

# Chatham News + Record

## IT STARTED WITH A DROP OF SOLDER 10 years ago, fire badly damages historic courthouse



Thick smoke billows from the Chatham County Courthouse as firefighters battle the March 25, 2010 blaze.

BY RANDALL RIGSBEE  
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Late in the afternoon of March 25, 2010, a construction worker with Progressive Contracting Company, which had been enlisted by Chatham County to renovate the historic Chatham County Courthouse, aimed a soldering iron at a gutter high atop the southwestern portion of the old building.

Since early February of that year, the then-129-year-old

courthouse had been surrounded by scaffolding and the structure’s familiar clock tower wrapped in protective material, with long-planned renovations — including replacing windows, repairing masonry and stucco, and replacing wood siding and trim — under way and expected to be completed in a few more months.

At a cost of approximately \$415,395, the renovations were the first major ones undertaken on the historic building

since the early 1990s. With quitting time looming that Thursday afternoon, at somewhere around 4:30 the worker, armed with a hot soldering iron, turned his attention to a gutter. That’s when the trouble started. Hot solder dripped onto bare wood, the scorching binding agent quickly drawing flames from the wood which were fueled by gusty late-March

See **COURTHOUSE**, page A6



Submitted photo  
Jessica Sandel, a biology instructor at Jordan-Matthews High School, has been utilizing remote learning tools during the COVID-19-enforced change in schooling and performing lab demonstrations from her kitchen table.

## Learning a new way

Internet accessibility problems to educate during a pandemic

BY ZACHARY HORNER  
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY —The campus of Jordan-Matthews High School in Siler City, home to more than 870 students during a normal weekday,

was silent last Wednesday. But that doesn’t mean work wasn’t still being done. Sidelined from their normal learning hub by the spread of COVID-19 — the

See **SCHOOLS**, page A7

### MOUNTAIRE’S SALE TO THE PUBLIC

## Want chicken? It comes with a side of traffic



Staff photo by Peyton Sickles  
Residents were able to buy 10-pound bags or 40-pound boxes of Mountaire chicken on Sunday. The individual limit was five boxes or 200 pounds.

BY CASEY MANN  
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — Mountaire Farms has been processing chicken for distribution since 1964, but company officials say its first foray into selling directly to the public — which it did here Sunday in response to the COVID-19 pandemic — was a “learning experience.” Traffic in Siler City snarled to a near stop as people tried to purchase chicken from the Mountaire employee parking lot off East Third Street. The company operates as a wholesale poultry producer, selling its chicken in bulk to other food companies and grocery stores to sell. But on Sunday, it offered

its product directly to the public — selling 10-pound bags of chicken for \$10 and 40-pound boxes for \$40, with a limit of five cases or 200 pounds. “We don’t normally sell chicken like this so it was a learning experience for everyone,” Mark Reif, Mountaire’s North Carolina community relations manager said. Reif said the demand was much higher than anticipated. An hour before the noon start time Sunday, traffic had grown around the plant, backing up on Eleventh Street (U.S. Hwy. 64) in both directions and on Raleigh and East Third Streets into downtown Siler City. With lines of cars growing, the company decided to start early

to try to ease traffic. As the sale continued, though, more and more drivers found themselves caught in the gridlock. “It was impossible to anticipate the amount of interest for this truckload sale,” Reif said. “We alerted the police in advance and asked for their help with traffic flow. We appreciate the Siler City Police Department and their cooperation to allow us to help the community purchase chicken.” Cars entered the Mountaire employee parking lot through the entrance on Raleigh Street. Cones and workers, with the assistance of Siler City Police Department staff, led the in-

See **MOUNTAIRE**, page A3

## Sales tax option, revaluation still on schedule

BY ZACHARY HORNER  
News + Record Staff

Even with COVID-19 affecting many of Chatham County government’s regular operations, two specific ones slated to affect Chatham residents’ wallets are still ongoing and — as of now — still on schedule. Both the 2021 revaluation process and implementation of the Article 46 sales tax option are slated to be completed as planned, county Public Information Officer Kara Dudley told the News + Record on Monday.

The revaluation is a state-mandated process by

which county governments re-evaluate the taxable value of all real property within county borders. The current revaluation is scheduled to take effect next year. “We are not sure yet how the COVID-19 pandemic will affect Chatham County’s revaluation process,” Dudley said via email. “We have until January 2021 for the Board of Commissioners to make a decision about whether or not to delay revaluation. We are continuing on schedule for now, but we will see how the economic recovery progresses as we get into the fall of the year.”

See **TAX**, page A3

## Grocery workers on the front lines face exposure, fear

BY CASEY MANN  
News + Record Staff

While a large number of North Carolinians are working from home and adhering to a stay-at-home order issued by Gov. Roy Cooper, other employees around the state — particularly those whom residents depend on for food — remain on the frontlines, risking exposure by going to work. One area grocer employee shared her experiences on the job in the midst of COVID-19, speaking to the News + Record on the condition of anonymity. “Amber” — not her real name — asked that her identity not be revealed to protect her source of income. Amber says she’s worked in the same Chatham-area grocery store for about two years. Her starting pay was about \$8 an hour, but she says her store has given workers a \$1 an hour raise during the COVID-19 crisis, but she gets no benefits or healthcare. While grateful for the extra income, Amber said it’s a small bump “for as much money as we bring in.” But Amber’s biggest concerns right now are



Staff illustration by Peyton Sickles  
not with her employer or her salary. It’s for her fellow employees, who remain at risk of the coronavirus while on the job, and customers, some of whom are growing impatient with short supplies

See **GROCERY**, page A3



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

CANCELLATIONS

- **Town of Pittsboro**, all town advisory boards meetings are canceled. In order to protect the most vulnerable members of our community from the COVID-19 virus and slow its spread, Mayor Jim Nass has directed staff to cancel the Board of Commissioners Meeting on April 13, and the Planning Board Meeting on April 6. Please monitor the town's website at [pittsboronc.gov](http://pittsboronc.gov) for additional notifications and alerts.
- **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](http://chathamcoa.org).
- **Chatham County Historical Museum**: For the safety of visitors and volunteers, the Chatham County His-

- torical Museum is closed until further notice. See our website: <https://chathamhistory.org>.
- **Chatham Community Library**: Closed to the public at this time.
- **State Employees Credit Union (SECU)** 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.
- The **Second Bloom of Chatham Thrift Shop** will be closed for shopping and donations until further notice.
- 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.
- ON THE AGENDA**
  - The **Chatham County Board of Commissioners** will hold its regular meeting at 6 p.m. on Monday, April 20 at the Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center 1192 U.S. Highway 64 Business West in Pittsboro. Due to mass gathering restrictions as outlined in the Governor's Executive Order 121, the public will not be allowed to physically attend. However the meeting will be livestreamed at [TajTalk.com](http://TajTalk.com) If there are any residents that had planned to address the Board during Public Input at the April 20th 6:00 p.m. meeting, we ask for those residents to e-mail their comments to Clerk to the Board Lindsay Ray at [lindsay.ray@chathamnc.org](mailto:lindsay.ray@chathamnc.org) by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, April 20, 2020. The Clerk will present those comments during the Public Input

- Session on the agenda at the meeting, and comments will be recorded in the minutes. The public hearings previously scheduled on Williams Corner will be postponed to a future meeting.
- The **Chatham County Board of Education** is scheduled to hold its next regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 20, in the Board Room of the district's Central Services building at 369 West St. Pittsboro.
- THURSDAY**
  - 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.
- ALSO HAPPENING**
  - JMArts hosted a **JMA-CoronaConcert** via Twitter featuring performances submitted by JM students and faculty. Concerts can be viewed on its Twitter account @JMArts and by using the hashtags #JMA-CoronaConcert performances and #JMACoronaConcert program.
  - **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](http://chathamhabitat.org/volunteer), or email [rachelh@chathamhabitat.org](mailto: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](http://www.chathamhospital.org/ch/about-us/volunteer).
- **Volunteers Needed** - Non-profit 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](http://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@chatham-councilonaging.org](mailto:allison.andrews@chatham-councilonaging.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](http://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.

NC 211 helping North Carolinians find resources during pandemic

**BY CASEY MANN**  
News + Record Staff

On March 18, the day after closing sit-down service for bars and restaurants, N.C. Gov. Roy Cooper began to encourage residents to call 2-1-1 for food, housing and other assistance related to COVID-19.

The program, which can be accessed online at [www.nc211.org](http://www.nc211.org) or by phone by dialing 2-1-1, has been in place in North Carolina for about a decade, aided by the United Way of North Carolina. The resource is geared to connect "North Carolina communities with free and easy access to health and human services, government services, and disaster resources," according to information provided by the United Way of Chatham County. So far during the pandemic, the service has answered more than 12,000 calls across the state with



about 7,500 being related to COVID-19.

First implemented in Atlanta in 1997, states and communities have implemented the same 2-1-1 program and now nearly 95 percent of people in the United States are able to access the resources that 2-1-1 provides. Callers in North Carolina can find resources

for basic needs, education, healthcare, income support, mental health and legal services.

N.C. 2-1-1 does not offer medical, legal or other advice, but connects residents to a service provider from its vast database. A majority of the calls to N.C. 2-1-1 in the recent weeks have been for food

pantries and motel payment assistance. In Chatham County, a majority of the calls have been for housing and utility assistance.

"NC 2-1-1 is an important resource every day for families in our community who may experience a crisis such as food insecurity or unemployment," said Dina Reynolds, the executive director of the United Way of Chatham County. "During times like this with the COVID-19 pandemic, the needs of all Chatham residents will increase and I am proud that 2-1-1 will be here to help."

Another reason to use N.C. 2-1-1 to find resources is that the need it tracked. While the program retains a stringent privacy protocol for callers, the needs of a state or county can be tracked based on the needs of the callers. This information will help build the system and find where supports are

most needed in a specific area of the state.

"Services like NC 2-1-1 are critical during times of emergency," Cooper said. "We need to make sure North Carolinians have access to the resources they need while we continue to work together to prevent the spread of COVID-19."

North Carolinians can also get updates on COVID-19 via text by sending COVIDNC to 898211. Those who sign up via text will receive general information and updates through their phones. By signing up via text, residents can alleviate the "expected high call volume" for updates on the virus, according to a press release sent earlier in March.

For more information, visit the website at [www.nc211.org](http://www.nc211.org) or call 2-1-1.

*Casey Mann can be reached at [CaseyMann@Chathamnr.com](mailto:CaseyMann@Chathamnr.com).*

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**Mountaire held a ‘truckload’ chicken sale on Sunday based out of the employee parking lot of its Siler City plant. Workers who typically processed chickens for wholesale to grocers and others switched roles, volunteering to help distribute the chicken to the public.**

Staff photo by Peyton Sickles



# MOUNTAIRE

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coming vehicles through a labyrinth in the parking lot, fitting as many cars as possible into each of the lot rows. At the end of each row, workers allowed cars, one row of cars at a time, to merge into two lanes to where drivers made their chicken order. Patience wore thin with some drivers with one shouting, “This line has not moved at all!”

Workers and volunteers greeted people in their cars, with one writing the Post-it note “ticket,” while another would collect payment. Credit cards were accepted, but Mountaire staff were only collecting exact cash amounts to avoid making change to protect drivers from contamination from cash, according to Reif.

The two rows of cars then continued around the lot to the trucks where their chicken was loaded into the cars by workers. “Two cases,” one would shout while another would confirm “two cases” while pulling the 40-pound boxes from the truck. The vehicles were then directed to an exit that allowed only right turns, pushing all traffic into downtown.

“We organized the event so people never had to get out of their vehicles,” Reif said. “Our teams volunteered their time and worked quickly and carefully to minimize exposure to the community.”

Shortly after 1 p.m., the chicken supply

in the trucks had run dry — having sold the full allotment of 80,000 pounds of chicken in just a couple of hours. Mountaire did not anticipate the “high demand,” according to Reif. He noted Mountaire originally planned to only have one truck of chicken available at the sale, but brought the second out in “just in case.”

“We want to thank all those customers we were able to help [Sunday],” Reif said. “We are grateful for every one of our employees who volunteered their time on their day off to help fill a need in the community.”

Mountaire is working to find ways to do additional truckload sales in the coming days based on the lessons learned from the weekend, Reif said. The company will host truckload sales from 9 a.m. until noon on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at the Saint Julia Catholic Church, located at 210 Harold Hart Rd., off U.S. Hwy.64, in Siler City. The Chatham County Sheriff’s Office will manage the traffic along U.S. Hwy. 64 while the Siler City Police Department will handle traffic on the Church property, according to Reif.

“This will keep the trucks and the traffic outside of downtown Siler City,” Reif said.

Reif said Mountaire wants to continue to help families in the community and distribute food.

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



**Waiting on the lily**

They say a watched pot never boils. News + Record photographer Kim Hawks watched and waited for this Atamasco Lily to unfurl while she was on a hike in Chatham County last week, but it stubbornly refused — and still looked beautiful in the process.

Photo by Kim Hawks

# CCCC transitioning College and Career Readiness classes to online

From Central Carolina Community College

The Central Carolina Community College College and Career Readiness (CCR) program is transitioning to online classes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

All High School Equivalency (HSE) and Adult High School Diploma (AHS) classes transitioned to distance classes effective April 1.

All English as Second Language (ESL) and Civics/Citizenship classes transitioned to distance classes April 6.

Students who have questions or concerns can contact Sandra Thompson, CCCC Associate Dean of College and Career Readiness, at 919-545-8666 or by email at ccrenrollment@cccc.edu. Students also will need to use this contact information to enroll in the classes.

“For academic support, students will have an assigned instructor who will monitor their progress, answer questions, and offer assistance with any issues that may arise. For non-academic services, I would refer everyone to the college’s website (www.cccc.edu) for a comprehensive listing of resources,” Thompson said. “We are also available to answer questions and address concerns by email at ccrenrollment@cccc.edu.”

To learn more about CCCC’s CCR programs, visit [www.cccc.edu/ecd/college-career-readiness/](http://www.cccc.edu/ecd/college-career-readiness/).

# TAX

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The Article 46 local sales tax option was approved by county voters in March after being put on the ballot by unanimous decision of the county board. The tax puts an additional quarter-cent on all purchases that apply sales tax except for gas and unprepared food like groceries.

“As it stands right now, we are continuing to move forward with the implementation of the Article 46 sales tax,” Dudley said. “Given the timing for a Board of Commissioners vote and then notification and requirements of the N.C. Department of Revenue, the earliest the sales tax would go into effect would be October 1st.”

