The Kid and I were making our secret chicken tenders (recipe also to come). There were seven of us at dinner.

Mom made the side that everybody loves; her baked mac and cheese. It's on the table every holiday. When I was a kid and she made it, you could find me in the kitchen in the middle of the night, eating it cold, straight out of the fridge.

There were seven of us at Dad's birthday dinner. She tripled the recipe. Thanks for your time. Contact me at dm@bullcity.mom.



Photo courtesy of Debbie Matthews.

A look at the dish before it goes into the oven.



Photo courtesy of Debbie Matthews.

The finished mac and cheese, fresh out of the oven.

Mom's Baked Macaroni and Cheese

1 pound large ridged elbow macaroni	Dash of pepper	2 cups Velveeta "cheese," cut into small cubes
3 tablespoons butter	2 cups whole milk	1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons flour	4 cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided	

Boil pasta for five minutes in very salty water and drain. The pasta should be about half-cooked so it adsorbs cheesy flavor and it doesn't get mushy while baking. Drain and pour into buttered, 9 x 13 oven-safe dish.

In large heavy pot, melt butter and whisk in flour. Cook for three minutes to cook out the raw taste of the flour.

Pour in milk and cook until it just comes to a very low boil. Season with salt and pepper. A little bit at a time, stir in 2 cups cheddar and 2 cups Velveeta, about 1/2 cup at a time. When one addition of cheese has melted, stir in the next addition. When all the cheese has been added, check for seasoning, reseason if necessary, and remove from heat.

Add the cheese sauce to the macaroni, holding back a little, so that you can adjust if needed. The mixture should be pretty loose before baking because the sauce will be absorbed by the pasta, and some of the liquid will cook out while baking.

Preheat oven to 350°. Sprinkle the remaining 2 cups of cheddar on top and place into oven. Bake for 45-60 minutes or until the cheese on top is melted, it's bubbly, and the internal temperature is 165°.

Let sit, lightly covered for 10-15 minutes before service. Serves 8-10. It can be doubled, but you'll need to increase baking time by 10-15 minutes.

A CHATHAM REFLECTION

It's time for a little faith

BY MARK STINSON

Special to the News + Record

Like most Chatham folks I was caught off guard by the COVID-19 pandemic. I think I would like to share what I have noticed about the people of this county. The online discussion boards I am part of normally have ongoing conversations about everything from politics to potholes on county roads. There has been for sometime a big divide in this county that seemed would only get worse. People were talking at each other instead of too each other. Different groups with different opinions all pulling in different directions while pointing fingers and tossing insults caused me to become a bit disenchanted with life in Chatham.

After the first executive orders by the president and our governor were issued on the pandemic I saw some of what I expected to happen. Lots of folks started preaching gloom and doom while fertilizing panic every chance they could with rumors and misinformation. Shortly stupidity and ignorance with just plain greed started to show up most anywhere I went. I saw a lady in a green SUV with toilet paper stacked to the ceiling of the back seat with the rear hatch open stuffing four full shopping cart loads more in the back. I thought this was a pandemic not an "a-potty-lypse."

I have been up late at night trying to keep our Chatham County online community aware of everything from COVID-19 updates to what grocery store has fresh meat. As many of us discussed where to find toilet paper I saw people start to talk to each other rather than at each other. With each new online post people started stepping up and volunteering to help others.

I made a comment during an online discussion that we were not fighting the virus yet but the pollen. We were stuffy with sinus headaches and watery eyes but fine otherwise. I had a wonderful lady I didn't know offer to bring us allergy medicines and all of a sudden Chatham felt like home again. I declined her kind offer as we are well-supplied for pollen allergies but I encouraged her to continue help others not as fortunate.

Time and time again I am continuing to see people selflessly step up to help out their neighbors regardless of political or religious affiliations. People are networking with each other across the county to help each other and the many small businesses that are suffering. It's truly amazing and heartwarming to me.

My daddy always told me things always work out. We may not like how they work out sometimes but they will work out. God moves mountains for those with the faith of a mustard seed so no problem you have is too big for God to resolve — just have a little faith. I have survived car wrecks, floods and hurricanes on top of many health problems from being hit by lightning. I have faith in God. COVID-19 doesn't scare me a bit but how people react to it does. I haven't had a lot of faith in many of the people of this county for a good while but what I am seeing now has restored some of that faith in people. If the people of this county continue to talk to each other and look out for each other during and after this pandemic we will all be just fine. Just have a little faith.

Mark Stinson is "Goodnite Mark," a frequent poster on Chatham Chatlist and Facebook group moderator of Chatham County NC Community.



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PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

ACROSS

1 Passengers
7 It's used for simmering
14 Good for farming
20 Texas wildcat
21 Huffington of HuffPost
22 Hooded snakes
23 Noted WikiLeaks whistleblower
25 Potato, yam and rutabaga
26 Impressionist painter Mary
27 Toaster waffle brand
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29 Not needing an Rx
30 Unkempt sort
33 Swimmer who won six Olympic gold medals
35 It has triceps
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41 Author of the Edgar-winning novel "New Orleans Mourning"
45 "TRL Top 10" channel
46 Wig makeup

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90 Stag, e.g.
91 Nondairy milk source
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95 "Pet (1980s fad)
97 Petrol unit
99 Astros, on sports tickers
100 She played Dharma on "Dharma & Greg" (#43)
105 Deep drink
108 Have life
111 How Earth rotates
112 Born under sign
113 Dog's jingler
14 Role-playing source
15 Boxers' units
16 Nuns' place
17 Period of rest
18 Jumbo-sized
19 Ruhr city
24 Fla.'s ocean
28 Future flies
31 Yes, to Pierre
32 Deli classics, for short
34 Critters' doc
36 Irks
37 Israel's Goida
39 — McAn (shoe brand)
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43 Reggae grew from it
44 Taxi ticker
45 Saharan illusion
46 Longtime Ritz rival
47 "How sad!"
48 As to
49 Enjoy a book
52 Ice — (longtime skating show)
53 Netflix alternative
55 Crooner Murray
56 Heathland
58 "You know who I am"
60 Merman of old musicals
63 Full of tumult
66 Fedora fabric
67 Still having a shot to win
68 Qatar's capital
69 Van Devere of "The Changeling"
70 Hoodwink
71 "There, I did it!"
72 Said aloud
73 Sound along
76 — "Detoo" ("Star Wars" droid)
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103 Dewy-eyed
104 The Pine Tree State
106 "— bin ein Berliner"
107 Totally lose it
109 Charlotte (rich dessert)
110 Anesthetic of old
113 Flabbergast

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Solution for the puzzle in last week's edition.

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CHURCH NEWS

HOUSE OF PRAYER FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

We will be hosting our 5th Sunday Celebration in the 11 a.m. service on Sunday,

March 29 at the House of Prayer Fellowship Church. Join us with our speaker, Minister Naomi Harris. We are located at 549 Horton Rd., Goldston.



Staff photo by Zachary Horner

A group of Briar Chapel residents under the moniker 'StopChathamNorth' have asked to be part of the N.C. Utilities Commission's deliberations in allowing Old North State Water Co. and Chatham North, both entities owned by Michael Myers, to take on wastewater from Fearington Village.

Briar Chapel resident group petitions to intervene in regional wastewater decision

BY ZACHARY HORNER
News + Record Staff

CHAPEL HILL — A group of Briar Chapel homeowners want in on the N.C. Utilities Commission's deliberations over allowing the neighborhood's wastewater treatment plant to become a regional one.

StopChathamNorth, a quasi-homeowners association of more than 1,700 Briar Chapel residents, filed a petition before the NCUC on Thursday seeking to "participate fully as a party in these dockets."

Old North State Water Company, which operates the Briar Chapel Wastewater Treatment Plant, is seeking NCUC approval for redirecting wastewater from Fearington Village to Briar Chapel and expanding the WWTP's footprint to handle the new intake. Large numbers of Briar Chapel

residents have expressed concern over ONSWC's previous handling of wastewater within the neighborhood, citing poor customer service, bad odor coming from the current treatment plant and improper dispersion of reclaimed water.

The petition said the purchase of the BCW-WTP by Chatham North, a separate entity owned by ONSWC President Michael Myers, "could affect rates associated with the Briar Chapel wastewater system and adversely impact what Petitioner's members already consider to be unsatisfactory wastewater treatment services." Additionally, residents say that "on information and belief" additional developments could access the plant — "In effect, Chatham North seeks to locate a regional waste water treatment facility located in the Briar Chapel subdivision."

The petition was filed by lawyer Brady Allen of The Allen Law Offices in Raleigh.

According to commission documents, the NCUC is slated to conduct an evidentiary hearing starting at 10 a.m. on June 16 in the Commission's Hearing Room in Raleigh. Prior to the meeting, Chatham North, ONSWC and Fitch Creations, the entity that owns Fearington Village, can "file supplemental direct expert witness testimony" related to resident complaints by May 1. NCUC Public Staff and any intervenors, including StopChathamNorth if approved, can file expert testimony by May 14, and Chatham North, ONSWC and Fitch Creations can reply by May 29.

Reporter Zachary Horner can be reached at zhorner@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @ZachHornerCNR.

Pet of the Week: BIGGINS



The Chatham County Sheriff's Office would like you to meet Biggins, a 6-year-old canine who has proven himself to be a true sweetheart during his stay at the Animal Resource Center (ARC)! Biggins is docile by nature and eager to please his human companions. He enjoys lounging in his doggy bed most of the day, but lights up when visitors or staff members show him attention. Biggins is people-oriented and a master when it comes to using his "puppy-dog eyes" to procure treats and head rubs. A true "good boy" in every sense, he loves walks and any excuse to spend quality time with his human. Biggins would do well in a quiet household with owners who are looking for a faithful, devoted companion to love them unconditionally. For more information on how to meet or adopt Biggins, call ahead to 919-542-2911 to schedule an appointment or speak with an Animal Resource Officer. The ARC is located at 725 Renaissance Dr., Pittsboro, and currently remains open for pet adoptions!