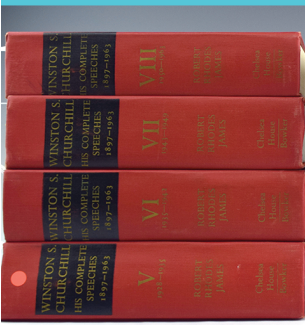
The county commissioners will next meet on Monday, April 20, at the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference

Center. The meeting will be closed to the public due to the governor’s order on mass gatherings, limiting them to no more than 10 people, but individuals will be able to submit public comments prior to that. However, the meeting will be live-streamed as always on the county’s website.

Reporter Zachary Horner can be reached at [zhorn@chathamnr.com](mailto:zhorn@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at @ZachHorn-CNR.


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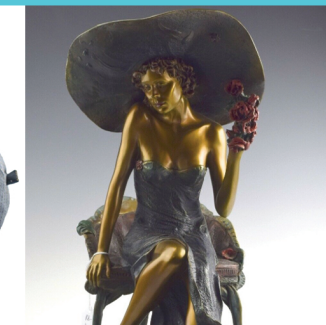
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# GROCERY

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on in-demand goods. Amber and her co-workers spend hours each work day dealing with the public and staying busy restocking toilet paper, eggs, canned goods and other essential items in high demand now due to COVID-19 fears.

“It’s not our fault we don’t have things on the shelf that you want,” Amber said. “Don’t take your anger out on us. We’re just as frustrated. And if we do limit the amount of what can be bought, people get mad. We’re just trying to do everything we can to make sure everybody gets what they need.”

Amber said employees unload trucks and distribute goods onto the shelves as quickly as they can. New store rules now prohibit employees from telling customers when those trucks come in to prevent “runs” on the

store. Still, by the time the workers themselves are able to get the chance to purchase the things they need themselves, most of it is already gone.

“Employees need toilet paper too,” she said.

Amber shared a story of one customer who filled a grocery cart with meat and other goods, ignoring limit signs posted on some items like milk, toilet paper and fresh meats. The employees explained to the customer that she couldn’t buy it all “because other people need meat too.” The woman responded by calling her co-worker a profanity.

“We’ve been called every name in the book,” she said.

Amber also worries about the health of her customers as they cram into often-packed stores.

Grocery store workers, exposed to hundreds of customers during a shift, are particularly vulnerable to exposure to the virus. Amber is young — under 21 — the age group that seems



**Siler City Lions Club Sponsored BLOOD DRIVE on SAT., APRIL 18<sup>th</sup> HAS BEEN CANCELED**

most resilient to the virus, often carrying it without any symptoms, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“My fear is getting other people sick,” she said. “Someone going through chemo or something like that. I try to take as many precautions as I can, but I can only do so much.”

Amber also worries about those who survive on the supplemental nutrition assistance program, or SNAP, and WIC, a special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children. SNAP recipients receive a debit card to assist in paying for any food product in a grocery store. Those with WIC can only use their vouchers to purchase items in the store that are labeled WIC. For example, if a gallon of 2 percent milk is a WIC product, but the half-gallons are not, the cashiers are not able to allow them to buy a half gallon with the voucher if all the gallons are gone.

“They are on WIC for a reason,” Amber said. “If you make enough to not be on it, don’t take it.”

Ultimately, Amber is asking for everyone to be patient and be aware of the needs of others because that’s what she’s trying to do.

“I’m not so worried about me,” Amber said, “but about what other people want, what other people need. Taking your frustrations out on the people at the grocery store will not help your situation. We’re trying to give you the best we can. Nobody likes to go to work. We’re doing the best we can for everybody.”

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



# VIEWPOINTS

GUEST EDITORIAL | THE REV. SARA BETH PANNELL

## ‘The disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear ...’

They were sheltered-in-place and doing the safest thing they could: staying home. Their whole world had been turned upside down in a matter of days. Life as they knew it was forever changed and what once seemed unshakeable was suddenly uncertain. Recent events were hard to believe and even harder to watch. News of death was overwhelming and their own lives were at risk. Confused and afraid, they sought refuge in the place where they felt safe: a warm and welcoming home. At home, they were protected from the chaos swirling on the other side of the door.

I wonder if this sounds familiar to you?

Does it sound like you? It sounds like me these days.

It sounds like my loved ones, my family and friends near and far. From my college friend doing COVID triage via telehealth in New York City, to my seminary friend hunkered down by herself in an apartment in Jackson, Mississippi. From my extended family all across our great state, to the members of our church family all across

Chatham County.

It sounds like all of us: hunkered down, seeking shelter, staying home, doing our part to flatten the curve, and trying to make sense of this new reality in which we live these days. Even as people of faith, the news is overwhelming, the danger feels real, and all of it is hard to comprehend.

The good news is: it sounds like Easter, too.

The first Easter all those years ago, where the faithful followers of Jesus were hunkered down at home.

As a pastor, Easter is one of the most magnificent days of the year for me. In worship every Easter I’m frequently drawn to the familiar parts of the story: the garden and the tomb and stone rolled away, the risen Savior who apparently looks a lot like a gardener. Every year, I rejoice in the opportunity to tell the old, old story of brave and faithful women who went to the tomb early on the third day, found it empty, and went to tell the good news.

This year, though, I find myself drawn to the other side

of the Easter story: the part of the story we usually hear the Sunday after Easter, when most everybody is on vacation.

It’s the part of the Easter story that tells us: for three days, most of the disciples sought shelter together in someone’s home.

John’s Gospel describes it this way: “The disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear.”

And who could blame them? They had been on a week-long rollercoaster with Jesus.

They had come to Jerusalem with Jesus for the biggest festival of the year, they were greeted with shouts of praise as Jesus rode into town on a donkey. Then in a matter of days, their friend and teacher had been arrested, beaten, tortured and crucified.

The man for whom they had left everything behind to follow was gone and their own lives were at risk for having followed him. They were confused and afraid, so they did the safest thing they could: stay at home.

I find some comfort in knowing that these unprecedented days we’re living through right

now are really nothing new in the story of God’s great love for the world. Like the disciples on that Easter morning long ago, we too are facing uncertainty, grief and fear in this Easter season. And like the disciples on that Easter morning long ago, we will surely encounter the love of God in our risen Savior.

While they were sheltered together at home, the disciples found themselves suddenly in the presence of the resurrected Jesus. John’s Gospel says, “with the doors locked for fear... Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.”

What a mighty God we serve, who not only sent Jesus to be born in the humility of a stable, but lived this life we live and wore this flesh we wear. With love, he took the form of a servant and humbled himself to the point of death, even death on a cross. With the same life-giving power that brought forth life on the earth, God

brought forth life in the tomb, raising Jesus from the dead and conquering the grave forever. What a powerful Savior we serve, who not only transcends our locked doors, but walks right into our places of fear and grief and uncertainty and offers us His peace: “Peace be with you!” Proving his triumph over death, he shows us his hands and side that bear the wounds he endured for our sake and reminds us that there is no pain or suffering we face that he has not known.

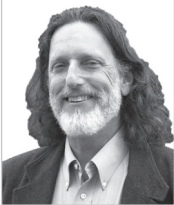
Like the disciples, may our fear give way to joy in our homes this Easter Season. May we be reminded of God’s great love poured out for us in Jesus Christ. May the sight of empty churches this Easter Sunday be nothing to fear, for it’s in the emptiness of a tomb that God has done the most magnificent work of all.

For as the story goes...the risen Jesus is likely to show up in our home this Easter...

*The Rev. Sara Beth Pannell is pastor of Pittsboro United Methodist Church.*

## A return to normal? It just takes time

The prospect of several weeks in stay-at-home mode can seem daunting.



**RANDALL RIGSBEE**  
Randall Reflects

It’s a lifestyle and a work style foreign to most of us, and making it happen is an adjustment. It takes time. Every day feels a little different from the day before. We’re all on a learning curve as we work to flatten the curve.

So far, so good, I’m finding. Staying home and retrofitting routines to fit this temporary new reality, I’ve experienced moments of feeling defeated and despairing. They’ve been few, but intense.

Humans — a social species by nature — weren’t built for isolation. Just watch “Cast Away,” which has Tom Hanks so desperate

for companionship he befriends a volleyball.

The amazing technologies that are helping us mitigate the sting of literal social distancing and are keeping many of us working through this crisis are wonderful and indispensable, but Zoom can’t hug you.

So in those fleeting moments when I feel anxious about the prospect of weeks of staying at home, I wonder how we’re going to do it. Then I remind myself that a month, even two or three months, can go by fast. It seems only like moments ago, for instance, that we were celebrating the new year, even if we were clueless as we raised our glasses cheering 2020 what a peculiar new year we were toasting.

But the span of time between then and now doesn’t seem wide, and I’ve kept that thought — about the speed with which days, months and years pass — close while navigating these uncertain COVID-19-era waters. Even a decade can breeze by fast.

To cite a timely example, it’s been that long ago that a fire sparked in the windy month of March badly damaged the Chatham County Historic Courthouse in Pittsboro.

As tempting as it is to reach for a cliché — “Seems like yesterday!” — to describe my memories of the fire, it wouldn’t be entirely true. Doesn’t seem like yesterday. But it hardly feels like 10 summers, 10 Christmases, 10 periods of 365 days each have come and gone since the afternoon that Chatham County’s historic courthouse shot flames and smoke.

It’s been long enough that there are certainly more than a few folks new to our area since 2010 who may not know the stately courthouse they see as they drive into Pittsboro ever survived such a calamity.

But it has been that long. And survive the courthouse did. After the passage of 3,650 days, my memories of that time — of March 25, 2010, the day of the fire, and the immediate days after — remain sharp and clear, though, paradoxically, also somewhat of a blur.

I remember the hectic pace of our bustling Siler City newsroom as we worked overtime to put out a paper documenting the dramatic and historic event.

We were short-staffed that week, with one reporter on vacation, so those of us on duty were working furiously. Though it’s probably a trick of memory, I conjure an image of myself as the Tasmanian Devil from Bugs Bunny cartoons when I recall the pace of our output. As soon as I finished writing one story, I’d turn my attention to another. That’s the blur part of my memory of that time.

I also recall one memorable moment of almost eerie calm that occurred the Saturday morning after the Thursday the courthouse caught fire. I’d gone to town to see the smoldering building and to talk with anyone who might be doing the same. At that early hour, there were some other folks standing around, gazing at the odd, illogical sight of the courthouse’s charred remains.

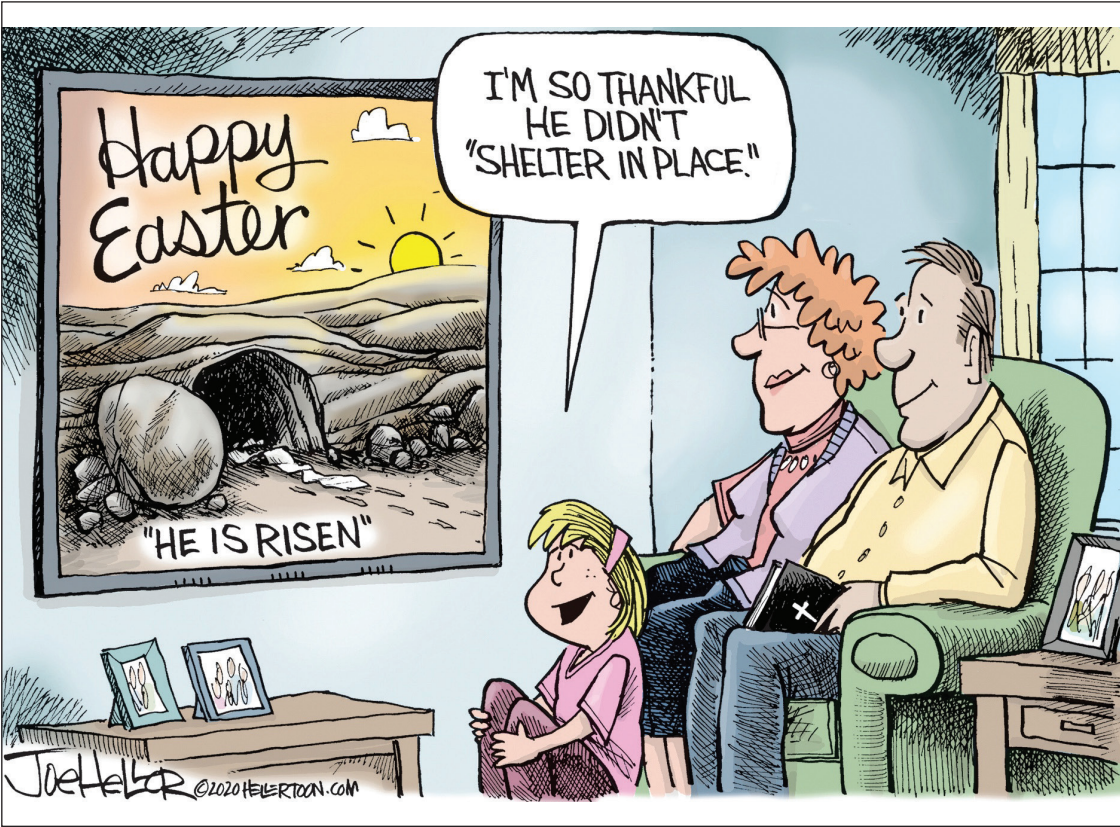
As familiar as Pittsboro and its old county courthouse were to me, having spent countless hours in old building, and working for years from an office right across the street from it, I could have been standing on Mars for how foreign Pittsboro’s newly-adjusted landscape looked.

I wondered — looking at what remained of the courthouse on that mild March morning a decade ago — would Pittsboro ever be the same?

Fast-forwarding 10 years — a period of time long by some measures, swift by others — the courthouse was rebuilt, the familiar landscape restored, and life in Pittsboro returned to normal.

Normal. These days, nothing feels or seems normal. Everything is overshadowed by the pandemic. The things we know and love — the normal things — are on hold or modified, not the same, so I can’t help but view the anniversary of the courthouse fire through a lens smeared by COVID-19.

In those times ahead when COVID-19 stuff overshadows me — and it will happen again; the other night, Jessica (my wife/office-mate) and I watched Trisha Yearwood and Garth Brooks sing and play in a live show on CBS, and the husband and wife duo’s inspiring song and spirit making me nearly weepy — I hope I may remember examples like the courthouse, which stands as a beacon of hope, a reminder that time passes quickly (even two months under orders to stay at home) and a return to the life we know and love, difficult to imagine now, isn’t so far off.



## Kitty Kallen was right: Little things do mean a lot

It’s been said “little things mean a lot.” But just what is a



**BOB WACHS**  
Movin' Around

“little thing”?

Is it, like beauty, in the eye of the beholder? Do the little things ever amount to bigger ones?

Consider, for instance, a single snowflake.

By itself it’s hardly noticeable. But let a couple hundred or so of them get together and they’ll slide a semi off the road. Or take a tiny wasp weighing no more than a nano-ounce. With the right aim, that little wasp can make a 2,000-pound bull charge down a hill and through a fence.

And the life we’re all living now with the spread of a mean virus so little we can’t see it is certainly proof of a little thing meaning a lot.

But this time of the year turns my attention to another little thing, namely Mother Nature’s pollen. I’ve got to assume that when the Grand Designer and Creator undertook creation that pollen was part of the plan. Without pollen today, plants as we know them

would have a hard time simply existing.

Without pollen — and the bees and wind that carries it — we’d have no beans and tomatoes and pine trees and majestic oaks and the like. And, my stars, without pollen there’d be no corn growing for corn on the cob or popcorn, the latter of which would send part of my household into deep mourning.

I’m a big fan of pollen because of its end result; I’m just not that big of a fan while it’s working. And that has nothing to do with it turning my gas grill green or coating the truck with yellow stuff.

It’s because it’s a little thing, a little thing that climbs up my nose, down my throat and behind my contact lenses. Basically, I should remain indoors for most of April but that’s hard to do — even in the midst of being told to stay home, when the sky is turning blue and the grass is going green and the azaleas are doing their thing.

So, I go out outside so I can be tortured by pollen. Have you ever seen a single speck or grain or whatever they’re called of pollen? I looked up a picture of one recently and it looked like a miniature

sweet gum ball or a rolled-up porcupine, all sharp and prickly.

So, I got to thinking (and here you must understand that “got to thinking” is a Southern phrase like “fixing to,” as in it’s fixing to rain, hopefully maybe to wash away the pollen)...I got to thinking that maybe dealing with pollen is sort of like dealing with life. Sometimes it is the prickly things that cause us to take action, as in when pollen gets in my eyes, I have to wash my contacts or when it slides down my throat, I drag out the salt and vinegar and make my mama’s concoction for throat gargling.

It’s when life gets prickly that we need to do what we can to correct or improve it, whether it’s to say “I’m sorry” or “Congratulations” or right now to stay at least six feet away from every other human being. The end result, like the end result of pollen, can be a beautiful thing.

And, by the way, for those folks under, say, 21 or 38 or even 57, Kitty Kallen colored the airways in the 40s and 50s with a little song about how little things really do mean a lot.

Check it out...and try her advice yourself.

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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.

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# VIEWPOINTS

## When a trip to the store is so much more



**CASEY MANN**  
This Is A Mann's World

I woke up early one day last week to venture to the local Dollar General near my home in rural Chatham County. I had learned when the “paper” truck would be arriving and the shelves would be restocked. We are a family of three and have fought the urge to stock up on toilet paper. But we were down to two rolls. I arrived at 7:30 a.m. to see a line already formed at the door. Several people wore masks and for the most part everyone was

keeping a safe distance from one another. As the 30 minutes dragged on, more and more people began to line up. By the time the doors opened at 8, the line stretched around the parking lot. Sadly, there were people who pushed their way through the door, nearly running down a gentleman who wore a mask and walked with the assistance of two canes. I waited, blocking the doorway, so that he could grab his cart. Those of us with mobility quickly moved directly to the paper aisle. It was nearly empty, with shelves being cleared by customers. A sign on the shelf said “one per customer,” but neither the customers nor the staff seemed to be enforcing the limit. As others filled their carts with

toilet paper, there were only two packages left at the back of a bottom shelf. Mind you, this was at about 8:02 a.m. I went to grab one and an older gentleman tried to grab it at the same time. I handed the package to the older man. He looked so grateful. A younger man who went to grab the last package, looked at what I had just done and handed it to me. Now I was the one who was grateful. In the end, I was able to get the few staples I was looking for — one package of toilet paper, coffee filters, paper plates and a half gallon of milk. No eggs, though; they come in on a different truck. I mentioned my morning shopping experience to a friend who said, “Is this what it will be

like living in a socialist society? Everything will be rationed?” I reminded him that we’re actually living under capitalism, supply and demand, a basic tenet. The demand, which is fueled by panic, is high. There is no command to produce more, so companies are continuing to produce at the same rate. And as the demand continues and the supply remains the same, the price of those commodities go up. Such was the case for the toilet paper — it was nearly \$2 more than I would normally pay for the same package. At the same time, I thought about humanity. I thought of those hoarding toilet paper out of fear and some sort of need to feel in control during a situation they have absolutely no control over. And then I

thought about that look on that older man’s face when I handed him the toilet paper I had collected for myself. And how I can only control who I am and what I do under this new world we are all experiencing. I am going to continue to think of others. Those who can’t get to the paper aisle as fast as I can. Those whose limited budgets won’t allow them to hoard a month’s worth of supplies. We are adapting as a family. We are reducing the size and frequency of meals. We are reducing the paper products we use. And we are finding ways to make do with what we have. It’s the only way to flatten the supply and demand curve. And it may just help someone else.

**GUEST COLUMN | ANDREW TAYLOR-TROUTMAN**

## A song of Fierce Hope

Due to the shelter in place restrictions, I am unable to gather at church during Holy Week. So, I worship in the woods around my home with the timbered choir of trees and the chorus in the branches above. Surrounded by birdsong, I think of poet Emily Dickinson’s lines:

*“Hope” is the thing with feathers – that perches on the soul – and sings the tune without the words – and never stops – at all –*

It is a lovely thought to personify hope as a songbird. Yet Dickinson wrote this poem in 1862 when it became clear that the Civil War was not ending anytime soon and that many more people were going to suffer and die. Hope is needed in such tragic times. Dickinson’s songbird is no mere flight of fancy. The poem continues:

*And sweetest – in the Gale – is heard and sore must be the storm – that could abash the Little Bird – that kept so many warm –*

The COVID-19 pandemic is not a war. It is an unseen virus, not a military foe. Yet the death tolls are rising. The projections are grim. As in Dickinson’s time, we know that things will get worse before they get better. How can we sing a song of hope?

The Easter story flies from the celebration of Palm Sunday to the tragedy of Good Friday. Christians have long walked the Via Dolorosa — the way of suffering and sorrow — to the cross. We believe it gets worse before it gets better.

But this year, instead of the metaphor of walking through the valley of the shadow of death, I’m thinking we need to imagine ourselves as a seabird called a whimbrel that can fly through a hurricane!

People of faith have endured storms before. By the time of Jesus, the people of Israel had suffered under the hurricane of war for almost 600 years. First, the Babylonians, then the Persians, then the Greeks and finally the Romans. Certain regimes were better than others, but the bottom line was that Israel suffered under foreign rule. And so, the prophets envisioned a coming Messiah who would establish a new kingdom on earth. They found strength for the present in their hope for what was to come.

On the one hand, Americans cannot relate such brutal occupations. We live in a democracy, a society that enjoys freedoms the ancient world could not have even imagined.

But we do know uncertainty about the future. COVID-19 has stripped away any illusion that we are in control. For all of our technological innovation and medical prowess, we realize that we are at the mercy of forces beyond our powers.

Therefore, we must be courageous. I think the bravest thing we can do today is sing of fierce hope as we endure this pandemic. Wherever you are, be like that songbird flying into the hurricane. Sing into the storm! Trust that there will be clearer skies and brighter days ahead. Have faith that, one day, we will flock together again in large groups to sing hymns of gratitude. And what a morning that we will be!

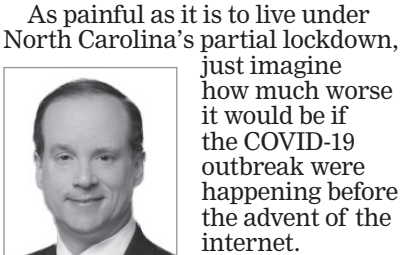
*Andrew Taylor-Troutman is the pastor of Chapel in the Pines Presbyterian Church and author of “Gently Between the Words: Essays and Poems.” He is currently working from home with his wife and three children.*

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## Technology has reduced suffering



**JOHN HOOD**  
John Locke Foundation

As painful as it is to live under North Carolina’s partial lockdown, just imagine how much worse it would be if the COVID-19 outbreak were happening before the advent of the internet.

The damage to our economic well-being would be far more severe, for example. While many goods and services cannot be produced without concentrations of employees and face-to-face transactions, large numbers of North Carolinians are, however imperfectly, working from home. They are videoconferencing, emailing, producing goods and services, buying and selling, and preserving the nexus of relationships that forms a business, large or small.

Keep in mind that “the economy” is not a stack of dollar bills. When the federal government borrows money from creditors to pay out to households, who can then pay their own creditors, little real economic value is created.

Such stopgap relief may make sense — indeed, I think government must step in to soften any blow that is itself delivered by government edict — but the policy does not expand the economy. Production of goods and services still declines. Without online work, it would be declining faster.

The damage to our children’s education would also be more severe in absence of the internet. In several years, colleges and universities have

been moving more and more of their content and coursework online. After the shutdown, then, they already had an infrastructure in place for students to continue their education through distance learning.

The transition has been far rockier for elementary and secondary schools, of course. Not only are their lessons and assignments harder to deliver online, especially for younger students, but also there has been resistance to delivering new academic content to K-12 students on the grounds that it wouldn’t be fair to disabled students and those lacking computers and broadband connections.

While equity concerns are understandable, the vast majority of parents aren’t going to accept a months-long break from learning for their children. The U.S. Dept. of Education has made it clear that proceeding with online education will not be considered a violation of federal law, so public-school districts can use other approaches — including compensatory education once schools reopen — to address the needs of disabled and disadvantaged students while continuing to teach new content through the end of the 2019-20 academic year.

Next, if we look at the front lines of the battle against COVID-19, the role of online networks has proved to be indispensable. State regulators and third-party payers have allowed a major expansion of telemedicine. It helps contain the spread of the virus in at least three ways.

First, it diverts patients with unrelated conditions or minor injuries from emergency rooms, urgent-care centers, and other providers in hotspots where capacity may be

strained. Second, it allows COVID-19 patients with mild-to-moderate symptoms to receive medical attention without leaving their homes and potentially spreading the virus. Third, as North Carolina and other states develop strategies to track the disease — including but not limited to widespread DNA testing for the virus itself — online tools will be essential.

Finally, for millions of people, the Internet is providing at least a semblance of normality under highly stressful conditions. Using online video, they can see as well as talk to their family members and friends.

At the dance studio where I teach on the weekends, our video lessons aren’t just about exercise and technique. They are about maintaining personal connections and combating feelings of isolation and depression for young people (and not-so-young people) whose shared interests have created a tight-knit community.

Whether it be religious services, support groups, book clubs, video “play dates,” or virtual “coffee” with neighbors and colleagues, such uses of modern technology serve a timeless need, the desire for sociability that is deeply imbedded in human nature.

It does not minimize the staggering toll of what we are experiencing to point out that America in 2020 is in some key ways a better place than it was a generation or two ago, when a comparable pandemic would have inflicted vastly more suffering.

*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.*

## Plots, hoaxes, and pandemics

Is the coronavirus the result of a plot by the



**D.G. MARTIN**  
One on One

Chinese to bring down the United States?

Or is it a plot by the United States to punish China? Knowing that

some of us are prone to believe such alarmist reports, there are those who spend their time making up and spreading far-fetched conspiracy theories.

They are people like Nick Body, a fictional Rush Limbaugh-type who lives in Charlotte. He stirs up his podcast listeners with tales of child abduction and other offbeat alarms and somehow makes a good living from these malicious efforts to influence and mislead.

Body is a major character in “A Conspiracy of Bones,” the 19th and latest novel by Charlotte-based and New York Times best-selling author Kathy Reichs. Her series of Temperance Brennan novels were the basis of the long running “Bones” television series. Brennan is a brilliant forensic anthropologist uses her dead-body-examining

skills to solve complicated and deadly crimes.

The new book’s evil character, Body, would claim that the epidemic we are experiencing in real life is the result of some carefully contrived plot by the Chinese, the Russians, or our government.

Here is how Reichs sums up her character’s alarmist con games: “Over the past decade, Body has been particularly vehement on two themes. Plots involving kids. Plots involving medical wrongdoing. Occasionally, his insane theories managed to combine both elements. Many of Body’s harangues focused on disease. Over and over, he returned to the theme of government conspiracy. A sampling: he claims that the Ebola epidemic in West Africa was a biological weapons test performed by America. That SARS was a germ attack against the Chinese. That AIDS was created and distributed by those in power in the U.S. That the anthrax attacks following 9/11 were orchestrated by the government. That banning DDT was a scheme to depopulate the earth by spreading malaria. That Huntington’s disease is caused by a microbe and the government is conspiring to suppress a known cure.

And, my personal favorite, that chemtrails are responsible for mad cow outbreaks.

“There were numerous variations on the evils of vaccination. In the old tried-and-true, Body alleged that vaccination causes autism. In a somewhat more creative twist, he argued that Bill Gates was behind the plot to use immunization for population control. In another series of tirades, he insisted that the government was sneaking RFID chips into children via inoculation.”

Reichs has Brennan figure out Body’s deadly schemes and bring him down.

But the beginning of the story seemingly has nothing to do with Body. What gets Brennan’s attention is a mutilated, unidentified body found in rural Cleveland County and sent to the medical examiner in Charlotte for identification.

The fictional Charlotte-Mecklenburg medical examiner, Dr. Margot Heavner, and Brennan have a long-standing and bitter rivalry. So Heavner does not ask Brennan to assist in the official identification process. Brennan is miffed and decides to conduct her own investigation. With the help of old friends in law enforcement, she tracks

down multiple leads in Cleveland County, Winston-Salem (an ashram), Mooresville, Tega Cay near Charlotte, and all over Charlotte, from Myers Park to Central Avenue and modest developments in west Charlotte. At every stop Brennan and Reichs teach readers lessons in science and technology. They show how good law enforcement can use such learning to track down leads and bring the bad guys to justice.

In the end, Brennan connects Body to crimes that go far beyond his conspiracy theory exploitations.