Photo courtesy of the Chatham Sheriff's Office

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The modern way to sell your classics

Chatham's social services, Council on Aging and health departments keep on rolling despite COVID-19-enforced changes

BY ZACHARY HORNER

News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — They serve as three of the most front-facing agencies of Chatham County's government that interact with thousands of residents every week.

But now, the Chatham County Department of Social Services, Public Health Department and Council on Aging are being forced to adjust their procedures and still provide services, despite restrictions placed on them by the spread of COVID-19, or the novel coronavirus.

"It definitely has been strange," said Jennie Kristiansen, director of Chatham DSS. "Every day we've made modifications to how we're doing business, recognizing that we need to be really proactive in reducing our community's risk. The reason people come to DSS is because they need help, and we are here to provide that help. We're working on ways to connect and serve people while minimizing the amount of face to face contact."

DSS normally serves approximately 1,000 clients each month with Medicaid applications, food and nutrition services and other programs like the foster and adoption systems. To help cope with the needs still out there, Kristiansen said her department has tried to step up phone service and keeping her employees available by phone much more, while reminding people of the option to email or snail mail applications and other paperwork.

The department has also set up a table in front of the DSS building on Camp Drive in Pittsboro for people to pick up and



Submitted photo

The Dunlap Building, which holds the Chatham County Departments of Public Health and Environmental Health, among others, has no visitors right now, but the lobby is home to drop-off boxes for paperwork and other items.

submit applications, and there's also a dropbox available. Last Monday, March 16, more than 50 people stopped by.

"We do have staff out in front of our office, but we're really trying to limit the number of people coming in to reduce everyone's risk," Kristiansen said. "(We're) really trying to keep people physically out of our waiting area."

Across the street and across the county, the Council on Aging has scaled back its operations at its Pittsboro and Siler City locations, something that Executive Director Dennis Streets said was devastating.

"The first thing is that we've remained focused," he said. "It's been heart-breaking that we haven't been able to have those who are regular participants in our two centers."

The COA served an average of 1,334 congregate meals and 1,340

home meals per month during 2019, according to an organization report, along with hosting more than 40,000 exercise and fitness opportunities for its participants throughout the year. To counter that all being canceled, at least the in-person options, the organization has been delivering food to Meals on Wheels participants, working to the N.C. Diaper Bank on incontinence supplies and storing shelf-stable food with the county's Emergency Management Department.

Streets said the agency is still doing medical rides and encouraging those who "don't need to go" to not "so that the health practitioner can deal with what they need to be dealing with." Additionally, the COA's Facebook page has hosted virtual workout videos to try to make-up for those in-person events being canceled. An hour-long workout video

on Monday morning with East Chatham Senior Center Fitness/Wellness Specialist Jackie Green had nearly 400 views just four hours after it started.

Other types of interaction that utilize technology, like FaceTime and video conferencing, are ways Streets say can help with one of the larger challenges that seniors in Chatham are facing.

"So many of our folks live alone," Streets said. "Social distancing, social isolation is what's really worrisome. We asked (participants) if they wanted a call each day or how often, and we're meeting that with our staff and then we have a friendly caller volunteer group."

The Chatham County Public Health Department is on the front lines of the COVID-19 response in the county, but Public Health Director Layton Long says the department has still been able to



Submitted photo

Jackie Green, the fitness/wellness specialist at the Eastern Senior Center in Pittsboro, conducted her first virtual exercise last week on Facebook Live with 15 participants through the Chatham County Council on Aging. The room she is in is normally filled to capacity with people exercising.

perform most of its usual responsibilities. The department sees around 150 people in its clinic per week, Long said.

"We have been able to keep most of our services running despite the demands and challenges posed by COVID-19," Long said. "However, we have made some changes to continue to serve the public while reducing face-to-face contact and practicing social distancing."

Among actions: asking individuals to drop off vital records like death certificates instead of face-to-face interactions; postponement of inspections of long-term care facilities and childcare centers; and not conducting asthma home trigger assessments or lead investigations. The department, Long said, has still taken efforts to

still provide guidance and resources to those who ask for them in these areas while minimizing personal contact.

But COVID-19 is, perhaps understandably, taking up a lot of time.

"COVID-19 has certainly had a large impact on our day-to-day efforts, with staff from across all divisions being pulled into response efforts," Long said. "Preparing for and responding to public health emergencies is a critical function of local public health. While COVID-19 is of a magnitude that we have not seen, we have been working with our partners and staff to prepare as best we can for a long time."

Reporter Zachary Horner can be reached at zhorn@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at [@ZachHornCNR](https://twitter.com/ZachHornCNR).



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CHATHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

State report: Schools saw 37% increase in short-term suspensions

BY ZACHARY HORNER
News + Record Staff

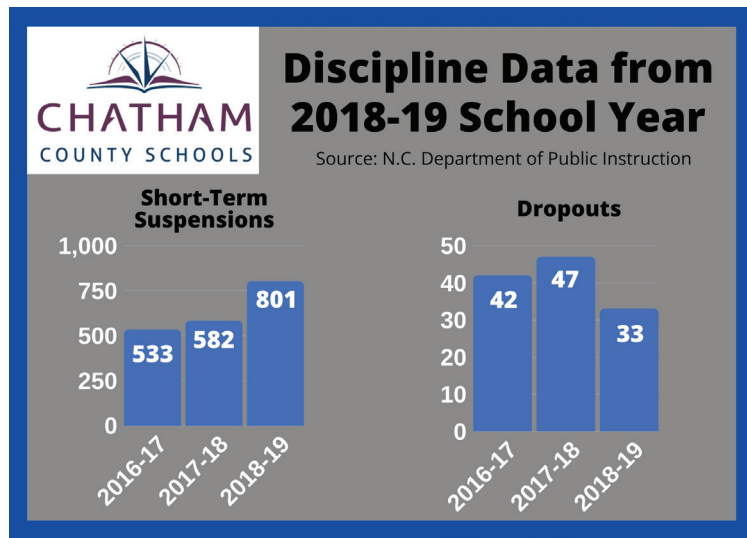
Chatham County Schools doled out more than 37 percent more short-term suspensions during the 2018-19 school year than the year before.

That's according to a recent report from the N.C. Dept. of Public Instruction, which provided the numbers of short-term suspensions, long-term suspensions, criminal acts and dropouts, among other data, from the last school year.

CCS handed out 801 short-term suspensions — defined as when a student is suspended from school for 10 days or less — in the 2018-2019 school year, compared to 582 the prior year and 533 in 2016-2017. DPI's data is the total number of suspensions, including when the same student was suspended multiple times.

The number of students was not included in the DPI report. Overall, the state saw a 3.8 percent decrease in short-term suspensions.

"Of course, we don't like to



Staff graphic by Zachary Horner

see that number go up," said John McCann, the district's public relations coordinator. "But we continue to work on it. Our goal is to have kids in school."

District officials have spoken often in recent months about instituting the practice of restorative justice, something discussed at the Chatham

County Board of Education's mid-year retreat this past January. Katie Rosanbalm, a senior research scientist at the Duke University Center for Child and Family Policy, told the board that discipline is best not just for the sake of punishment but with the goal of improved behavior. "The goal of discipline is

teaching a different behavior next time," Rosanbalm said. "If we can have a plan of consequences that we know that we're going to do when the behavior shows up, we're going to do it calmly, with respect. That's going to teach a child a different way to behave."

Amanda Hartness, the district's assistant superintendent for academic services and instructional support, added that the schools have been focusing on pairing suspensions with restorative circles to help students understand the effects of their behavior on others and make a plan to avoid that behavior.

McCann said those efforts have played a part in some of the other data in the DPI report, particularly dropouts decreasing from 47 in 2017-2018 to 33 in 2018-2019.

"A good bit of what's reflected in the numbers are one-time offenses," he said. "We believe those students didn't repeat those offenses due to the way we implemented restorative practices. Consider the dropout rate that's down.

Again, we believe our restorative practices played a part in that."

The introductory statements in the DPI report echoed the efforts taken by Chatham's public schools.

"School discipline should not be viewed as a way to manage students and deliver a punishment, but instead a chance to grow students in reinforcing expectations," the report stated. "If a school community has intentionally set the expectation that certain behaviors are not in alignment with a positive school culture, students will strive to meet the high expectations that the adults in their lives have set for them."

The full report and district-specific data are available for viewing at dpi.nc.gov/data-reports/dropout-and-discipline-data/discipline-and-dropout-annual-reports.

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RESTAURANTS

Continued from page A1

of sales I used to do," he said. "What kind of comfort food do people want? If you're sitting at home having dinner with your family, what will appeal to most of your family? You've got to put something on the table to please them all."

Comfort food it is: barbecue chicken, pot roast, meatloaf, pulled pork, chicken wings and beef brisket, with sides including gouda mac 'n' cheese, mashed potatoes and green beans. Lewis added that the Roadhouse has partnered with, or is in the process of partnering with, nearby bakeries to sell baked goods alongside toys and games from nearby Pittsboro Toys.

The Roadhouse and other restaurants like Town Hall Burger & Beer in Briar Chapel have used this opportunity to

give back to their communities. Lewis said his restaurant is giving a meal to a family in need, working with the schools, for every two meals purchased, and Town Hall Burger is redirecting the generosity of one of its regular patrons.

David Sadeghi, an owner at Town Hall Burger, said a customer came to the restaurant ownership offering \$5,000 as a fund for the restaurant's employees. Working with the anonymous donor, the restaurant's owners set up a \$15,000 fund — \$10,000 of which is going to Town Hall Burger employees to help them during the restaurant's adjusted hours and service and \$5,000 for meals cooked for front line employees at UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill.

"I think we give them a bit of a smile," Sadeghi said. "You can't keep saying you want to be part of the community. You have to act like it, and we're trying to do that."

Other restaurants across Chatham have had varying reactions to this new

"normal." Angelina's Kitchen in Pittsboro said on its website that it has suspended hot food service and is making food to be wrapped and sealed cold or frozen. Nericcio's Family Restaurant in Siler City is only opening from 3 to 7 p.m. from Monday to Saturday and offering free delivery up to 10 miles from the store.

And starting last Tuesday, The Root Cellar Cafe in Pittsboro closed its doors "through at least the end of the month," according to a post on its Facebook page, citing "the latest advice from health experts and a desire to keep our staff and customers safe and healthy." Family-size dinners are still available for pick-up at the restaurant on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Just how long restaurants will have to stay closed to dine-in business and restrict to takeout, curbside and delivery services is unknown — that's a decision made at the state government level.

"We hope that is a short time," Sadeghi said. "It's scary not knowing when this is going to finish up its course."

Lewis said the situation has brought the best out of people — a customer came in and bought 100 \$30 gifts cards for others, he said — and it's left him a bit philosophical.

"If everybody does a little bit, it everybody helps those around them, everyone will be taken care of," he said. "If everybody does the next right thing, everything will fall into place. The way to move forward is to just do the next right thing."

But that hasn't fixed everything. "There's absolutely nothing we can do about it," Lewis said. "I don't even know what to think about it. If you think about it too much, it makes you want to cry."

Reporter Zachary Horner can be reached at zhorner@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @ZachHornerCNR.

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SPORTS NEWS & CLASSIFIEDS

MARCH 26 - APRIL 1, 2020 | chathamnewsrecord.com/sports | SECTION B

Area leagues honor winter All-Conference selections

BY DUCK DUCKSON
News + Record Staff

The NCHSAA recently announced its 2019-2020 Winter Sports All-Conference teams, with Chatham County having a number of individuals from four area high schools (Northwood, Chatham Charter, Chatham Central and Jordan-Matthews) recognized for their athletic achievements in men's and women's basketball plus wrestling as well as men's and women's swimming, where applicable.

Regarding just how successful the winter season was for local teams, it's interesting to note a total of seven basketball squads advanced to the state playoffs, while five coaches received the distinction of being named "Coach of the Year" in their respective sport.

In the Big Eight 3A Conference, the Northwood men captured the basketball regular-season championship with a record of 13-1 and finished 27-3 overall,

advancing to the 3A East Regional Finals. Named to the All-Conference team were Aaron Ross, Jalen McAfee-Marion and Deuce Powell, while Jack Thompson and Alex Snively were selected to the Honorable Mention squad. In addition, Matt Brown was tabbed as men's "Coach of the Year."

The Northwood women also claimed the basketball regular-season title with a mark of 13-1 while concluding the year at 22-6 after advancing to the third round of the 3A East state play-off. TeKeyah Bland, Rae McClarty and McKenna Snively were chosen to the All-Conference team, with Chandler Adams and Gianna McManaman named to the Honorable Mention squad. In addition, Cameron Vernon was selected as women's "Coach of the Year."

With regard to wrestling, Northwood's Tyler Tracy (106-pound class) was chosen as the Big Eight 3A Conference "Wrestler of the Year" and was joined on the All-Conference team by Evan Boggess (132), Joe Sipper (138),

Montgomery Allgood (160), Ben McGaughnea (285) and At-Large selection Jamison Davis, while William Lake and Chandler Stubbs were named to the Honorable Mention squad. The Charger grapplers finished third in the league standings with a record of 5-2 while ending up 20-4 overall.

With respect to team results in swimming, the Lady Chargers finished third while the men ended up sixth. All-Conference performers included Julia Earnshaw (100-yard Butterfly and 100-yard Freestyle), Mia Corrado (100-yard Backstroke and 500-yard Freestyle), and Suzanne Earnshaw (100-yard Breaststroke), plus the team of Mia Corrado, Gwen Hoeg, Suzanne Earnshaw and Julia Earnshaw (200-yard Freestyle Relay). In addition, Jill Wenstread was chosen female "Coach of the Year."

In the Central Tarheel 1A Conference, the Chatham Charter men captured the basketball regular-season championship with a mark of 14-0 and finished 32-2 overall, advancing to the 1A East

Regional Finals. Named to the All-Conference team were Jordan Hamilton (also tabbed as the league's "Player of the Year"), along with Cole Milholen and Connor Murphy, while Ryan White and Trevor Golden received Honorable Mention recognition. In addition, Jason Messier was selected men's "Coach of the Year."

The Lady Knights also captured the basketball regular-season title with a record of 14-0 and concluded the year at 27-4 after advancing to the third round of the 1A East state playoffs. Morgan Lineberry, Tamaya Walden and Rebecca McGaughnea were named to the All-Conference squad, with Lillian Jones and Olivia Cheek chosen for the Honorable Mention team. In addition, Jennifer Dameron Bridges was selected women's "Coach of the Year."

The following Chatham Charter players also received recognition from the NC Basketball Coaches Association

See WINTER, page B3

An unprecedented time in sports, life

There are times in life that you never forget where you were when a particular event occurred. The Miracle on Ice, N.C. State defeating Houston for the '83 hoops national title, and 9/11 certainly come to mind for me for a variety of reasons, both good and bad.

Now Thursday, March 12, is certainly on that list for me personally.

I was down in Bear Creek at a 1A Yadkin Valley Conference track meet between Chatham Central, Albemarle, Gray Stone Day, and North Stanly, enjoying the competition, like any other day from my more than 23 years of covering sports.

Now, of course, I was well aware of the coronavirus and the problems it was causing worldwide, but still, in the back of my mind, it really hadn't hit me the severity of the situation. Or maybe it had and I was in denial.

Well, I found out just how real a situation it was that night when word began circulating around the track meet, boys tennis match, and girls softball areas that sports would be put on hold in Chatham County until April 7. I remember standing there with Chatham Central Athletic Director and good friend Bob Pegram and the school's Assistant Principal Matthew Wilkins, and discussing exactly what our thoughts were and what the future may hold in what is an unprecedented time in sports and life.

In the week and a half since that evening I heard a great deal of discussion from people around Chatham County, parents, players, coaches, fans, administrators, teachers; it's just the dominating theme of our life, the prevailing topic of conversation in so many ways.

While riding home one day I began thinking of some of the prevailing words that continued to reoccur in these conversations, and for some reason I came up with a new word in my



Staff photo by David Bradley

It's a dreary day in two ways at the tennis courts at Chatham Charter School. Rain on Monday washed out the already empty courts because of the virus crisis. Gov. Roy Cooper has locked down schools throughout the state until May 15, and perhaps longer.

head to sum them up, almost like playing the game Scrabble, which I used to play with my grandmother. And that word was SABAEVA.

Now honestly, the word sounds like a Russian Siberian Buryat surname, as my wife's last name was Altaeva, and subconsciously I'm sure that played a part in the deriving of it. In her homeland, common Buryat names are Bambaeva, Pantaeva (Irina the famous model and actress), Dagbaeva and the like. But alas, SABAEVA didn't derive centuries ago on the Siberian steppes with the indigenous Buryats, but rather here 8,000 miles away in Chatham County.

The letter "S" in my new word SABAEVA stands for what we all feel currently, Sadness. And its not so much for myself, the coaches, and even the parents, but for the kids here in Chatham County on all the teams whether its baseball, softball, track, tennis, soccer, lacrosse, golf — it's just a sad feeling.

Don't get me wrong. I feel bad for the likes of John Will Headen at J-M, Brett Walden at Chatham Central, David Miller of Northwood and Bill Slaughter at Chatham Charter, all of who were set to have banner years on the baseball diamond. But they've all had their days as players and coaches. It's just different when talking about the kids not only in high school, but middle school and recreation ball, in our county and across the state and nation, robbed due to a health hazard that was sprung upon us almost out of the blue. Sixteen teams were set to decide eight state titles in basketball two days after the announcement on that Thursday, and they will never get the chance to know if they could have won as a NCHSAA state title.

The first letter "A" stands for Anxiety. We all have felt it to some extreme or another, whether its worrying about your job, business, loved ones — it's everywhere and it's real. My first real experience with



Staff photo by David Bradley

The evidence of a too-short season remains in the home team's dugout at Jordan-Matthews High School. Cleats, boots and jackets were left behind after the abrupt halt to all high school sports in the state after a season that lasted for only a few games.

the anxiety that the coronavirus would cause was that night down at Chatham Central when a well-known young lady who competes for the Lady Bears came up and spoke to Coach

Pegram, Assistant Principal Wilkins and myself. I will never forget it. I was left in almost shock and thinking, "Wow, this

See SPORTS, page B2

Panthers made right decision to move on from Cam

When the Carolina Panthers announced on the team's website last Tuesday that QB Cam Newton was given permission to seek a trade, it took me by surprise.

Probably the best quarterback in franchise history, the nine-year vet took Carolina to the Super Bowl and won league MVP in 2015. But recent injury issues put his future with the team in doubt as he lost his ability, at least temporarily, to be as mobile and effective as he had been.

"One of the distinct pleasures of my career was selecting Cam with the first pick in the 2011 draft," team GM Marty Hurney said, according to the team's

website. "Every year difficult decisions are made and they are never easy. We have been working with Cam and his agent to find the best fit for him moving forward and he will always be a Carolina Panther in our hearts."

Yes, every sports team has to make difficult decisions. But this move fits right in line with the direction owner David Tepper and new head coach Matt Rhule are taking the Panthers, and I think it's wise to follow them.