Even more satisfying for Brennan, her superior work results in putting a negative spotlight on Dr. Heavner, who has to leave her job in disgrace. All this gives us hope that the next fictional Charlotte-Mecklenburg medical examiner will value Brennan and put her great skills to work.

We will hope, too, that Reichs will soon bring us another story of Brennan’s adventures in science and law enforcement.

*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.*

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# COURTHOUSE

Continued from page A1

winds. The flames spread fast.

## ‘It didn’t take long to see the courthouse was a tinderbox’

At those same moments, recalled the then-chairman of the county Board of Commissioners Sally Kost, commissioners were in a room inside the Courthouse Annex building just across the street from the courthouse, engaged in a mandatory ethics training session. Vicki McConnell, the county’s finance director, suddenly interrupted the meeting, bringing commissioners the stunning news. The courthouse was on fire. “That event was really something,” recalled then-county manager Charlie Horne, who’s now retired. “We all rushed to the Annex’s balcony and watched in horror,” said Kost, who now lives in Colorado. From their position standing on the breezeway of the Annex building, commissioners and other county staff gathered there had an unimpeded view of the quickly unfolding situation. “It didn’t take long to see the courthouse was a tinderbox,” Horne recalled.

## ‘A deep sense of sadness’

Although renovations were under way in the courthouse, and the work often noisy, court and other daily routines continued uninterrupted inside the building. In addition to the upstairs courtroom and related offices, the building housed the county probation and parole office, district attorney’s office and, in a small corner of the southwestern portion of the ground floor, the Chatham County Historical Museum. In the weeks just prior to the fire, the historic courthouse had been the setting of court hearings related to former Senator John Edwards and the alleged existence of incriminating video tapes of Edwards and his mistress, Rielle Hunter, the proceedings drawing national news crews to town. “There were ridiculous conspiracy theories that the fire was deliberately started to destroy evidence, sex tapes,” Kost said. “I believe it was CNN that called to check on the whereabouts and condition of these tapes.”

On that early spring day, the folks who worked in the courthouse were conducting business as usual. “We had been in a Superior Court Criminal Administrative session,” recalled Superior Courth Judge Allen Baddour, “so things had been fairly busy that morning. By mid- to late-afternoon, court had ended and I was in chambers, which was up on the third floor on the southeast corner.” Baddour was meeting with an attorney when he heard the fire alarm. “Honestly, with all the renovation work going on at that time, this was a fairly regular occurrence, and we didn’t really respond, though the attorney I was meeting with left,” he said. “It was too loud to continue talking. The alarm continued, which was unusual, so I grabbed my keys and went down the stairs.” Baddour exited the building from the east-side door and, turning around and looking up, he saw the fire. “I immediately ran back in the building with Lisa Robinson, a probation officer, to clear the building,” he said. “Once outside, we stood and watched things. I distinctly remember wondering whether I would get back in the building that evening, or whether I’d have to wait until morning. After a few hours, it became clear — I wouldn’t go back in at all. My thinking shifted from worrying about my computer, my robe and my personal effects to feeling relief that everyone was safe, but also a deep sense of sadness at the loss of such an iconic Chatham institution.”

## ‘An audible gasp’

A bit farther down U.S. 64, Bett Wilson Foley, a Pittsboro native and later a commissioner on Pittsboro’s Town Board, was leaving work at Habitat for Humanity. “I remember hearing sirens,” Foley said, “and I ran out to the street and saw smoke pouring out of the historic Chatham County Courthouse.” She said she remembers grabbing her camera and running toward the courthouse. “By this time,” Foley said, “the smoke had intensified into black, billowy clouds.” Onlookers started gathering in the vicinity of the burning building, which had stood as the epicenter of Pittsboro, the county seat, since its construction in 1881, watching as flames and smoke intensified. “A group huddled together around the circle in horror,” recalled Foley. “For the most, part people watched in silence, like we were in a collective sorrow. Firefighters seemed to understand this and allowed the crowd to stay, at a safe distance. They were very respectful.

When bright orange flames shot out of the smoke, there was an audible gasp.” In those moments, Foley said, efforts to extinguish the massive fire “seemed futile.”

## ‘I got my gear out and started filming’

Foley and many others at the scene, cameras drawn, were snapping pictures. Triangle area television crews were en route and would soon be broadcasting. But the first moving images of the blaze were captured by local documentary filmmaker Mike O’Connell, who first observed the smoke driving home from his job at UNC-TV in Chapel Hill, where he was a staff videographer. “Nearing town, I saw smoke,” O’Connell recalled. “I said to myself, ‘That looks like smoke coming from the courthouse.’ As I got closer, across from the Hardees I said to myself, ‘That IS smoke coming from the courthouse...I need to shoot this.’ O’Connell was driving a work vehicle and he had his camera gear with him. “Quickly, I got my gear out and started filming,” he said. “I think I was the only television media person on the scene at that time. The police didn’t even have the police tape up yet. I was able to film right next to the firemen as they deployed hoses and sprang into action on the southwest corner. I could see and filmed the wind fanning flames licking out from under the southwest roof corner. At that moment I remember thinking ‘Do your job, keep it simple, stay focused, pay attention.’”

## ‘It seemed futile’

At 4:43 p.m., Pittsboro Fire Chief Daryl Griffin, a veteran firefighter since 1981, would soon be battling the biggest blaze of his career. “A gentleman ran up the street,” Griffin recounted a few days after the fire for a story published in the April 1, 2010, issue of The Chatham News, “and told us there were flames coming out of the courthouse roof.” Pittsboro firefighters, paid and volunteer, sprang into action and moments later, Griffin and his crew arrived at the south corner of the building in the first fire truck on the scene. “A little while into the fire, it was obvious we had a water supply issue,” said Horne. “We didn’t have fire apparatus to work a fire of that magnitude, so mutual aid agreements kicked in.” Pittsboro firefighters soon had help from a long roster of area fire departments: Siler City, North Chatham, Moncure, Bonlee, Silk Hope, Goldston, Deep River, West Sanford, Northview, Apex and Parkwood, with other departments on stand-by. “What I remember most was how the fire departments from all the communities worked together to try to get the fire under control and to save the structure,” said Kost. “It seemed futile,” Foley remembers, “watching firefighters battle this huge fire with their small hoses. But they got it contained.” It would be several more hours, though, well into early Friday morning, before firefighters could declare victory. Ladder trucks from Siler City and North Chatham fire departments arrived and, by 5:16 p.m., less than an hour after the fire was sparked, firefighters were aiming hoses from above the structure. They would continue to battle the blaze for hours, until about an hour and a half past midnight; after the clock tower had collapsed into the upstairs courtroom, the blaze finally came under control.

## ‘A hundred thoughts’

As Horne watched the event unfolding, his mind was reeling. “A hundred thoughts immediately popped into my head,” he said. “Is everyone out? Are firefighters safe? Where will alternate meetings and offices need to be? How did it start? What about recovery? Will anything be left for reconstruction?” Soon, many would be wondering if the courthouse, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979, would be rebuilt. “The community was in mourning after this loss,” Foley said, “not knowing then whether or not it would be restored.” “It was a rough time for the community,” said Kost, “but just after the fire, the commissioners were committed to including residents of Chatham County in the decision process.” “We went through a lengthy process of public discourse about what to do with the building, and eventually the public and the county commissioners agreed to rebuild the courthouse,” said Baddour, for whom the historic courthouse had always been a special place. As an assistant district attorney, his office was in that building, and he lived a block and a half from the building during that time. “Often, after dinner or on a weekend afternoon, I would walk my young children up to the courthouse, to walk around, see the courtroom, and maybe grab a file to work on after they were in



Staff photo by Peyton Sickles

The Chatham County Courthouse in Pittsboro shows no signs today of the flames that tore through large portions of the building after an accidental fire was sparked during construction work 10 years ago.



Photo courtesy of Wilson Foley

Firefighters were on the scene soon after the courthouse caught fire around 4:30 p.m. They would fight through the evening and into the next morning before it was contained.

bed,” he said. “It had a special place in my heart and the hearts of my family.” Convening about a week after the fire, county commissioners voted to rebuild the courthouse. The decision was unanimous. “I was really glad for that,” Baddour said, “and also that my good friend Taylor Hobbs and his dad, Grimm, [both of the Pittsboro firm Hobbs Architects] would be in charge of the reconstruction.” “There was never a question about rebuilding the courthouse,” Kost recalled. “It was built so that if burned, the structural integrity of the building remained. One of the biggest decisions was how to purpose the old courtroom, respecting the historical significance, the needs of the community, and the future needs of the court.” Sifting through what was left of the building in the aftermath of the fire, county officials found a lot of good news. Exterior walls remained sound. The Chatham Historical Association salvaged hundreds of artifacts stored in the building which had sustained little or no damage. And a few days after the fire, Kost and other county officials toured the inside of the burnt building with then-Congressman Bob Etheridge. “I was amazed,” Kost said, “that signage on the first floor, as well as light fixtures, remained.”

## ‘Truly a treasure’

Three years after the fire, the rebuilt courthouse — retaining the second floor courtroom and now boasting a larger ground floor museum of local history — opened on April 20, 2013. “The rebuilt courthouse is truly a treasure,” said Baddour. “It is a masterful recreation of the historic building, with important and appropriate accommodations to modern needs, such as audio visual needs.” Though the Historic Courthouse is “rarely used for court these days,” Baddour said, “we do occasionally hold civil sessions of court. I’m really glad we rebuilt the ground floor as we did, to accommodate the museum. It’s a great resource.” Ten years later, many close to the events of that day still reflect on the old building, the fire that nearly toppled it, and the resilience of the building. “I think about the old courthouse with great fondness,” he said. “I think about it around this time every year, and also in January, when the Chatham Justice Center opened. Both dates give me a reason to remember where we’ve been, and where we’ve come. We were lucky to have been on the way to a new courthouse even before the fire, and had visionary leadership in Chatham County that saw the needs of the court system and met those needs, so that we

can serve well the citizens of Chatham.” Kost, likewise, still reflects on the day the courthouse burned and the decisions commissioners faced in the immediate aftermath, though this year — the 10th anniversary of the fire — was a bit different, the former county commissioner said. “With all that is going on in the world,” said Kost, “this is the first March 24th that I didn’t think about that day, and how devastating it was to the community.” “As I drive by going through town,” O’Connell said, “I think about how beautifully it has been restored. I haven’t been back inside in years, but knowing it’s there is fantastic. A community is more than a building or a place; it’s also shared experience. I believe that when presented with a great challenge, people rise to the occasion. I saw that then and I see that around me now.” O’Connell’s documentary about the fire and the re-building of the courthouse, a co-production between UNC-TV and Haw River Films called “The Courthouse,” is available to watch for free anytime at <https://www.pbs.org/video/the-courthouse-documentary-mv5bz5/> “I shared it via social media last week around the 10th anniversary,” said O’Connell. “People seemed to appreciate that. One of my goals was to leave behind a record for those that come after us. Part of my research was going through Chatham News and Record newspapers, some as old as the 1890’s and some even older. Just like the journalists back then, I think it’s worthy to document our time here in this beautiful town. I feel fortunate to have been able to have done so.”

## ‘Full of steel’

O’Connell, in documenting the rebuilding, observed that the old building — 139 years old now — came back not only restored, but stronger. “Architects Taylor and Grimsley Hobbs were fascinating,” O’Connell said, “as it was their restoration project when the fire occurred. They didn’t seem to flinch and continued methodically through the rebuilding. A lot of the nuts and bolts of the rebuilding process are in the film. Grimsley explains what a wooden ‘fire joist’ is and how they worked to save the brick walls decades after being installed. The highly skilled and talented carpenters and craftsmen from that era are much like the ones who rebuilt it in our time. That courthouse will never burn again. It’s full of steel, built like a fortress.”

Randall Rigsbee can be reached at [rigsbee@chathamnr.com](mailto:rigsbee@chathamnr.com).



Photo courtesy of Mike O’Connell

Three years after the 2010 fire, the rebuilt courthouse, shown here during reconstruction, was re-opened for use.



# SCHOOLS

Continued from page A1

novel coronavirus — and a state mandate to close all schools but still keep educating, Jordan-Matthews Principal Tripp Crayton, the 2020 Chatham County Schools Principal of the Year, and biology teacher Jessica Sandel were still doing their jobs, though under very unusual circumstances.

“Not a bit,” Crayton said, responding to a question about how much of his schooling prepared him for this. “This is probably the most challenging experience I’ve dealt with. There’s a lot of gray, and I like things in black and white.”

In his 14th year as a principal, Crayton said he’s trying to balance keeping his students and faculty both academically engaged and emotionally “OK” during this odd time. Sandel said she’s trying to do the same.

“It’s not even so much about making sure the kids know biology, it’s checking on them to make sure they’re OK,” said Sandel, who is both the 2014-2015 Jordan-Matthews Teacher of the Year and 2016 Lucrecia Herr Biology Teacher Award from the Association of Southeastern Biologists. “This is a huge shift for their norm and their structure. Them being home and not being able to see anybody, it’s crazy. We’re also just checking on them as a person. That’s probably 50 percent of this.”

## A ‘new’ set of standards

On Friday, March 27, the state Department of Public Instruction instituted new guidance for public schools across the state, “strongly encourag(ing)” remote learning, defined as “learning that takes place outside of the traditional school setting using various media and formats, such as but not limited to: video conference, telephone conference, print material, online material, or learning management systems.”

The best kind of remote learning, the state guidance advises, is “accessible” by all students, meets curricular needs and “considers the whole child as well as the home learning environment.”

What that actually looks like in practice can depend on several things, including how prepared a district is for getting learning materials ready and having devices to receive that material.

Amanda Hartness, CCS’ assistant superintendent for the Academic Services & Instructional Support Division, said Chatham was prepared, even though it has been a shift.

“I would definitely say it’s been an adjustment, for some teachers more than others. I think Chatham’s ahead of the curve,” Hartness said. “As I look to neighboring counties and other surrounding districts, some of them still don’t have their remote learning plans up and running. We have provided families with devices for K-12, and many districts don’t have the capacity for that.”