Newton only played two games last season because of injuries, but also missed time in 2014 and 2018. As a rule, I'm always going to be skeptical of athletes who have a history of injuries. That doesn't mean they can't do amazing things — Kirk Gibson in the World Series, Michael Jordan and the flu game — but athletes' effectiveness is limited when they're not physically at their best. That's especially the case for

Newton, whose best play comes when he's mobile and slinging the ball downfield.

Football is a physical sport, and players are going to get hurt often. I'm not expecting Cam to be healthy all the time. Even the greats miss time — Tom Brady missed all but the first part of the first quarter of the first game during the 2008 season. But Brady came back from that and has earned two MVPs, went to 10 Pro Bowls and won three Super Bowls since then.

Is Cam capable of that? I think so. But here's the second part of my argument. Owner David Tepper wants to win, which Panthers fans should love. Additionally, new head coach Rhule comes in with a lot of energy and passion. But it's a project. And starting a project with a quarterback with nine years under his belt and multiple injuries is not entirely promising. Think of the other moves the

team has made or have made for them: releasing veteran contributors Greg Olsen and Eric Reid, trading away Trai Turner and seeing Luke Kuechly retire. This is a squad that's in the midst of an overhaul, and no position is more emblematic of a team's approach than a quarterback.

I don't know if Teddy Bridgewater is the long-term answer. He's got a history of injuries of his own — he missed the whole of 2016 and almost the entire 2017 season due to an ACL tear and dislocated knee joint, and that worried me. But having a player fresh off some solid outings for the New Orleans Saints last year three years removed from his last major injury seems like a safer bet for a reboot.

My last line of reasoning: If Bridgewater doesn't work out, the Panthers can just draft Trevor Lawrence at No. 1 overall in 2021, and they'll be set.

Wherever you fall on the Cam Newton debate in North or South Carolina, whether he should have been kept on or not, you can appreciate what he brought to the team on and off the field, in the community and on social media. And he clearly felt the love — "I love the Panthers TO DEATH AND WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU GUYS," he wrote March 17 in a post on Instagram.

He added that he felt he was being forced out — that's another conversation — but in this case, I encourage Panthers fans to be grateful for what Cam Newton brought to the franchise and look forward to something new and different. And root for Cam wherever he goes, except when he plays the Panthers.

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How NC's professional sports teams are responding to season cancellations due to COVID-19

BY ZACHARY HORNER
News + Record Staff

Pretty much every professional sports league in the United States, and many others around the world, have hit the "pause" or cancellation button in response to the spread and potential spread of COVID-19, or the novel coronavirus.

That's left teams having to make decisions about player safety, regular operations and compensating game-day workers for missed time. North Carolina's professional sports teams — the NHL's Carolina Hurricanes, the NBA's Charlotte Hornets and NFL's Carolina Panthers among them — are left to make similar decisions.

Last Tuesday, the Hurricanes pledged to pay



hourly PNC Arena and team event staff wages based on the team's final seven March regular-season home games. Funding came from Hurricanes owner Tom Dundon and the Carolina Hurricanes Foundation, as well as "a generous donation" from Hurricanes players.

"Our part-time event staff are a vital part of the gameday experience at PNC Arena," Hurricanes President/GM Don Waddell said in a press

release. "We know that the season being paused has created a lot of uncertainty, so Tom, the players and the Foundation have stepped up to help these employees through this unprecedented situation."

The NHL paused play for teams on March 12 and encouraged players and traveling team staff to self-quarantine for two weeks. The Hurricanes press release stated that "no player, team staff member or arena em-

ployee have exhibited any signs of COVID-19 at this time."

The Hornets have done the same thing as the Hurricanes, establishing a fund designed to give compensation of lost wages to employees slated to work games played at home by the Hornets and Greensboro Swarm, the Hornets' G League affiliate, as well as postponed events and concerts at the Spectrum Center in Charlotte. Hornets part-time staff will

be paid through April 13, the originally-scheduled end of the regular season.

"Payments from the fund will assist the more than 500 part-time staff that are employed by HSE," a press release from March 15 said. "These part-time employees serve in various capacities during games and events, including ushers, ticket takers, box office attendants, entertainers, public safety officers, retail staff, guest services personnel, technical operations and more."

The Panthers have been busy in football-related decisions — giving QB Cam Newton permission to seek a trade, releasing safety Eric Reid and making trades and free-agent signings of their own — but on the operations side, the team

has followed the pattern of many businesses.

"Outside of a few exceptions, we have instructed our staff to work from home," a statement from Tepper Sports & Entertainment, which owns the Panthers, said on March 12. "We have limited travel for Panthers coaches and scouts until further notice and will continue to prepare for the upcoming league year. TSE will continue to closely monitor developments and remain in contact with local health officials."

The NFL Draft, currently scheduled for April 23-25, will go on as planned but no longer live from Las Vegas.

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Submitted photo

Silk Hope Nuggets 7/8 Champions

The Silk Hope Nuggets 7 & 8 boys basketball team went undefeated at 8-0, winning the Chatham County Western Conference regular season championship. The team then went on to finish as the runner-up in the Chatham County tournament, losing a hard fought championship game 22-20 to the Pistons from North Chatham. Team members are, front row, from left: Ronen Moore, Caleb Mitchell, Bryson Green; second row, from left: Braylon Degraffenreaidt, Hayden Dark, Drew Rippe, Zach Griffin-Riggsbee, Bryson Stout, Jackson Clark; back row, from left: coaches Charles Daniel and Kenny Glover.

NCHSAA responds to Gov. Roy Cooper's press conference

BY DON BEANE
News + Record Staff

CHAPEL HILL — The North Carolina High School Athletic Association addressed the Monday, March 23 news conference by North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper by issuing a statement in response to the executive order closing all North Carolina public schools through May 15th.

North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) Commissioner Que Tucker released the following statement:

"Having heard the updated information relative to schools remaining closed until the middle of May, NCHSAA interscholastic athletics will remain suspended until at least May 18."

"The NCHSAA Board of Directors and staff will use the next few weeks to weigh our future

decisions based on the new directions given by Governor Cooper, other government leaders, and organizations charged with public health and safety during this unprecedented time. Such decisions will include the possible resumption of spring sports competition and the possibility of holding the state basketball championships.

"While we remain hopeful that we will be able to resume competition, particularly for our senior student-athletes, we also recognize the need to protect the health and safety of our students, coaches and the communities we serve."

The NCHSAA had hoped to resume high school athletics in North Carolina on April 7, but the potential spread and severity of the virus forced the pushback to the new date of May 18.

SPORTS

Continued from page B1

is serious and how do you explain to a teenager that things will be OK when she's expressing such valid concerns?"

Missing her final spring season of sports, missing school and not seeing her lifelong friends on a daily basis, missing a prom for which she had already purchased a dress and was so excited about, and possibly missing her graduation with all her classmates to celebrate 12 years of accomplishments and hard work. All just heartbreaking thoughts that were running through her mind and probably most other teenagers. But then, she took it a step further, and showed how caring a young lady she is, and said, "They say it affects elderly people more, I don't want anything to happen to my grandparents." That was a real dose of reality in that moment, and real anxiety over fear of something happening to loved ones. As adults really not having a sure answer to give her other than words of reassurance that all would be OK was a tough pill to swallow.

The letter "B" has been a common theme, and most parents can identify I'm sure, and that's Boredom. Kids of all ages all of a sudden have been yanked out of the classroom, off the sports fields and courts, and now can't

even go out to a restaurant just to have a sweet tea and burger with their friends. And the younger ones. I mean, parents are having to create academic schedules and forms of entertainment while juggling work around it to try and keep the kids from going stir crazy.

Next is the letter "A" again, this time for Athletics, or the lack thereof. So many people have brought up the cancellation of March Madness, the Masters, Major League baseball, and the likes, all staples of spring time in America. For me, the withdrawals of not having March Madness have been difficult; it's just one of my favorite times of the year.

The letter "E" stands for the Elderly. It's been noted from day one that this terrible virus affects our elderly population more than any other age bracket and that has been a big topic of conversation among many I know. So especially with those over 80, it's up to us to take real precautions and the social distancing needs to be part of our daily life for a while.

With that said, "V" can be a something very positive in these trying times, and that's Virtual. With Skype, Facetime, and other apps we can communicate like never before. And the Virtual aspects are key for our kids to continue to get an education online while at home as well as our college students. It can also be used to set up play times



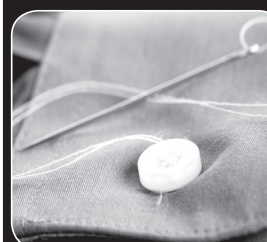
Staff photo by David Bradley

Looking down the first base line to the football stadium into the memories of baseball and football games played at Jordan-Matthews High School, the hope is that games will resume after COVID-19 has passed.

and discussions with the kids missing their friends, and more importantly in some regards, with the elderly population, which often includes grandparents, to make them feel still connected. Medically, the virtual hospital and health care visits online are going to be an area that will grow exponentially due to this virus, which is at least one good aspect to come out of a bad situation.

The final "A" stands for America. We've been through hard times before, and one thing Americans always do is pull together and help out others. This situation certainly is unique, but the efforts by so many to help others and the overall response has been amazing to see. But it's no surprise, because this is America, and it's what we do. God Bless America!