But that planning and device capacity does not preclude the district and its schools from answering

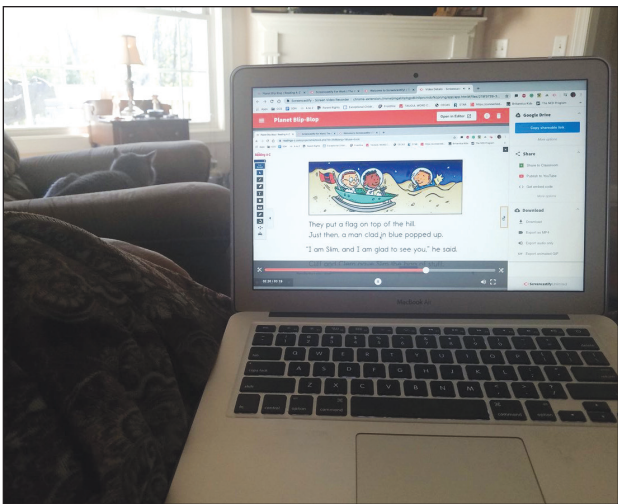


Photo courtesy of Becky Bouldin

**Virginia Cross Elementary School special education teacher Becky Bouldin posted this photo on her Twitter account (@becky\_bouldin) April 3 with the caption: ‘So excited to make videos for my students using @Screencastify! #LearningANewTool #SoSimpleToUse #Lovelt #VCEatHome #CCSatHome #Challenge @VirginiaCrossEI’.**

tough questions. On that “whole child” part of the DPI guidance — the state has been emphasizing in recent years educating every part of a student, including their social and emotional skills. As Sandel said, that becomes more difficult in a distance learning environment. Crayton said he’s been emphasizing to his teachers the need to check in on students beyond their academics.

“Making sure the kids are OK, they’ve got what they need — and if they don’t, they can reach out to our counseling staff and our social worker,” Crayton said. “It goes further than the academic piece. I’m fairly confident that (teachers are) doing everything they can to make sure they’ve seen or heard from every kid.”

Sandel said she’s brought home components of her school lab so she can do experiment demonstrations for students through Zoom meetings. After spring break, she’ll teach her students the parts of a microscope and how to use it. But doing that while trouble-shooting issues with remote learning software and answering questions just like any other day in class, she said, requires a lot.

“A lot of it is, ‘OK, I’ve got to figure this out,’” Sandel said. “It’s been hours and hours and hours spent, ‘How do I make this work?’ Not just in an online environment but for EC [Exceptional Children] kids, and English language learners, and honors kids. It’s meeting the needs of the students that we have in our classroom. It’s been a lot of time.”

## Accessibility for all

Grading is still allowed for assignments during this time in North Carolina public schools — if “critical factors” are met. That includes making sure the remote learning tools are “accessible by all students for which the learning is intended and is responsive to diverse learning groups,” according to the DPI guidance. But in Chatham, as in many other places, that’s a barrier.

According to the 2018 Chatham County Community Assessment, fewer than 60 percent of Chatham residents reported having “good quality internet,” with “stark differences in quality across the county.” For example, 44 percent of

residents in western Chatham felt they had “good quality internet,” compared to two-thirds in the eastern part of Chatham.

This lack of broadband access across the county has been addressed by county leaders many times, with particularly prescient words spoken by County Manager Dan LaMontagne at a February 28 breakfast with Chatham’s elected officials, government leaders and legislative representatives.

“It’s extremely valuable to our students,” he said. “Their homework is increasingly online. This is really a needed utility throughout the state.”

This was 13 days before N.C. Governor Roy Cooper signed an executive order closing all the state’s public schools for two weeks, a period later extended to May 15.

Crayton estimates that around 90 kids, 18 percent of his school’s student population, don’t have internet access at all. The school has been making paper packets for students to provide them something to do, but even that has its limitations.

“The struggle with that, as you can probably imagine, is those kids are not getting any virtual face-to-face time,” Crayton said. “They’re having to learn on their own, figure things out on their own. If a teacher has 15 kids on paper packets, how does she communicate with them? Those are things we’re just having to work through and figure out how to make happen.”

Last year, the district made an agreement with the 1 Million Project, an initiative to bring internet hotspots free to needy students across America. Keith Medlin, the district’s director of technology & communications, said at the time that the hotspots can provide 10 free gigabytes of data a month, accounting for 900 emails, 900 webpage visits and 10 hours of instructional videos.

But picking up those hotspots was not mandatory, and as Crayton says, they don’t ensure broad equality in access.

“Just because a kid has a hotspot doesn’t mean they get equal access as those who have full internet,” Crayton said. “Hotspots can be slow. It counts on a student having cell service on their phone.”

Hartness said that achieving that kind of equality has been the dis-

trict’s “biggest challenge” — “We do have students and staff who aren’t getting the same experience,” she said. And because of that, she said the county won’t meet all the critical factors to continue evaluations for all grade levels.

## Making the most of it

Many groups are facing particular challenges during this time.

The Class of 2020 is undergoing an abnormal senior year, as Crayton says: “We’re really concerned about them. Especially me. We know this is extremely hard for them. They don’t have a prom. We don’t know what’s going to happen for graduation. All these senior experiences they’re not getting, they’re facing a lot.”

Teachers who are parents, trying to manage their kids at home, as Sandel says, regarding her two kids: “I get up really early before they do to get a lot of stuff done. You try to get your kids going with something, and then once my school day, once my teaching day is over, I’m focusing more on my kids. They’re doing stuff more on the evenings and the weekends. We’re just doing the best that we can.”

The district and its schools are finding ways to make the most of it. If you go to Twitter and search “#CCSatHome,” you’ll find a plethora of examples of how teachers are spending their time.

The Northwood High School Twitter account (@NHSCargers) posted a picture on April 1 of a teacher teaching about hydrogen using what looked like a child’s whiteboard. Siler City Elementary’s Twitter page (@SCEBulldogs) posted multiple pictures March 30 of students and teachers “#DEAR”-ing (dropping everything and reading). And Becky Bouldin (@becky\_bouldin), a special education teacher at Virginia Cross Elementary school, posted a photo of herself April 3 making videos for her students using Screencastify, with hashtags including #LearningANewTool and #SoSimpleToUse.

All this while still working with some uncertainty as to when school will resume. The governor’s most recent executive order says school will resume after May 15.

“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 March 23 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.”

In the meantime, the district is doing what it can. Hartness, Crayton and Sandel all say good has come out of this situation, mostly in how they understand Chatham’s students.

Hartness: “We’ve had teachers dabbling in all of these things, but I think we as educators sometimes underestimate what these kids are able to do. It’s reminded us sometimes that kids will meet the expectations that we set for them. We probably will have teachers that will utilize these digital platforms more.”

Crayton: “We live in world where we want answers now, and I’m the same way. This has caused me to slow down a lot and be patient and understanding of what our students are going through. It’s just a tough time for them. I really feel for the Class of 2020 right now.”

Sandel said students will often come into her classroom during a normal day with their earphones in, listening to music, almost shutting themselves off from the world. Now, with the world shutting them off from each other, they seem more ready to talk.

“I feel like I’ve gotten to know my students a little different,” she said. “They’re all answering how they are. Just emailing with the kids back and forth about what their day is like, how they’re doing. We’re getting to know them a little better.”

Reporter Zachary Horner can be reached at [zhorn@chathamnr.com](mailto:zhorn@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at @ZachHornerCNR.

# WRESTLING WITH INTERNET INEQUALITY



Submitted photo

**Keith Medlin is the chief information and technology officer of Chatham County Schools. In one week, his team was able to distribute 2,000 laptops to families in Chatham County.**

## Schools distributing laptop, hotspots

**BY CASEY MANN**  
News + Record Staff

With students now learning from home, the Chatham County Schools’ Digital Learning and Technology Department has been forced to work quickly to ensure that regardless of their access to internet, all students have access to quality education materials.

The day before Gov. Roy Cooper ordered N.C. schools closed on March 14 because of COVID-19, CCS sent a survey to parents of students to assess students’ access to technology and the internet. The purpose, according to Keith Medlin, Chief Information & Technology Officer of Chatham County Schools, was to be “proactive” in case schools needed to close.

It turns out they were right on time.

Of the approximately 9,000 students in Chatham County, 6,618 students responded to the study, which was conducted online, by phone and on paper. Only about half of the county’s 2,600 high school students responded to the survey, something Medlin attributed to the fact that those students have a school-provided laptop. (Chatham County Schools has been providing laptops to high school students for use during the school year as part of the One-to-One program since 2008.)

In addition to supplying laptops to high school students, the county is already participating in the 1 Million Project — a nonprofit which provides hotspots to students — founded by Marcelo Claude, executive chairman of the board of Sprint Corporation. The county distributed internet hotspots from the 1 Million Project to high school seniors without reliable access earlier in the academic year through the program for the first time this year. Medlin noted that the current program is for students in high school, but the organization is working to expand that coverage to students in lower grades in the wake of COVID-19.

When Cooper released the order to close North Carolina schools, Medlin and a team of eight technicians who work for Chatham County Schools, with the support of school staff, began to assemble a massive distribution program. In one week, the team distributed just shy of 2,000 laptops already in the schools’ possession to students in elementary and middle school students. Each laptop needed to be tracked, and each parent needed to sign loaner agreements in which they agree to be financially responsible for it. Medlin created an iPhone app for the team to use for laptop distribution at each of the schools where parents were able to pickup the equipment. The technicians could take a photograph of the parent’s signature on the loaner agreement using the phone, connect that agreement to a distributed laptop and connect it all to each student’s account as the parent remained in their car.

“I’m really proud of

the work done to make it happen,” Medlin said. “This allowed everyone to be safe and help facilitate social distancing for employees and for families.”

Even with the mass distribution of technology, Medlin said that there are still significant gaps in internet connectivity in the county, breaking down into “every variation” in Chatham County — those who can afford it, but don’t have access; those who have access, but can’t afford it; and those who don’t have access and can’t afford it.

According to the survey of students performed by Medlin’s team, 88.5 percent of students did have some form of reliable internet with 76 percent using DSL, cable or fiber. The survey purposely used the phrase “reliable internet” as access to internet doesn’t matter if the access doesn’t have the bandwidth to do a class online with video using a program such as Zoom or Skype.

“This is not inclusive of all Chatham County residents,” Medlin said. “The density of students in new neighborhoods are more likely to have access, but in other areas of the county, pockets remain with limited access.”

Medlin said the school system is “tailoring” education resources in a way that “encompassed the broad variance of internet connectivity in the community.”

The Chatham County Schools has created a new website — <https://sites.google.com/chatham.k12.nc.us/ccs-ahl/> — for at-home learning, which includes resources for parents, including a listing of school campuses that have internet access from the parking lot. That list includes the Bennett and Bonlee Schools, J.S. Waters in Goldston, Moncure School, Virginia Cross Elementary School in Siler City and Horton Middle in Pittsboro.

“Families can stay in the car, contact teachers and download content,” Medlin said.

In addition, school system staff created and distributed to parents a combined total of 340,000 pages of learning materials in “robust packets” that should cover several weeks of instruction that can all be obtained completely offline.

“We take it seriously and continue to look at it seriously,” Medlin said. “It’s a tailored approach. Hopefully, regardless of access, students will have access to high quality learning materials. And access, even if by phone, to a teacher.”

Medlin said the program “continues to evolve” as the team receives new information and adapts.

“This is an opportunity for the district to rise to the challenge and still work to achieve learning equity,” he said. “When we talk about healthy communities, it begins with good relationships with elected bodies, organizations where everyone wants to make things right and professionals that care. Extraordinary things can happen.”

Casey Mann can be reached at [CaseyMann@Chathamnr.com](mailto:CaseyMann@Chathamnr.com).

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OBITUARIES

CHARLES E. FULLER

Charles E. Fuller, 70, died from complications of diabetes on March 24, 2020, at the Laurels of Chatham in Pittsboro, NC. He was born in Harnett County to Jasper Fuller and Pauline Ashworth on December 16, 1949.

He was a project manager for Billings and Garrett for many years. He enjoyed fishing, farming, animals, his grandchildren and the love of his life, Jean. He was predeceased by his parents; his wife, Jean Willard Fuller; siblings, Everette Fuller, Violet Duke, Ava Bowling; son, Chuck Wicker; and granddaughter, Aurora Whaley.

He is survived by his sisters, Sally Fuller, Nona Fuller, and Nina McIntyre. He is additionally survived by children TJ Whaley, Cindy Little, Dana Wicker, and Steve Marlowe; along with grandchildren, Chip Wicker, Robyn Stafford, Emeilia Martin, Crystal Meyer, Jacob Marlowe, Dylan Marlowe, Christian Godfrey, Frances Whaley, and eight great-grandchildren; and a host of nieces and nephews.

A celebration of his life will be held at a later date due to the pandemic.

Memorial contributions may be made to a charity of ones choice.

HENRY ARNOLD CHALMERS

Henry Arnold Chalmers, 66 of Sanford, passed away Wednesday, April 1, 2020 at Laurels of Chatham of Pittsboro.

Funeral service was held at 1 p.m. Sunday, April 5 at Knotts Funeral Home. Interment followed at the First Church of Christ in Broadway.

BRENDA C. FOXX

Brenda C. Foxx, 59, of Siler City passed away Sunday, April 5, 2020 at UNC Hospice Home in Pittsboro.

Services entrusted to: Knotts & Son Funeral Home.

RAYMOND L. TYSON

Raymond Lewis Tyson, 59, of Graham, formerly of Goldston, passed away Thursday, April 2, 2020.

Services entrusted to: Knotts & Son Funeral Home.

ANITA L. WENDEN

Anita L. Wenden, 87, of Chapel Hill passed away Saturday, April 4, 2020.

Arrangements by: Cremation Society of the Carolinas  
www.CremationSocietyNC.com .

TAMARA MARIE (PERCELL) WIMBLEY

Tamara Marie Wimbley, 58, of Cameron passed away on Tuesday, April 2, 2020 at Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst.

Services entrusted to: Knotts Funeral Home.

ELFRIEDE (KOFLER) TORRES

Elfriede Torres, 84, of Sanford, passed away on Monday, March 30, 2020 at Liberty Commons Nursing and Rehabilitation Center of Lee County.

Additional services will be completed by the family.

MARIA INERVA SOSA MODRIGAL

Maria Inerva Sosa Modrigal, 63, of Sanford, passed away on Tuesday, March 31, 2020 at UNC Hospital, Chapel Hill.

Services entrusted to: Knotts Funeral Home.

MARY ANN BUCK

Mary Ann Buck, 88, passed away Monday, March 30, 2020 in Chapel Hill.

Arrangements by: Cremation Society of the Carolinas  
www.CremationSocietyNC.com .

VICTOR OMAR SILVA MONTOYA

Victor Omar Silva Montoya, 30, of Sanford, passed away on Friday, March 27, 2020.

Services entrusted to: Knotts Funeral Home.