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BEST FOODS CAFETERIA & HAYLEY BALES STEAKHOUSE: Cafe line is still open for take out ONLY, offering daily selection of 6 meats and 10 veggie selections, our menu is updated daily on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BestfoodSilerCity/>. Offering pies, frozen chicken pie, and fresh ground hamburger, call ahead ordering available (required for Hayley Bales Steakhouse), gift cards are available for purchase, Daily hours: Cafeteria 11 am-2pm & 4:30 pm - 8pm Monday to Saturday, 11 am - 3pm Sunday; Steakhouse 4:30 pm - 8 pm Daily, 220 E. 11th Street, Siler City NC 27344, Phone: 919-742-6033

CAROLINA BREWERY: Operating with amended hours (Chapel Hill 4pm-7pm, Pittsboro noon-7:30pm). We will be serving a limited to-go menu with curbside delivery available. Our limited food menu will be posted on our website (carolinabrewery.com) and social media (@carolinabrewerybrewpubs on IG and FB @carolinabrewery on Twitter). Beer Delivery now available! To-go beer specials including: \$6 4-packs of 16 oz Sky Blue, \$25 cases of Sky Blue 16oz 4-packs, \$100 1/2 barrel kegs, \$45 1/6 barrel kegs FREE coozie and logo pint glass with a gift card purchase for future use either at our pubs or our online store. Purchase gift cards via the phone, at our Brew Pub locations, and our online store. Funds from gift cards are used as relief fund for our staff.
Chapel Hill Location: 460 W. Franklin Street, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516 Tel: 919-942-1800
Pittsboro Location: 120 Lowes Drive #100, Pittsboro, NC 27312 Tel: 919-545-2330
Email: info@carolinabrewery.com

COMPADRES: Serving full menu (subject to availability) for CALL AHEAD orders, curbside delivery available, Amended hours 4:30 pm - 9 pm. Locations: 193 Lowes Drive, Pittsboro NC 919-704-8374 or 115 Siler Crossing, Siler City NC 919-663-5600, Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CompadresTequilaLounge/>, <http://www.compadresnc.com>

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We operate a commercial kitchen and bar, a small fleet of delivery vehicles, and licensed to provide food, wine, and beer deliveries. If you can pick up your order, please do. We'll deliver curbside to your car at your request. Located at 39 West Street, Pittsboro NC 27312, Phone: 919-542-2432 (Gift cards available)
If the phone is busy, send email to takeout@pittsbororoadhouse.com with your name and phone and ask us to call you to get your order. Stay up to date with us via <https://www.facebook.com/PittsboroRoadhouse/>

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Spring blooming



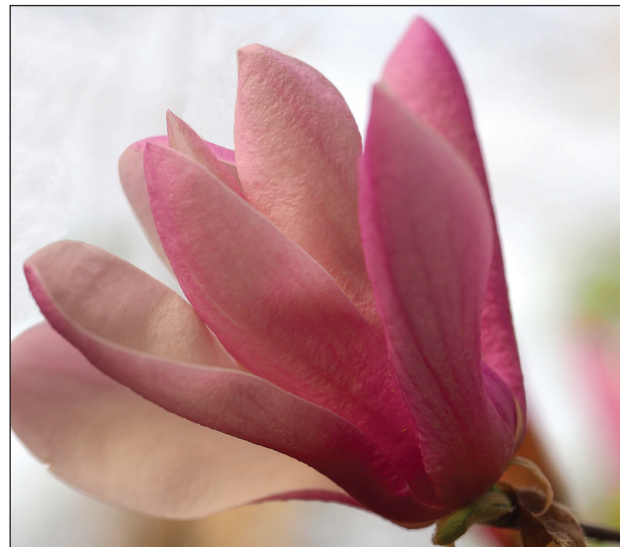
Staff photo by Kim Hawks

Caught between a rock and a hard place — this variegated Solomon's seal in photographer Kim Hawks' garden is showing some resilience.



Staff photo by Kim Hawks

A saucer magnolia opens in Hawks' garden at the 'Hawks' Nest.'



Staff photo by Kim Hawks

This saucer magnolia is in full bloom.

WINTER

Continued from page B1

as members of the 2020 District 8 All-District team: Jordan Hamilton (men's first team), Morgan Lineberry (women's second team), and Tamaya Walden (women's third team).

Chatham Charter's Chandler Steele was named to the All-Conference wrestling team and finished state runner-up in the 126-pound class.

In the Yadkin Valley 1A Conference, the Chatham Central men finished in a three-way tie for first place in the final basketball league standings with a record of 14-2 and concluded the year 22-6 overall after advancing to the second round of the 1A West state playoffs. Named to the All-Conference team were Michael Moore and Lucas Skertich, while Phillip Gaines was selected to the Honorable Mention squad.

The Lady Bears tied for third place in the final basketball league standings with a mark of 11-5 and finished 16-13 overall after advancing to the third round of the 1A East state playoffs. Mary Grace Murchison and Danielle Vaughn were chosen to the All-Conference team, while Savannah Stilwell was named to the Honor-

able Mention squad.

In the Piedmont 2A (PAC 7) Athletic Conference, the Jordan-Matthews men finished sixth in the final basketball league standings with a record of 3-9 and concluded their season 10-17 overall after advancing to the first round of the 2A East state playoffs, with Camden Fuquay and Lanice Hedgepeth both selected to the All-Conference team.

The Lady Jets finished in a tie for fifth place in the final basketball league standings with a mark of 4-8 and concluded their season 8-16 overall, with Jasmine Scotten and Ellia Wright chosen to the All-Conference squad.

Andre Charles (220) and Esmar Bixcul (113) were named to the All-Conference wrestling team, while Lady Jets' swimmers finished fourth in the final league standings.

Jannah Fadely was the lone J-M swimmer to receive All-Conference recognition, both in the 200-yard individual medley and the 100-yard Breaststroke.

Congratulations are extended to all these student athletes plus coaches Brown, Vernon, Wenstread, Messier and Dameron Bridges for their accomplishments while representing their respective schools during the winter sports season.



COMPADRES



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Mock NCAA tournament progresses as Duke and FSU advance to Sweet 16

BY DON BEANE
News + Record Staff

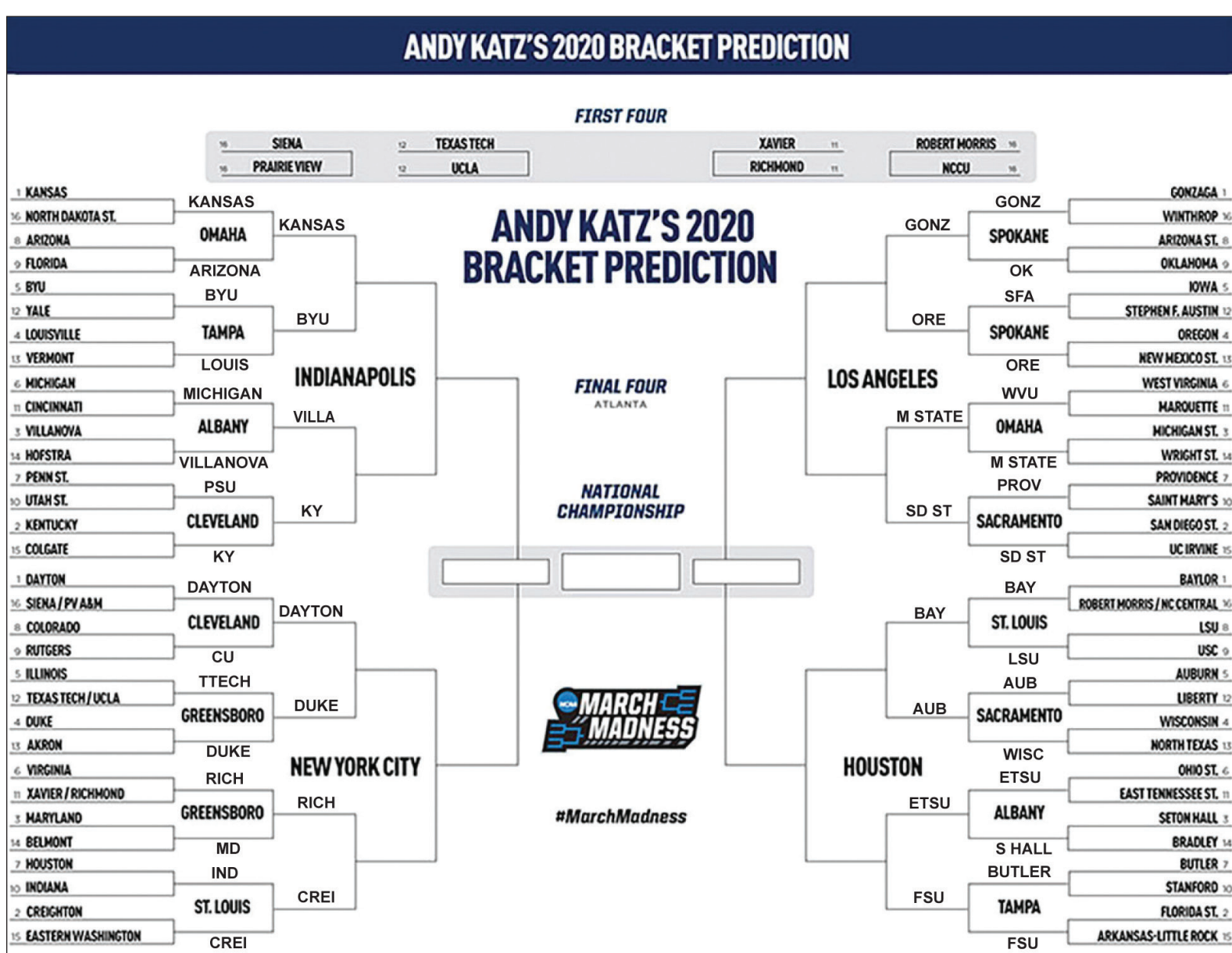
The official NCAA tournament may have been postponed but here in Chatham County it will play out using the final projection bracket of famous bracketologist Andy Katz.

Of statewide interest, it was North Carolina Central advancing in the First Four games as the Eagles took an 87-79 victory over Robert Morris as Jibri Blount and C.J. Keyser had 23 and 19 points respectively.

With the win NCCU earned an opening round matchup in Saint Louis where the locals dropped a 68-54 loss to the South Region top seed in Baylor despite 17 from Blount.

Other opening round games saw Duke pull away from Akron 72-53 in Greensboro in East Regional play behind a three-point barrage from Tre Jones, Matthew Hurt and Jordan Goldwire, who hit a trio of treys each for the Blue Devils while Vernon Carey had a double-double with 14 points and 12 rebounds in the win.

Defending national champion Virginia was stunned 58-57 in the opening round by in-state foe Richmond as Blake Francis canned a 24-foot trey from the left wing as the buzzer sounded to lift the Spiders to the upset March Madness style in Greens-



boro in East Regional action. Florida State advanced in the opening

round of the South Regional with a 76-60 triumph over Arkansas Little-Rock in Tampa while Louisville also moved on in the Midwest Regional with an 88-53 win over Vermont in Tampa.

Second round action saw a pair of Atlantic Coast Conference teams advance into the Sweet 16 as Duke squeaked by Texas Tech 66-61 in a grind it out affair with Carey netting 17. Florida

State took down a feisty Butler squad 77-74 while Louisville lost 92-87 to an experienced and dangerous Brigham Young squad.

Of note, all four of the top-seeds advanced into the Sweet 16 in Kansas,

Dayton, Gonzaga and Baylor.

Duke takes on Dayton in New York City in third round action while Florida State will battled Cinderella story East Tennessee State in Houston.

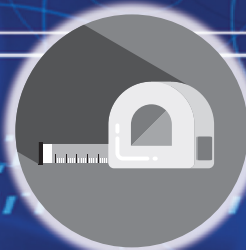
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CORA FOOD PANTRY

Increased need puts extra demands on CORA during COVID-19 pandemic

BY BILL HORNER III
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — When traffic at CORA jumped last week — double or even triple the normal numbers of individuals and families seeking food assistance — Melissa Driver Beard, the non-profit food pantry’s executive director, found herself in dire need of healthy volunteers to help assemble and hand out bags of food.

And then they showed up.

CORA’s facility on Camp Drive, not far from the Chatham Community Library in Pittsboro, was abuzz with activity last Thursday afternoon as Beard, staff members, volunteers — some of whom Beard hadn’t seen before, but was happy to — and those needing food helped, and were helped, as the impact of the COVID-19 virus began to be felt in kitchens and pantries in homes around Chatham County.

Earlier, Beard had put the word out about needing volunteers — CORA still needs them and will continue to — and as the community responded, she took a moment to reflect and express her thanks.

“It’s funny,” she said during a brief break in her work. “Last week, I was so proud of myself for having the foresight on Monday or Tuesday to place an order for a month’s worth of food thinking, ‘Oh, I’m getting ahead of the game.’ And, you know, if there are shortages or if there are price increases, we’ll be ahead of that.”

But with the new reality of this pandemic, the best plans don’t always bear fruit.

“That food order was supposed to come in by Thursday,” Beard said, “and it’s still not here.”

With some other suppliers, she says: “Every day we’re told, ‘Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow.’”

CORA — Chatham Outreach Alliance, which provides food to individuals and families within



Staff photo by Bill Horner III

Melissa Driver Beard, left, executive director of CORA, and Pam Barker of Chapel Hill, who serves on CORA’s board of directors, take a break during the fury of work there Thursday afternoon at the food pantry in Pittsboro.

the community who are in need from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekdays — does have food on hand, although canned protein (“we’re extremely low on canned tuna, canned chicken, salmon, beans, that sort of thing”) is in short supply.

In a normal week, CORA might serve the needs of 800 or so people. By last Friday, the number exceeded 1,800 for the week. Another 430 individuals came for food on Monday.

Beard said already-planned food drives, extra donations from individuals and groups and newly-planned drives were huge helps in keeping CORA’s stores supplied. And food from regular CORA suppliers such as the N.C. Food Bank and Aldi?

CORA learned Monday it wouldn’t get any shipments of food at all this week.

“We’re relying heavily on donations of canned goods,” said Rebecca Hankins, CORA’s development and communications director. “The most important thing is to direct people to our website to get the latest updates, as things are changing very rapidly.”

For Chatham County residents in need, CORA provides a week’s worth of nutritionally-balanced food up to six times over a 12-month period. For

non-Chatham residents, CORA can temporarily provide food while strategies for finding food closer to home are managed. The organization’s “Beyond Six” program provides a basic level of food support to help families navigate additional weeks of need.

Those needs are changing. The spread of the novel coronavirus and the workload of her staff means, too, that Beard is taking as many precautions as possible. A mobile food market planned for Siler City was canceled, and alternating Saturday distribution hours will probably be stopped as well. But because CORA is designated as a disaster relief agency, CORA will be handing out food “as long as we have food to hand out,” Beard said.

In doing so, they’re practicing “social distancing” as much as possible in CORA’s cramped facilities — including having clients stay at “curbside” and having volunteers hand bags of food to them.

“So, there are no clients coming in the pantry,” she said. “Given our space restrictions in the pantry, I’d love to be able to keep our volunteers farther apart from each other. But I can’t even really successfully do that. Everybody is here by choice. I’ve told my staff



Staff photo by Kim Hawks

A pallet of grapes awaits clients of CORA at the organization’s facility in Pittsboro.

if they would rather work from home, they could, and right now some are working remotely.”

CORA’s employees will begin working in two teams in the coming week in an effort to provide some separation — “so that if one of us at work becomes sick, we wouldn’t all have to go into isolation,” Beard said — and volunteers will be able to work “off-hours” if they so choose.

Beard appreciates the extra help and says that need will continue.

“We do need volunteers,” she said. “We primarily are using volunteers to bag food. If you are worried about social distancing, we can arrange for people to come after hours. And, you know, we want people to be cautious. We want you to be safe. We want to respect people’s boundaries. And because of our building size, that’s hard for us to do.”

“We’re just trying to get as much food pre-bagged as we can,” she said. “We’ve got things really well marked, and putting together a bag of food is a pretty easy process. We need people who we’re

calling ‘runners’ — so that you would basically just take bags of food out front. And there’s very limited social contact with that. We need people who are willing to be exposed to the public that will bag take bags of food to cars. And we need Spanish translators.”

But right now, the biggest need, Beard says, is food: proteins, canned fruits, vegetables, cereal bars, crackers, apples, oranges.

“And oddly enough, we need paper grocery bags, because getting those in is proving to be difficult,” she said.

And for those who can, CORA needs financial donations, which can be made at corafoodpantry.org.

As Beard works to keep her staff and volunteers healthy, and CORA’s food supplies stocked, she says a word of thanks about the community’s support.

“Really, I mean, the community has rallied around us and is seeing the value in what we’re providing,” she said. “And we’re so, so thankful for that. I think it speaks volumes about just how entrenched CORA is

in the community and the fact that we’ve been here for 30 years.

“You know, we’re seeing people who are coming because suddenly they’ve lost their job as a waitress or a waiter or in some other business, or they’ve had to quit because their kids are out of school, or who knows what may be the case...” Beard said. “And we may be dealing with that for months. So, we’re just trying to plan for every possible scenario. It’s really hard to look into that crystal ball and see what’s going to happen, but we’re trying to do that and just so thankful for everybody that’s helping us along the way.”

Publisher/Editor Bill Horner III can be reached at bhorner3@chathamnr.com.

DONATIONS TO CORA

You can send in donations to CORA at P.O. Box 1326, Pittsboro, N.C. 27312, or give securely online at corafoodpantry.org. You can also drop off donations at the CORA Food Pantry Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

NEWS BRIEFS

CCCC SBC offers free webinars regarding COVID-19

The Central Carolina Community College Small Business Center is offering the following free webinars regarding COVID-19.

To register or for more information, visit www.cccc.edu/sbc/.

- Thursday, March 26th - A Game Plan to Survive a Cash Flow Crisis Amid the COVID-19 Disruption - 3-4 p.m.
- Thursday, April 2nd

- Strategic Planning and Actions to Take Now During the Coronavirus Crisis - 1-2:30 p.m.

• Tuesday, April 14th - Marketing and Promoting Your Professional Service Business During the COVID-19 Pandemic - 1-2:30 p.m.

Johnson named Pittsboro PD’s interim chief

PITTSBORO — Interim Town Manager Robert Morgan said Tuesday that Lt. Shorty Johnson would be the Interim Po-

lice Chief for the Town of Pittsboro until a new police chief is hired.

Johnson will take over from retiring Police Chief Percy Crutchfield on Saturday.

Johnson has nearly 26 years of law enforcement experience in Chatham County. He has served as a Patrol Deputy and Detective for the Chatham County Sheriff’s Department, several positions with the Siler City Police Department and has been with the Pittsboro Police Department since 2015. Johnson has a Bachelor of Science Degree in

Criminal Justice from Appalachian State University and a Master’s Degree in Justice Administration at Methodist University.

Siler City P&R cancels events; parks remain open

SILER CITY — The Siler City Parks and Recreation Department is taking appropriate action to limit the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Following Gov. Roy Cooper’s Executive Order No. 120, the Siler City Parks and Recre-

ation Department is cancelling or postponing multiple programs, events, and reservations. All indoor and outdoor facility reservations are cancelled until further notice.

To encourage social distancing and prioritize the well-being of community member, park patrons, and staff all playgrounds, park shelters, and park restroom facilities are closed until further notice. Areas surrounding playgrounds — including green ways, walking trails, and other open

space amenities — are still available for use.

The Department of Parks and Recreation encourages everyone to recreate in a variety of alternative ways and to follow us on social media and find us on the web at www.silercity.org for up-to-date information and daily recreational activity ideas.

If you have any questions, please contact the Department of Parks and Recreation at (919) 742-2699 or email recreation@silercity.org.

— CN+R staff reports



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CHATHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS EDUCATOR OF THE WEEK

Wendy Bowden | Silk Hope School

Grades/subjects you teach: I am currently an instructional assistant for children with special needs. I have also worked in preschool, kindergarten and 1st grade.