**HELENA GIBSON (MCIVER) EDWARDS**

Helena Gibson Edwards, 88 of Fuquay Varina, passed away Tuesday, March 31, 2020 at WakeMed Hospital in Cary.

Services entrusted to: Knotts Funeral Services in Sanford

GREGORY KELLY

Gregory Kelly, 59, passed away on Monday, April 6, 2020 at Central Carolina Hospital in Sanford.

Services entrusted to: Knotts Home, Sanford.

JIMMIE RAY WILSON

Mr. Jimmie Ray Wilson, 82, of Bear Creek, died Sunday, March 29, 2020 at his home.

A private family graveside service will be held at 2 p.m. on Thursday, April 2, 2020 at Prosperity Friends Church with Pastor Val Chadwick and Rev. Robert Kidd presiding. The funeral home will be open during regular business hours for those wishing to sign the register and pay their respects.

Jimmie was born in Chatham County, in 1938, son of the late Walter Alexander Wilson and Susie Catherine Jones Wilson. He worked along side his family in W.A. Wilson & Sons Poultry which became Wilson Brothers Milling Co., Inc. where he retired to start Wilson Farms. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother Jerry, his son Michael and his grandson, Steven Lee Vaughn.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Helen Edwards Wilson of the home; daughters, Jeanne W. Vaughn and Rebekah Sue Wilson, both of Bear Creek; sisters, Cindy Dixon and Lisa Scott, both of Bear Creek; five grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family

requests donations be made to Prosperity Friends Church Cemetery Fund, c/o Marlyn Scott, P.O. Box 79, Bear Creek, N.C. 27207.

Condolences may be offered online at: www.joycebrady-chapel.com .

Joyce-Brady Chapel is honored to serve the Wilson Family.

WALTER ANTHONY MARTIN

Walter Anthony “Chrome” Martin, 69, passed away on Sunday, March 29, 2020 at Duke Raleigh Hospital.

Services were held at 2 p.m. Thursday, April 2, 2020 at Knotts Funeral Home in Sanford.

Mr. Martin was born October 2, 1950 to Walter and Cleo Martin, who preceded him in death.

Survivors include his wife of 39 years, Pamela M. Martin; sons, Anthony Devon Martin of Bunnlevel, Sheroud McLeod, Brandon Martin, and Robert Martin, all of Sanford; sister, Cynthia Williams, Penelope Lewis of Winston-Salem, of Winston-Salem, Sharon Todd, Brenda Martin, and Lisa Sanders, all of Sanford; brothers, Trevor Martin of Australia, Tracy Martin of Sanford, and Xavier Martin of Pinehurse; and three grandchildren.

RALPH “WAYNE” POWERS

Ralph “Wayne” Powers, 73, of Carthage passed away on Tuesday, March 31, 2020 at his home.

Due to the current COVID-19 mandate, a private graveside service was held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 4, 2020 at Putnam Friends Church with Rev. Darrell Garner presiding.

Wayne was born in Moore County on March 1, 1947, to Edith Jones and James Wilton Powers. He was a welder at Mansion Homes for 27 years. He was preceded in death by his parents and son, David Wayne Powers.

He is survived by his wife, Sandra Digs Powers of the

home; daughter, Kristy LaClair of Carthage; and two grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to: Putnam Friends Cemetery Fund, 136 Putnam Church Road, Carthage, NC 28327.

Condolences may be offered online at: www.joycebrady-chapel.com.

JAMES MICHAEL ELLIS

James Michael Ellis, 61, of Pittsboro died Friday, April 3, 2020.

Mr. Ellis was born in Orange County on December 12, 1958, the son of James and Wilma Hackney Ellis. He had worked as a logger.

He is survived by a sister, Ann Headen and a brother, Joe Ellis, both of Pittsboro.

Online condolences may be made at: www.pughfuneral-home.com.

Smith & Buckner Funeral Home is assisting the family.

REBECCA GENTRY SHANK

Rebecca Gentry Shank of Moncure, passed away on Sunday, April 5, 2020.

Private graveside services were held at 2 p.m. Wednesday, April 8, 2020 at the Juniper Springs Baptist Church Cemetery with Rev. John Hackney and Rev. Leslie Cox officiating.

She was preceded in death by her son, David Miller, one grandson, her parents, Marguerite Whetstone and Rabron Gentry, and brothers, Ray Gentry and Randall Gentry; step-son, Peter Shank and one step-grandson.

Survivors include her husband, James of the home; son, Steve Miller; five grandchildren, two great-grandchildren; sisters, Linda Erwin and Rev. Leslie Cox; step-daughters, Missy Rolewicz and Linda Osborne; step-sons, Bill Shank, Paul Shank, and Joseph; eleven step-grandchildren and seven step-great grandchildren.

Online condolences can be made at www.smithfuneral-homebroadway.com .



Photo courtesy of Debbie Matthews

Beefy farro pilaf topped with glazed carrots, as prepared by Debbie Matthews.

So Farro So Good: ‘Like hope in a bowl’

In Japan, food texture is very important. Often foods will be eaten because even though they has little taste, they’re valued because of their interesting texture.

The rest of us value texture too. Who doesn’t love the snap of biting through a sausage or a fresh, pillowy biscuit, or chocolate melting on your tongue? Then some textures just make us sad, like cold fries, overcooked chicken and undercooked rice.

My mom is a big fan of both cream of wheat and cream of farina. And while I love hot cereal, the Dickensian orphan-

age gruel-like mouth feel of those particular hot cereals make them a hard no for me.

Farro is a type of wheat mainly grown in the mountains of Tuscany. It resembles barley and is delicious by itself or in recipes with other things. It’s chewy and nutty, and although a member of the same family as cream of wheat and farina, it in no way resembles that off-putting pabulum con-

sistency.

It’s also very nutritious, with protein, fiber, and nutrients like magnesium, zinc and B vitamins. But it’s a straight-up comfort food. While you’re eating this pilaf it can just about make you feel that everything’s going to be ok.

It’s like hope in a bowl. Thanks for your time.

Contact debbie at dm@bullcity.mom.

### Beefy Farro Pilaf

- 12-16 ounces of inexpensive steak, like blade or eye of round, cut into 3/4-inch cubes
- 1 tablespoon corn starch
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 yellow onion chopped
- 12 ounces mushrooms, cleaned and sliced
- 1 teaspoon dry thyme
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 1/2 cups farro (not quick-cooking)
- 2/3 cups sherry or brandy
- 4 1/2 cups beef stock
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 teaspoons horseradish
- 1/8 teaspoon Chinese five-spice powder
- Salt & pepper

### Five-Spice Glazed Carrots

- 2 pounds carrots, peeled and cut into slices with similar surface area
- 1/4 cup water
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons sweet, such as honey, maple syrup, jam, or jelly (the last batch I made I used peach passionfruit preserves)
- 1/4 teaspoon Chinese five-spice powder
- Salt & pepper

After cutting beef into cubes, toss in cornstarch.

In a large, heavy pot with a lid, melt butter on medium (6-ish). Put about half of the meat into the pot. Season. When the first side gets browned and crusty, flip and let the other side brown. Remove and cook the rest. Remove and set aside.

Place mushrooms and onions into pot. Add thyme and season. Cover and cook for about 7 minutes to get the veg to release all their liquid. Remove cover and cook until all the liquid has cooked out and the mushrooms and onions have lightly browned.

Add the beef back in and stir in tomato paste and farro. When the paste has begun to darken, pour in sherry. Cook until almost all of the liquid has cooked off.

Pour in beef stock and add Worcestershire, horseradish, and five-spice. When it comes to a boil, cover and turn to medium-low. Cook for 35-40 minutes or until farro is cooked through, but still chewy.

Remove cover, turn up to medium and let cook until most of the stock has cooked out, but it’s still moist and almost creamy (5-10 minutes). Remove from heat, cover and let sit, undisturbed for 10-15 minutes.

Serve in shallow bowls with carrots on top. Serves 6 and leftovers microwave well.

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Q&A: LAYTON LONG, DENNIS STREETS

# Chatham health, aging leaders share advice, ways to help seniors during pandemic

BY ZACHARY HORNER  
News + Record Staff

In the latest installment of our chats with experts and people making a difference in Chatham through the COVID-19 pandemic, we spoke to Layton Long, director of the Chatham County Public Health Department, and Dennis Streets, executive director of the Chatham County Council on Aging, about why seniors are a group at-risk for contracting COVID-19, advice for seniors and their caregivers and what different groups are doing to help this vulnerable population during this time.

For the latest from the Chatham County Government on COVID-19, visit [chathamnc.org/coronavirus](http://chathamnc.org/coronavirus), and you can also follow the health department on Facebook at [facebook.com/chathamhealth](https://facebook.com/chathamhealth). For the latest from the Council on Aging, visit [chathamcouncilonaging.com](http://chathamcouncilonaging.com) or their Facebook page at [facebook.com/ChathamCOA](https://facebook.com/ChathamCOA).

The following interview has been edited for clarity and length. The full transcript can be found online at [chathamnewsrecord.com](http://chathamnewsrecord.com).



Screenshots from Zoom

Dennis Streets, left, executive director of the Chatham County Council on Aging, and Layton Long, director of the Chatham County Public Health Department, spoke to the News + Record last Thursday about caring for seniors and how Chatham can help during the COVID-19 pandemic.

record.com, and the video is available at [facebook.com/ChathamNR](https://facebook.com/ChathamNR).

**Why are seniors considered a group that's particularly at risk for contracting COVID-19?**

**Long:** I think generally we all understand that seniors are more at-risk for other types of infections, and they have limitations on what they can do in a lot of ways. What we're seeing — and I think this is the biggest issue, and what the data shows from the CDC and worldwide —

is that about 80 percent of those that end up either in severe care, and 80 percent of the fatalities related to COVID-19 have been persons at 65 years and older.

So it is a particularly susceptible population to very bad outcomes if they do become affected. The other part of the issue is that a lot of seniors live in congregate sites — whether it be in retirement communities, assisted livings and nursing homes — where they are in close proximity to each other. So it becomes more problematic if you do get an infection that it can spread through the facility.

**Streets:** With those living in assisted living, in nursing homes, it only represents about a little less than 3 percent of that population. But I would add, though, you've got those living in the continuing care retirement communities, again, often in close quarters in terms of where they eat and so on. And I would say that's closer to maybe around a total of 4,000-5,000 of that number. That suggests, though, that the vast majority of our older adults are living out amongst us in the various parts of the county.

So in addition to what Layton was talking about, in terms of their medical vulnerabilities, the physical isolation, the shelter in place, plus the social distancing that we're have to do in this situation, I think just compounds the problem. A lot of them do have conditions, chronic conditions, often more than one that might be respiratory in nature, which is one of the big factors with this disease as well as other factors like heart disease.

**What are some good steps seniors should take if they haven't already to protect themselves during this time?**

**Long:** Well, I think it's the same things that all of us should be doing. One of the things I want to

emphasize is anybody, regardless of age, should be following the governor's directive to do this today, if at all possible. If you're in a senior situation, a lot of seniors in our community needs support systems to help them maintain in the home and there's a lot about that side of the equation.

Speaking from my own personal experience with my very elderly parents, I have worked with my sister who's their primary caregiver: that she's the only one going into the house and she takes all precautions before she goes to the house. We just limit access to them. In terms of physical presence now, they still talk to people on the phone and those kind of things, the socialization aspect of it, but I think it's critical to realize that, the other way the virus is going to get there is somebody brings it to them.

And so try to put those procedures in place now, to limit those opportunities, make sure that anybody coming in the house is not sick themselves, washes their hands thoroughly. I've even talked to my sister before she goes over there, even taking a shower before she goes, just to make sure she wipes down everything in her own personal car before she goes in. She wipes down the door-knobs. There's just a lot of things you can do that take those necessary precautions just to prevent that virus the opportunity from being transmitted in the home.

**Streets:** All of what Layton said is just so critical, and that's something that we were certainly talking about before all this happened, but it became something that we started preaching about that first week of March with our participants that are both of our Centers, up to the point that we then had to close both centers to the public.

I think the tricky thing in this is about a quarter of our seniors in the com-

munity live alone. And so all of what Layton said in terms of the physical distancing, restricting visitation is so vital. At the same time, we don't want to leave these folks socially isolated. And so it's that balancing act. We're trying to do a lot, but a lot with the friendly calls. But it is vital that we stay in contact, not just for the social side, but also to help determine what people may still need, whether it is food or medication or pet supplies or mental health counseling or whatever it might be.

**What are some things that seniors can still do on their own at this time and still protect themselves?**

**Streets:** Recently, in one of our days when we were doing friendly calls, one of our staff persons here at the Council shared with me some of the quotes from folks, the seniors who were at home, I'll just read you a couple of these because I think it gives you a sense. Now this was about a week ago, and I assume that a few things have changed, but not probably much.

This person said, "Doing well. Eating, sleeping, exercise and as best I can. My house has never been so clean." Someone else said, "I've changed my bedsheets, done all my laundry." I'm sure they may be doing that more frequently than maybe they have in the past. Someone else said, "I'm growing flowers." So to the extent they can get outside, whether it's sitting on a porch or just walking out into a little garden area. This person is "enjoying the spring flowers and birds, are loving seeing the deer and rabbits. That's what keeps me going." This person said, "Doing fine. I'm picking out a seam," meaning I guess they were doing something in hopes that they could submit it to Silver Arts. Somebody else was working on a quilt. Somebody else was watching a church service on TV and somebody else said they "have a lot of friends calling to check on me."

But then you also get the concerning calls or comments. This person's again worried about everybody else. This person, "Doing okay but all the churches are closed, about to go stir crazy, but hanging in there." Somebody else said "Faith should work, always darkest before the dawn before the dawn." Then the last one was, "You really never miss the well until the water goes dry."

I think something that's been really encouraging to see is the way people in Chatham have been

reaching out and supporting the community as a whole, especially with seniors. What are some practical ways Chatham residents can help right now?

**Streets:** I do worry a lot of our seniors that live alone, and even those that don't obviously, enjoy, whether it's a cat or a dog or something else. And yet if they're not able to get out shopping, what's going on with that? And we've had a couple instances recently where people have called and said, "Can you help us out with that?" Just yesterday, as soon as we put it out on our Facebook, somebody brought some pet food.

And we don't want to be overwhelmed with pet food, but on a case-by-case basis, if we're able to publicize things, whether it's through you, your paper or whether it's through our Facebook or our website or other social media, having people respond as they have is just so uplifting and so empowering.

These are just remarkable, I think, outreach stories that community is coming together. This morning I got an email from our emergency management that had taken a call from someone who they could just tell — who was calling just for general information about what's going on, but they could tell from the person's voice that they might have some issues going on. So immediately they referred to us and a staff member right now is following up with that individual.

It really does take people coming together. I felt a little guilty that we've had so many wonderful efforts on the part of people wanting to volunteer, volunteer with friendly calls and so on. At least at this point in time, we've tried to limit the friendly calls to our participants to those who are participants know, because again, there's so much uncertainty already. We didn't want to introduce something new. So we're calling for them, as much as we can, and it's a voice they know, it's somebody they trust.

**The latest numbers for COVID-19 in North Carolina is 1,857 cases with nearly 50 percent of those 50 and older, and 75 percent of the deaths 65 and older. So it's definitely a population that I think a lot of people are concerned about. The last question for both of you guys: There's a lot of things closed and changes — why should people living in Chatham County be attentive to the needs of the seniors in Chatham County?**

**Long:** There's a lot of reasons. All of us hope to, at some point in time, be seniors ourselves. And we would hope that we would be given those considerations at that age. And these are folks that have dedicated their lives to the community in so many ways in whatever job they did. And so we feel a need to to help them at this at this time. This is a very different, very trying time that we're in.

The other part of the equation is that as part of a larger plan of trying to mitigate some of this is that the safer and the healthier we can keep the seniors, the less it strains the capacity of the hospitals and the medical providers to support their health needs.

So it's critical because if a senior person becomes effective, they stand a very good possibility of needing hospitalization, a very good possibility of needing a ventilator. And even very significant possibility of dying. So I think it's incredibly important for the community as a whole that we support our seniors during this time.

Reporter Zachary Horner, who conducted the interview, can be reached at [zhorner@chathamnr.com](mailto:zhorner@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at @ZachHornerCNR.

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Submitted photo  
Practicing social distancing, Rev. Ricky McKinney Sr. delivers a sermon to the congregation of Jordan Grove AME Zion Church seated in their cars in the Siler City church's parking lot. A similar service is planned this Sunday.

# Siler City church plans Sunday parking lot service

SILER CITY — Jordan Grove AME Zion Church, located 3106 W 3rd St., Siler City hosted the church's first-ever "Counter COVID-19 Drive-In Service" and plans another service in the church's parking lot this Sunday.

Last Sunday, the church's congregation and the public were invited to drive to the church to enjoy a variety of gospel music, said the church's pastor, Rev. Ricky McKinney Sr., who delivered a sermon entitled "God is Working it Out."

With no one leaving their cars, horns were honking and lights were flashing as the onlookers

responded to Rev. McKinney's message.

"The atmosphere was filled with the spirit of hope during this pandemic of the coronavirus," said Rev. McKinney said, who thanked those in attendance for their cooperation during the parking lot service.

"I cannot say how important it is for us to stay focused on being faithful to God," he said. "It is equally important to practice social distancing, and limit driving to places only necessarily as we all work to continue to control our destiny."

The church will host an Easter service in the parking lot at Jordan

Grove AME Zion Church once again in the parking lot on Sunday, April 12.

"We will celebrate the greatest day in the Church of God as we glorify His Risen Son, Jesus Christ," Rev. McKinney said. "It's a truly special occasion for all of Christianity. All of the people of God are invited to attend."

Rain or shine, the praise and song service will begin at 10 a.m. The worship services will begin at 10:30 a.m. and continue to noon. All are encouraged to arrive early to ensure a parking spot. Participants will be greeted by a vested parking lot attendant who will assist with parking.

## CHURCH NEWS

Events listed are subject to change in consideration of closures due to the coronavirus. Reach out to the individual Churches prior to events to verify.

### FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, SILER CITY

The First Baptist Church will hold an Easter morning service at 11 a.m. on Sunday, April 12, in the parking lot on the Smith and Buckner side of the church.

Please arrive and remain in your car

for the entire service. There will be a message by Pastor Allen Admire with music by Randy Johnson and Angelynn Fox.

### SANDY BRANCH BAPTIST CHURCH

Sandy Branch invites you to join the live stream on our Facebook page, Sandy Branch Baptist Church, for Sunday morning worship services at 10:55 a.m. and Bible Study at 6:55 p.m. on Wednesday.

Would love to have you be a part of these services.

## CARD OF THANKS

Thanks so much for the cards, texts, prayers, support, love and your many acts of kindness	shown to me at the time of my son Keith's death. It was all so very much appreciated. May	God bless each of you. Sincerely, Linda, Mitch, Addie Dorsett and Annette Dorsett
--	---	---

## WILCOCK NAMED TO PHI KAPPA PHI

Emma Wilcock of Pittsboro was recently initiated into The Honor Society of Phi	Kappa Phi at Widener University, the nation's oldest and most selective collegiate honor	society for all academic disciplines has been announced by the university.
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# Moon's Chapel Baptist Church

Join Us for

## HOLY WEEK

Services

Wednesday, April 8 at 7:00 pm - Passion Week Worship

Thursday, April 9 at 7:00 pm - Maundy Thursday Musical Worship with Danny Spivey

Sunday, April 12, 10:30 am - Resurrection Easter Celebration Worship

Moon's Chapel Baptist Church  
175 Moon's Chapel Road  
Siler City, NC 27344  
(919) 742 - 4569

All services will be drive-in style. They will be led from the front porch of the church. Drive up, sit in your vehicle and enjoy worship with us.

### PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

ACROSS	57 — bah (big wheel; Var.)	98 Possible reply to "Are you sure?"	12 — McAn (big name in footwear)	41 Neck and neck, scorewise	80 On the move
1 Hero-worship	58 Reach as far as	99 "That's the guy!"	13 Format of AP Radio Network	42 Fix at the vet's	81 Many minors
8 Not — (fair to middling)	59 "On the Beach" novelist	100 Calendar spans: Abbr.	14 "Alas!"	43 Eva, Magda and Zsa Zsa	83 Hot dog, informally
13 Gave a prize to	60 Jimmy Dorsey hit	101 Tehran native	15 Lemmon/ Wilder comedy	49 Objects of Emerson	84 Rural assent to a woman
20 Big name in cassette tapes, once	62 More furtive	104 Candle parts	16 Take hold again, as a plant	50 Middle name of Emerson	88 Feline in competitions
21 Bad booze	63 "Uncle Moses" novelist	106 Dominion	17 Three, in Munich	51 Rhino's pair	89 Ailment with red spots
22 "Wouldn't it Be —" ("My Fair Lady" song)	66 Riddle, part 4	115 Barbuda's partner island	18 Yale alumni	53 Canon camera series	90 Confess about
23 Start of a riddle	69 Gen — (millennials)	116 — two (a few)	19 Bit of force	54 Under oath legally	92 Submit, as homework
26 Came after that	70 Rental for relocation	117 Books filled with maps	24 Try, as a case	56 Roman 106	93 Emergency room sorting
27 Violin master	72 Flip out	118 Most sharp	25 Turkish VIPs of old	57 Odists, e.g.	94 Waikiki wear
28 Library no-no	73 Feudal toilers	119 Space of "3 Women"	29 Wash gently against, as the shore	58 Swiss canton or its capital	95 "Alas!"
29 Afame	75 Novelty	120 Pedicure target	30 Novelist	60 Reject rudely	96 Bites lightly
32 "Every day — new day"	77 Miniver's title	DOWN	31 Dice toss	61 Lay new turf on	101 "Out of Africa" writer
33 ET's craft	78 Riddle, part 5	1 Pal, to Pierre	33 Infantry division	63 Her niece is Dorothy Gale	102 Bit of Viking writing
34 Brief tussle	82 Moon of Neptune	2 Dict. lookup	35 1990s fitness fad	64 Shepherd once of "The View"	103 Poker post handlers
36 Riddle, part 2	83 Be the victor	3 Thurman of "Kill Bill"	37 Tom Cruise's role in "Mission: Impossible"	65 Sounding like a crow	105 Corp. money
44 Not wholly	84 Sci-fi sage	4 Ear feature	38 Get — start (not begin on time)	67 Bad blood	106 "Climb — Mountain"
45 "Cool" moola amount	85 Lasso part	5 Make — for it (take off)	39 "Sure, put me down for it"	68 Prefix with cuspid	107 Make mad
46 Bottom	87 "Oh, really?"	6 Tautness	40 Not in the country	71 Zodiac feline	108 Israeli statesman
47 Pro-school gp.	89 Country singer Tillis	7 Alibi, e.g.		74 Italian handbag brand	Abba
48 "Hi, Don Hol!"	90 Charge to run a promo	8 Like many horse hooves		76 Pouty states	110 Frat letters
49 Tease in fun	91 End of the riddle	9 Reaction to a punch		78 Shed feathers	111 Calendar spans: Abbr.
51 Store window	97 Firebug's crime	10 Optimistic		79 Composer Carmichael	112 Onetime foe of the USSR
52 Smear all over		11 Leopardlike animal			113 Waikiki wear class, in brief
55 Riddle, part 3					

### LOBBY GROUP

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Solution for the puzzle in last week's edition.

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# Staffing levels worry NC hospitals anticipating coronavirus patient surge

**BY 2020 NC CORONAVIRUS TESTING COLLABORATIVE**  
via Carolina Public Press

As hospitals across North Carolina prepare for a possible surge of patients infected with the new coronavirus, it is not clear whether enough medical staff is available to provide adequate care or whether the state has enough equipment, including hospital beds and ventilators.

Hospitals are tracking and publicly reporting some statistics related to their capacity to treat patients, including the number of available beds and ventilators at their facilities.

The most recent state data on the number of hospital beds is from September 2018. That total — 21,222 beds — is the number licensed by North Carolina health regulators.

“A lot of times, hospitals don’t have all their licensed beds staffed,” said Cody Hand, senior vice president of the N.C. Healthcare Association. “That’s taken us a few weeks to tease out how to get the right data and the most useful data.”

State health officials are now surveying hospitals across the state to get figures on beds and ventilator capacity. But that process is voluntary, and not every hospital responds consistently.

In the last week since the state began reporting hospital data, the response rate has averaged about 80 percent.

That should account for the majority of beds in North Carolina, since the larger hospital systems are responding consistently, Hand said.

But there’s no information on staffing levels, a crucial factor — along with physical space and protective gear —

that can limit the number of patient beds available.

Individual hospitals, rather than the state or his association, are tracking staffing on their own, Hand said.

“We don’t do it consistently at NCHA for a reason, and that’s because our hospitals are already answering a lot of federal and state surveys,” he said. “Adding another question is really, at this point, not beneficial.”

For now, the NCHA does work with staffing agencies and hospitals to relocate health care personnel where surge capacity is needed.

“The biggest thing I worry about is staff,” Hand said. “Our doctors and nurses are working as hard as they can. ... My concern is that those putting their lives at risk aren’t going to get needed help or relief.”

## State doesn’t track staffing data at hospitals

An effort this week to find a dataset to track staffing levels at hospitals across the state was unsuccessful.

The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services has not released any data on staffing levels, and a spokeswoman confirmed late Thursday afternoon the agency is not tracking the data.

Reporters from six newsrooms across the state sent questions to every hospital system in North Carolina. Most didn’t respond at all. With the exception of one hospital system, the answers hospitals did provide did not include specific staffing numbers.

The goal was to find data to gauge whether hospitals will be able to adequately care for coronavirus-infected patients, even if they have enough beds and ventilators.

The size of that work-

force can make a big difference in a hospital’s capacity.

At Cone Health, for example, the network’s four Triad-area hospitals can currently staff about 600 beds among them. At “flex capacity,” according to a spokesperson, that number can increase to nearly 900 beds — if the hospitals can find the personnel to staff them.

Each COVID-19 patient admitted to the hospital to treat the virus needs a squad of health care workers — not just doctors and nurses — to care for them, whether in the intensive care unit or a less severe acute care unit.

“Staffing is determined by the condition and diagnosis of the patient,” explained Meghan Berney, a spokeswoman for Caromont Regional Hospital in Gaston County.

Berney explained that a COVID-19 patient on supportive oxygen therapy — which could range from simple supplemental oxygen to sedated intubation — would need a care team including the following:

- Registered nurse — from a 1-to-1 or 3-to-1 ratio, depending on patient condition.
- Certified nursing assistant — depending on patient condition and nurse ratio from above.
- Hospitalist — inpatient physician.
- Intensivist — critical care physician.
- Respiratory therapist — depending on patient condition.
- Specialist(s) — should a specialty physician consult be needed (cardiac, neuro, pulmonary, etc.).
- Ancillary staff — phlebotomists, environmental services, food services, facility services (these staff would be limited depending on patient diagnosis).

Hospital administrators say the defining factor in their ability to care for sick

patients may be whether they have enough qualified and healthy staff to tend to them.

“There’s a facility footprint, and then there’s a human resource footprint, and trying to align those is tricky,” said Dr. Joseph Rogers, the chief medical officer for the Duke University Health System. “We can repurpose a lot of space. We can’t go out and hire 1,000 new nurses or respiratory therapists or physicians.”

Linda Butler, the chief medical officer at UNC Rex Hospital in Raleigh, said she feels good about the hospital’s supply of ventilators but worries more about having enough qualified nurses and therapists to run them.

“You need nurses who can take care of that level of patient,” Butler said. “And if nurses are getting sick or there’s a nursing shortage anyway, because this is a high-growth area, we are being creative with staffing plans.”

That includes recruiting administrative employees who still have their medical licenses or calling on people who have recently retired.

## ‘It’s not a flip of a switch’

Dr. West Paul, chief clinical officer at New Hanover Regional Medical Center, said his hospital is working to find ways to add staffing capacity to treat a potential influx of COVID-19 patients.

“We can repurpose a lot of other machinery, including anesthesia machines, to be ventilators, but usually the critical limitation is the actual people, the technical capabilities to run them on a day-to-day basis,” Paul said. “It’s not just running the machines; it’s taking care of the patient and knowing what the patient needs to adjust the machines.”

Paul said his facility has

the equipment to intubate, the process of putting a patient on a ventilator, more than 100 patients at a time, but doing so would be incredibly difficult from a staffing perspective.

“It’s not a flip of a switch; each ventilator is individually tuned to the patient and his disease or her disease process. So it is a constant in and out adjustment of what we are doing,” he said.

Paul said NHRMC system hospitals are working to train physicians and staff who might not usually work with ventilators to be able to care for COVID-19 patients. He added that training is being assisted by medical facilities and experts largely on the West Coast.