E-mail address: wbowden@chatham.k12.nc.us

Date, place of birth: Born and raised in Siler City

Education: I graduated from Jordan-Matthews High School and have an associate's degree in early childhood education from Central Carolina Community College.

Brief work history: I was hired as an assistant for Silk Hope School in 1993. I am currently in my 27th year at the same school!

Honors/awards: 2019 Silk Hope School Instructional Assistant of the Year

Hobbies/interests outside of educating: I attend Community Baptist Church in Siler City, where I love to serve my Lord. I enjoy fishing and watching my son play sports. Family time is my favorite time no matter what activity we are doing.

Family: I am blessed to have SO many family members live close to me, my husband, Jimmy, and children, Jake and Cecilia.

What led you to a career in education? I have always loved the idea of working with children. As a student, I would ask teachers for extra class papers to play school with dolls and stuffed animals. Pretending became a reality and a career I love.

Who were your favorite teachers as you went through school, and what did you learn from them? I had many wonderful teachers, but it was the teachers I did not like that made a difference. I learned from them to not do any job you did not seem to love. You will always do your best at something when you are excited to be a part of it.

What "makes your day" as an educator? When a nonverbal child smiles at me as to say, "I did it!"

What's your favorite memory of your first year in education? This is by far not a favorite memory but a teachable moment for me: I had shared with a student how excited I was to have made it to Friday. He responded he was not happy because school is his



Photo courtesy of Chatham County Schools

Wendy Bowden is Silk Hope School's Instructional Assistant of the Year.

safest place. I made a promise to never say that again in front of a student.

Best piece of advice for other educators? When you stop loving your job,

stop teaching. To some students you are their world.

What about your job would most surprise your friends who are not educators? I have a time that I clock out on a computer but I never "leave" my job. My students are always on my mind. I see Goldfish crackers on a store shelf and think of a student that would love them. I hear a song and think of how that is a favorite and "she" would clap if she was listening, also.

If you could somehow magically instill one truth into the heads of your students, what would it be? Never give up trying!

What's special about your education space at your school? Between being in a mobile unit, and doing personal things for the students (feeding and diapering), our space feels exactly like a little home. I hope the students feel that, too!

What's special about your school? "The Silk Hope Way"... I was told about this from Principal Rob Tharp. He said "It is something that is hard to explain but just the way things are done around here." If you have ever worked at Silk Hope you have heard about "The Silk Hope Way."

Next Chatham board meeting to feature public hearings on Williams Corner, borrowing

BY ZACHARY HORNER
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — During an abbreviated Chatham County Board of Commissioners meeting March 16, the board postponed two public hearings on the Williams Corner development and scheduled a public hearing on borrowing funds for radio equipment and towers for emergency services.

The 10-minute meeting was necessary — "We're

conducting the basic business that the county needs to get done," said board Vice Chairman Diana Hales — but short on actual action due to COVID-19, the novel coronavirus. The county government had announced the previous Thursday that it was shortening the meeting to avoid large gatherings.

The meeting had been slated to hold two public hearings on changes to the Williams Corner development. Developed

by Chris Ehrenfeld — a partner investor in Chatham Media Group, which owns the News + Record — and Bold Commercial Real Estate, the project is expected to be built in three phases over seven years, beginning with apartments and retail at the Lystra intersection. Phase 2 will feature offices and storage space and Phase 3 will see the construction of more apartments.

The project's website argues that "being in close proximity to

a desirable mixed use community like this typically increases" neighboring property values, and says developers will make "approximately \$2 million of off-site improvements" required by the N.C. Dept. of Transportation.

The public hearings will allow for community input on various zoning changes and text amendments.

The other public hearing revolves around \$18 million of borrowing the county is slated to do to

pay for upgrades to its emergency communications and radio system. The county already received more than \$2.3 million in grant money from the North Carolina 911 Board.

Mike Reitz, the county's emergency communications director, explained to commissioners last May the need for an overhaul to the system.

"The current infrastructure is at the end of life," Reitz said. "The current system is just

out-dated, doesn't provide good safety measures for responders. We have challenges every single day with communicating."

The April meeting is currently scheduled to be held at the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center in Pittsboro, as this meeting was.

Reporter Zachary Horner can be reached at zhorner@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @ZachHornerCNR.

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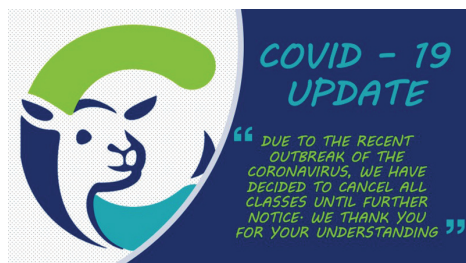
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CHATHAM CHAT | CHATHAM ORGANIZING FOR RACIAL EQUITY

CORE's work focuses on equitable outcomes for all Chatham residents

This week, we speak with Karinda Roebuck, the co-chairman and community organizer for CORE (Chatham Organizing for Racial Equity) and fellow members Maureen Maurer, Katy McCullough, Irene Wells, Maura Dillon and Rachel Winters about CORE's racial equity workshops and other training and educational programs. CORE was created in 2016.

What is Chatham Organizing for Racial Equity (CORE)?

CORE is a volunteer-led, grassroots organization working to build a broad-based coalition of individuals, non-profits, and community groups. We work together to build awareness of systemic racism and achieve equitable outcomes for all people in Chatham County. To accomplish that we provide educational opportunities for the public, training and consulting work tailored for organizations and institutions, and caucuses for the ongoing work of unpacking racism for the individual in a group setting.

Since 2017, CORE has hosted eight racial equity workshops for more than 300 people. We contract with Racial Equity Institute, based in Greensboro, to facilitate these workshops which serve as a baseline and framework for CORE's involvement in the community. Workshops have been throughout the county in Siler City, Pittsboro, North Chatham, and in Moncure. Participants include county and town officials, county and town employees, non-profit organizations, teachers, healthcare providers, ministers, community members, students, and more with the bulk of them residing in Chatham County.

How did CORE come about?

In summer 2016, in response to numerous acts of racial violence that had been occurring throughout the U.S., a group of Chatham County faith leaders and other concerned citizens began meeting to discuss how people in Chatham might proactively address hatred and divisiveness and work toward unity and deeper understanding in the community. A film series about race at the Pittsboro Presbyterian Church became the catalyst for discussions



Staff photo by David Bradley

Karinda Roebuck is co-chairman of Chatham Organizing for Racial Equity. The organization works to bring awareness to the damage created by racism in society.

about how our community could confront overt and more subtle forms of discrimination that people of color experience on a regular basis. CORE arose from those discussions.

In your work to build awareness of systemic racism, how do you define racism and racial equity?

All people should have the opportunity to make choices that allow them to live a long and healthy life regardless of their income, education, or racial and ethnic background. Yet, this opportunity is unattainable for many because of racism, which is present in all communities. Racism is not just about individual discrimination, prejudice, or hatred. Race has been and continues to be used to organize systems to benefit white people and disadvantage people of color.

Racial equity work focuses on the systemic racism that exists in our public and private institutions. CORE has chosen to make racial equity the focus of our work. We understand that without addressing the discriminatory practices that exist within our institutions, as a community we will not be able to create the conditions that allow all of our citizens to thrive.

What does racism look like in Chatham? How does CORE measure and quantify racism in Chatham County, or is it something that can be quantified?

Racism in Chatham looks like it does in the rest of the U.S. — whether it's north, south, east or west. Racism results in racial inequities with-



Staff photo by David Bradley

CORE members Sara Martin, Shvaughn J. Ross, Katy McCullough and Karinda Roebuck meet earlier this month in Pittsboro as they plan for upcoming CORE events and training sessions.

in and across systems — with white people consistently having better outcomes compared to black people, and all other races falling somewhere in between.

As one example reported in the 2019 Chatham County Racial Equity Report Card produced by the Youth Justice Project, white students in grades 3-8 were 2.5 times more likely to score "Career and College Ready" on end-of-grade exams than black students in 2017-18. Further, black students were 5.1 times more likely than white students to receive a short-term suspension in Chatham County in 2016-17. Statewide, black students received 57 percent of all short-term suspensions, even though they made up only 25 percent of the student population in 2016-17.

This is but one example of racial inequities. We find similar racial inequities in other systems in Chatham and the broader U.S., including inequities in income and wealth, home ownership, health outcomes, transportation, the justice system, and so forth. These racial inequities hold true even when one accounts for socioeconomic status or educational attainment.

We can historically trace these inequities in the education system as well. Chatham County approved the common school law in 1839, starting public education for white students. However, a few years earlier in 1830-31, the North Carolina General Assembly

strengthened an already existing anti-literacy law that prevented anyone from teaching enslaved African Americans to read and write. The legislation pointed out, "The teaching of slaves to read and write has a tendency to excite the dissatisfaction in their minds and to produce insurrection and rebellion." As a result, there were no public schools for African Americans until after the Civil War. By 1873, Chatham County had established two separate systems — one for white and one for black schools, and the disparity in funding for these two systems was high.

In 1908, Pittsboro opened a school for white students that eventually became Pittsboro High School. Black students who wanted to go to high school had to leave the county until the creation of Horton High School in 1930. The two high schools remained segregated until 1970.

Educational barriers for African Americans were further exacerbated by segregation in higher education. In 1960, UNC-Chapel Hill had only four black undergraduates. This means, for many of us, school desegregation did not happen in Chatham County in either this or our parents' lifetimes. The decades and decades of inequities contribute to the outcomes we see today, negatively impacting opportunities for African American families to accumulate wealth and gain status in our communities.

CORE has hosted a series of two-day Racial Equity Institute (REI) workshops. What's the plan for those workshops in 2020?

We plan to continue holding the Racial Equity Institute workshops, including a racial equity Phase 1 REI workshop in late April 2020. This year, for the first time, we successfully collaborated with Chatham County Schools, Chatham County Department of Social Services, and Department of Public Health to hold a 3-hour Groundwater training in early March. This training focuses on the consistent trends in the numbers across public systems, across the U.S., that illustrate people of color have worse outcomes than whites.

Other workshops we are looking to offer in the near-term would include REI's youth-focused racial equity workshop and a workshop specific to Latinx challenges. We are also exploring other workshops we can host in Chatham that are with other locally based organizations. Racial equity work is ongoing, and educating ourselves can only help us.

What are CORE's other objectives and goals for the near-term?

CORE works to deconstruct systemic racism through education, organization, and reconciliation. We hope to be a resource and connector for those interested in anti-racism and racial equity work in Chatham County.

In addition to the racial

equity workshops, CORE offers a series of trainings called Building Stronger Communities that focuses on community organizing, the power in forming community relationships, and leadership.

We are also in the pilot phase of providing a more tailored training session and consulting work for the local organizations, county agencies, and institutions looking to improve their equity policies. We are having great success and will be moving forward with more contracts in the near future.

Since 2018, we have co-hosted a Juneteenth tribute. This free, public event uses education, music, storytelling, and performance to deepen understanding of the efforts to abolish slavery and to connect slavery to modern day human rights issues. This year Juneteenth will be held on June 20th at the Agricultural Center in Pittsboro, in collaboration with the Abundance Foundation and Chatham Community Library.

Thinking about the debate in the last year over the Confederate monument in Pittsboro, has the scope of CORE's work, or the challenges it addresses, changed at all?

The scope of CORE's work has remained the same. Systemic racism existed before the statue went up and still exists after its removal. We will continue to create opportunities for education and discussion throughout Chatham County about the historical and cultural roots of racism, which includes the historical context of the monuments and other symbols.

How does CORE work with other organizations?

The bulk of our work is a collaborative effort with community organizations to provide racial equity education within and throughout our county. We welcome partnership and have partnered with other organizations to co-host racial equity workshops, hold workshops and trainings to specific departments and organizations, offer space for community meetings, and other work to address racial equity issues in Chatham.

For more information, go to <https://chathamorganizingracialequity.weebly.com>.

NEWS BRIEFS

Donaldson Funeral home limiting viewings

With the COVID-19, or coronavirus, continuing to spread, the staff of Donaldson Funeral Home & Cremation is taking measures to help protect the families its serves. Donaldsons' staff said a N.C. Board of Funeral Service released a statement saying it "encourages families to consider the risks associated with potential exposure to the coronavirus in larger gatherings." Donaldson is limiting

public viewings and gathering for services, saying the "safety and well-being of the families we serve, our staff, and the general public must be paramount."

2020 Eggstravaganza canceled

SILER CITY — Out of an abundance of caution, the Town of Siler City Department of Parks and Recreation has cancelled the 2020 Siler City Easter Eggstravaganza scheduled for April 4 at the

Bray Park Sports Complex. This decision is in response to directives from the N.C. Gov. Roy Cooper mandating cancellation of mass gatherings to minimize the spread of

the growing coronavirus (COVID-19).

While the annual Easter Eggstravaganza brings lots of joy to the community, the decision is to encourage social

distancing and prioritize the health and well-being of the citizens of Siler City, park patrons and participants, according to a release from the Town of Siler City.

For more information, links & resources related to COVID-19 please visit www.chathamnc.org/coronavirus.

— CN+R staff reports

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Kid Scoop Together:

The Four Cs
 Diamonds are the hardest natural materials known and they are the most popular of all the gemstones for jewelry because of their brilliance. They can only be scratched by another diamond.

They are valued by their **cut, color, carat and clarity.**

Cut
 The most common cut is known as the "brilliant." This has 58 facets or surfaces and the light reflected in the surfaces splits into the colors of the rainbow.

Color
 Most diamonds contain some color and the most common are shades of yellow or blue. A colorless diamond is both rare and expensive.

Carat
 A carat is a measurement of weight. 142 carats make one ounce. A diamond that weighs a full carat is worth more than one that weighs slightly less.

Clarity
 A completely clear diamond is said to be flawless but that is rare and most diamonds have spots or bubbles.

You're a GEM!

You know you have a birthDAY. Did you know you also have a birthSTONE? A special gem stone has been selected to be the birthstone for each month of the year.

Discover Your Birthstone

1. Find the month you were born in the box below.
2. Next to your birthday month, there are two symbols. The first symbol shows you which horizontal line to follow on the Intergalactic Gem Stone Locator Grid. The second symbol tells you which vertical line to follow.
3. The gem at the point where the two lines meet is your personal birthstone!

- ▼ 8 January
- ▲ February
- March
- April
- ★ May
- June
- ★ July
- August
- ▼ September
- October
- ▲ November
- December

INTERGALACTIC GEM STONE LOCATOR GRID

Standards Link: Math: Measure time using calendars. Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

I brought precious Alphasdots from planet Crzy Tahl to trade for gem stones from earth, but I dropped them all over this page. How many can you find?



Color the Birthstones

- Garnet – purplish red
- Amethyst – purple
- Aquamarine – greenish blue
- Diamond – white
- Emerald – green
- Pearl – white
- Ruby – red
- Peridot – light green
- Sapphire – blue
- Opal – blue and green and white
- Topaz – orangish yellow
- Turquoise – light blue

Birthstone Meanings

Each birthstone has a special meaning. To find out, do each math problem, put your answer on the line next to each gem and then find the answer in the list on the right.

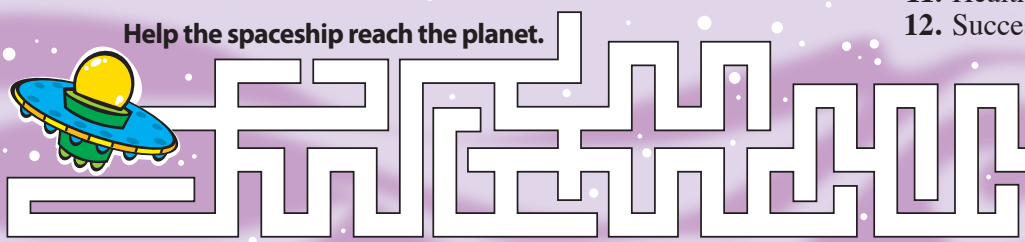
- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 13 - 9 = ___ Garnet | 18 - 16 = ___ Ruby |
| 7 - 2 = ___ Amethyst | 9 - 6 = ___ Peridot |
| 4 + 3 = ___ Aquamarine | 11 - 10 = ___ Sapphire |
| 4 + 4 = ___ Diamond | 2 + 4 = ___ Opal |
| 15 - 6 = ___ Emerald | 8 + 2 = ___ Topaz |
| 16 - 5 = ___ Pearl | 16 - 4 = ___ Turquoise |

1. Good thinking
2. Contentment
3. Married happiness
4. Dependability
5. Sincerity
6. Hope
7. Courage
8. Innocence
9. Love
10. Loyalty
11. Health
12. Success

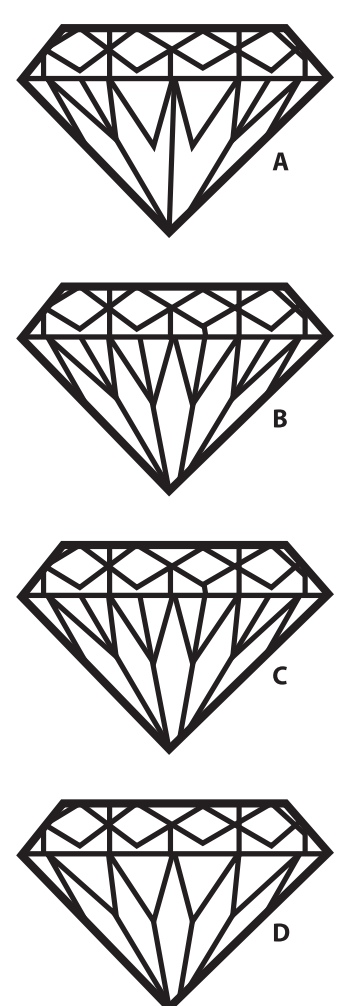
Extra! Extra! Words That Sparkle

Look through the newspaper for words that attract you to read more. The words could be used to attract you to an ad or a story. Can you find five? Use these words to write a story.

Standards Link: Vocabulary Development: Recognize words and phrases that show rather than tell events.



Find the two identical diamonds.



Standards Link: Visual Discrimination: Identify similarities and differences in common objects. ANSWER: B & C.

Kid Scoop-doku

Complete the grid by using all the letters in the word STONE in each vertical and horizontal row. Each letter should only be used once in each row. Some spaces have been filled in for you.

S	T	O	N	E
T				S
	E		S	
			E	T
E				O

Birthstone Survey

My birthstone is: _____

My friend's birthstone is: _____

My teacher's birthstone is: _____

My pet's birthstone is: _____

Family member birthstones: _____

Standards Link: Research: Locate information through interview and investigation.

Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?

AQUAMARINE
 GARNET
 AMETHYST
 DIAMOND
 EMERALD
 PEARL
 RUBY
 PERIDOT
 SAPPHIRE
 OPAL
 TOPAZ
 TURQUOISE

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognized identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

FROM THE LESSON LIBRARY

Fact and Opinion

A newspaper publishes both facts and opinions. Look through the newspaper for three examples of each. Discuss with a parent how you can tell the difference.

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Distinguish between fact and opinion.

RIDDLE RHYMES

HEAT AND PRESSURE,
 TAKE THEIR TOLL,
 CREATING BEAUTY,
 FROM A LUMP OF COAL!

What am I?

ANSWER: A diamond.

More at facebook.com/RiddleRhymes

Write On!

Diamonds and Gems

I am brilliant because ...
 Finish this story.

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