As of Wednesday, more than 1,900 people with medical credentials have volunteered to serve in North Carolina if the need arises, according to North Carolina emergency management officials.

Of those, “700 are vetted and ready to work,” Mike Sprayberry, state director of emergency management, said at a news media briefing Wednesday. “These are medical professionals who can be assigned to hospitals.”

No hospitals have yet requested help. But once they do, volunteers near a medical facility can go to work to fill in for sick workers and otherwise support the medical surge, Sprayberry said.

The Department of Emergency Management vets volunteers by checking with licensing boards. Background checks are performed by the State Bureau of Investigation and the state fusion center, NCEM spokesman Keith Acree said.

“Hospitals and medical facilities can request staffing by type from the state Emergency Operations Center in order to help with

the medical surge,” Acree wrote in an email.

Those requests can seek doctors, nurses, pharmacists and others. The volunteer pool also includes janitors and those with experience in medical records. People interested in volunteering can register at [terms.ncem.org](https://terms.ncem.org).

N.C. Medical Board spokesperson Jean Brinkley said the licensing body has taken several emergency measures to expand the health care workforce, cutting down on licensing hurdles for doctors and physician assistants. That includes granting emergency licenses to health care workers licensed in other states and those who have retired in the last two years.

Through the end of March, Brinkley said, the board issued 180 out-of-state doctors and PAs emergency licenses, and a handful of retired doctors have reactivated their licenses through the process as well.

Hundreds more doctors and PAs can start practicing in the state after the board postponed some final license examinations for medical students beginning their residencies. The board even temporarily suspended criminal background checks because of limited access to fingerprinting services.

All those steps, Brinkley said, are an attempt to “clear the runway” and expand treatment for patients.

*This story was jointly reported and edited by Kate Martin of Carolina Public Press; Gavin Off, Ames Alexander and Doug Miller of The Charlotte Observer; Richard Stradling of the Raleigh News & Observer; Nick Ochsner of WBTV; Emily Featherston of WECT; and Tyler Dukes and Ashley Talley of WRAL.*



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# What the CARES Act means for you during COVID-19

**BY ZACHARY HORNER**  
News + Record Staff

More than \$2.2 trillion in aid from the federal government has been targeted for an array of programs in responses to COVID-19, the novel coronavirus, and now it's on its way to American people and businesses.

The CARES Act — short for “Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act” — flew through Congress, getting a 96-0 vote in the Senate in favor on March 25 and agreement by a voice vote in the House and the President's signature two days later. As details spill out about what the bill means for the everyday American, we wanted to drill down to some of the key points and what Chatham County should know.

**How the money's divvied up**

More than \$2 trillion can go a long way and cover a lot of things, it seems. A short breakdown:

- \$560 billion earmarked for individuals through one-time payments and other means

- \$500 billion to large corporations
- \$377 billion to small businesses for loans and grants
- \$339.8 billion to state and local governments
- \$153.5 billion for public health purposes, including \$100 billion for hospitals responding to COVID-19 and \$4.3 billion to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- \$43.7 billion to education-related purposes
- \$26 billion to other causes, including \$8.8 billion for school meals and \$15.5 billion to SNAP food stamps

**Money for people**

One of the more widely-discussed parts of CARES Act is the promise of a one-time payment to most Americans. Most individuals with a Social Security Number who are not dependents will receive \$1,200 each, and joint filers will receive a total of \$2,400. Additional rebates of \$500 will be given to individuals per qualifying child if they meet income standards.

To distribute this money, the Internal Revenue Service will use direct deposit information or the most recent ad-

dress gathered from the most recent tax returns. Steven Mnuchin, the U.S. Treasury Secretary, has said the Treasury will soon be setting up a website for those without bank accounts or have not given direct deposit information to the IRS for them to fill out that information.

Mnuchin said at a press briefing on April 2 that the Trump Administration was expecting payments to be made within two weeks for those with direct deposit information and later for others.

**Payroll help for small businesses**

MetLife and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce released its most recent Small Business Index on April 3 with some dire numbers for small businesses. Twenty-four percent of small businesses surveyed said they had already temporarily shut down, with 40 percent of those who hadn't yet shut down saying they likely would in the coming two weeks.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury and Small Business Administration's Small Business Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) is

designed to help small businesses with funds to stay open and keep people on their payrolls. Small business owners could begin applying April 3 for funds equal to up to eight weeks of payroll costs, including benefits. According to a document from the Treasury, “funds can also be used to pay interest on mortgages, rent and utilities.”

To qualify for the PPP, employers must retain or quickly re-hire employees and maintain salary levels and have 500 or fewer employees. The loan can be fully forgiven if used properly, and payments will be deferred for six months.

The guidelines on the program have shifted over the last week or so. Aaron Nelson, president and CEO of The Chamber for a Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro, encouraged small business owners to be patient with their banks, who are responsible for giving out the loans.

“Your banker right now is kind of like a clerk at K-mart right now,” Nelson said during an April 3 All Business Briefing hosted by The Chamber. “They're doing their best to figure this out

over the last few days. Please be as patient as you can. The best thing you can do when you see your banker is to be prepared.”

The application is available on the Treasury website at [treasury.gov](https://treasury.gov).

**More help for small businesses**

The SBA has also instituted the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program. An advance on the program has been offered recently, but the full program allows for businesses to receive up to \$2 million per entity with up to a 30-year term.

“The SBA is going to offer you an amount that they think will keep your business up and running and will be able to sustain your business operations,” SBA Senior Area Manager Patrick Rodriguez said during the April 3 All Business Briefing. “You won't necessarily be putting in a number for your loan amount. The SBA is going to do a calculation and come up with a number for you.”

The money can be used for fixed debts, payroll and other bills that could have been

paid had the disaster not occurred. Rodriguez said the EIDL is not intended to replace lost profits. He also encouraged business owners to apply for it even if they were also applying for the PPP.

“We don't know how long this is going to last,” he said. “Maybe the thinking is get in the queue. We're encouraging everyone to apply, have those funds there offered to you.”

That initial advance, worth up to \$10,000 in a forgivable loan, is also still available.

“It is money going out the door to small businesses,” Rodriguez said. “It would be almost malpractice to not go in and sign up for that. Everyone should just go back into their portal and apply for the injury grant by itself. That will not affect your loan application that you've already submitted.”

Applicants must have a physical presence in the affected area to qualify for the loan. That application can be found at [covid19relief.sba.gov](https://covid19relief.sba.gov).

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

## NEWS BRIEFS

**Chatham County 4-H creates an educational activities and resource website**

PITTSBORO – Chatham County 4-H has developed an educational activities and resource website (<http://www.go.ncsu.edu/readext?663540>).

The purpose of this website is to provide youth and families beneficial resources in a centralized location.

Information contained on this website includes 4-H virtual learning opportunities across the nation; educational activities for youth offered through various organizations (e.g., NASA, USDA); and general resources provided

by N.C. Cooperative Extension, as well as other community partners and organizations (e.g., Chatham Health Alliance, Center for Disease Control). This website will continue to be updated as more information becomes available to us.

As Chatham County 4-H transitions to a more virtual world, a news release state, the

organization will begin offering educational and fun learning opportunities, that will allow youth to continue developing life skills and giving back to their community while practicing social distancing. For the most up-to-date information, visit the educational activities and resources website and check out the Chatham County 4-H Weekly Challenge each

Monday.

If you are unable to access the information online and would like a copy of it, then please contact Victoria Brewer, Chatham County 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent, via email ([victoria.brewer@chathamnc.org](mailto:victoria.brewer@chathamnc.org)) or phone (919-545-8303).

— CN +R staff reports





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NORTHWOOD STANDOUT KAYLI BLANKENSHIP

# Outstanding softball career at Guilford cut heartbreakingly short by pandemic

BY DON BEANE  
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — A March 12 phone call. Maybe ordinary to many yet another phone call in a long litany of phone calls people receive in their lifetime.

But this particular one, Pittsboro native and former Northwood softball standout Kayli Blankenship will never forget. It came from Natalie Conrad, a fellow senior and co-captain on the Guilford College softball team, relaying the message that the Quakers' softball season was halted. The news had come from a team meeting with coach Dennis Shores.

"I had actually gone home for pre-marital counseling and to pick up my wedding dress from getting altered, so I was not even in attendance for the meeting," Blankenship said. "I could tell by the tone of her voice that something was wrong and this is when she explained that our season was postponed until April 1st, meaning we could potentially resume play at that time. But until then, we were not allowed to practice or workout at all with the team, meaning that we were going to be home until this time."

Blankenship said she and Conrad both cried on the call. They didn't have words for how they felt.

"We were angry, devastated and confused all at the same time," she said. "We both tried to remain hopeful, but we also knew that realistically, there was a chance our careers could be over."

Thus Blankenship's senior season, her final efforts on the collegiate softball field, was cut short. She was working on a productive year — batting .341 with two triples and five stolen bases for Guilford as the team got off to a 7-5 start. In the Quakers' last game a March 11 contest with N.C. Wesleyan College, she went 1-2 from the plate with a run and two walks to help Guilford to a 12-4 win.

Shores had spoken briefly to his team the day before that game, the second of a double-



Submitted photo

Kayli Blankenship of Pittsboro slaps a base hit in earlier game action this spring for Guilford College. The former Northwood star saw her senior season heartbreakingly cut short in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

header against the Battling Bishops after the Quakers had just returned from Spring Break. Blankenship and her teammates joked in the outfield that it may be their last game due to the coronavirus. Just 24 hours later, the joke became reality for the Quakers as well as all collegiate athletes across the nation.

Blankenship and Conrad were the only two seniors on the 2020 Guilford College softball team, and the lack of closure is something Blankenship said haunts the pair.

"I think not having closure to your senior season, your career, to me that's the most difficult thing," said Blankenship, who started playing tee-ball at the age of 5. "I had come to grips that my softball career was coming to an end and it was time to move forward."

The NCAA announced that spring sports athletes would be given an extra year of eligibility, giving Blankenship a chance, if she wanted, at what could be termed a more satis-

fying ending. But another year of tuition wasn't "feasible," she said, and with a wedding and a career as a kindergarten teacher on the near horizon, she's made the decision to move on.

Six days later, she wed former Northwood pitcher Garrett Scott in the back yard of her parents Gary and Etta Blankenship's home. The young newlyweds moved the wedding, which was originally scheduled for March 24 in Charleston, S.C.

"We knew that (banning) gatherings of over 100 people was coming, so we moved our wedding up so that we did not have to cut the invitation list," said Blankenship. "Garrett was two years ahead of me in school at Northwood, and I was a freshman when we met, him playing baseball and me softball, and we've been a couple ever since. This was our dream, so we made it happen."

Garrett attended Appalachian State and now works in the Raleigh area, and the couple has bought a house in Holly Springs.

From a young age Blankenship realized softball was her sport of passion.

"Once I was old enough I started playing softball and haven't stopped since and I also played basketball and soccer as well," she said. "In high school I played varsity softball all four years and JV volleyball my first two years but it was when I started playing travel softball in 6th grade that I found my passion, although I still enjoyed playing other sports as well."

In high school, she transitioned from a right-handed batter to a left-handed the summer after her freshmen year. It was then she realized she wanted to play softball in college.

"I felt that the use of my speed would be most beneficial as a slapper and this would be my best shot at playing at the collegiate level, so I stopped playing volleyball so I could train more in the off-season and focus my time on softball," Blankenship said. "It seems like about every weekend between 6th grade and now has been devoted to softball. Softball is definitely

my favorite sport, I love how fast-paced it is, especially compared to baseball."

With all the devoted time growing up with the sport, it mean she had to have some heavy influences, and there was none moreso than her father Gary.

"My dad has been my biggest influence in softball, he has spent so much time in the yard playing catch, in the batting cage hitting, and driving back and forth to practices and games," Blankenship said. "When I started slapping, I did not have a slapping coach because no one in our area slapped, it was still a very new art, and dad spent countless hours on YouTube watching videos and drills to teach me how to slap and I definitely would not have been nearly as successful without his guidance."

Blankenship also noted her travel team coach as another huge influence in her development as a player.

"For most of my life, I have felt like the underdog in softball and

See **KAYLI**, page B2

## Pittsboro's Eanes earns All-Conference honors for Queens University

BY DON BEANE  
News + Record Staff

ROCK HILL, S.C. — Kristian Eanes of the Queens University of Charlotte women's basketball team was named an honorable mention all-conference selection, the South Atlantic Conference announced last Thursday.

Eanes, a junior guard from Pittsboro and Northwood High School graduate, finished fourth in the league in scoring with an average of 16.8 points per game. She scored in double figures in 25 of her 27 games played and scored more than 20 points on 10 occasions.

On Nov. 30 versus Lehigh-Rhyne University, Eanes scored a career-high 24 points, going 12-of-14 from the field for the Royals while adding two rebounds, an assist and a steal.

A standout defensively, Eanes finished second in the conference in steals per game



Photo courtesy of Queens College Athletics

Kristian Eanes of Pittsboro eyes the basket from the charity stripe for Queens University this season. The junior guard averaged 16.8 points per game and struck for double figures in 25 of the Royals' 27 games this season.

(2.9 SPG). She recorded a career-high eight steals on Jan. 22 at Wingate University.

Eanes' postseason recogni-

tion marks the third consecutive season in which a Queens player has received an all-conference honor.

## NCAA gets it right in granting extra season to spring collegiate athletes

Like most in the sports media industry, I have been a critic of the NCAA and its barrage of inconsistent decisions and rulings through the years.

As a former collegiate athlete, of course it's something that's been close to my heart.

The coronavirus and its effects on everything in life, including sports, has been well-documented; it's just a way of life right now, and it's ongoing and will continue to be that way for a long time, likely even when things begin to transition back to some sense of normalcy.

It's unfortunate that the ACC and NCAA basketball tournaments were canceled along with the other winter sports. The tournaments would have been great, as always, especially on the men's side with no clear-cut favorites. But it is what it is and those were the cards dealt. It's gutwrenching for the seniors to go out that way, but they did play the entire regular season and the NCAA ruling to not grant them an extra year of eligibility was correct.

Now could the NCAA go 2-for-2 in the same day? Vegas odds would have probably put it at 50 percent going into the day and given its past history of head-scratching, pulling out hair, making you want to scream and say words that your mama would wash your mouth out with soap, decisions.

But alas, the NCAA, which brings in more than \$1 billion in revenue a year, went 2-for-2,

batting a thousand a week ago Monday, when the governing body of collegiate athletics voted to grant spring collegiate athletes an extra year of eligibility.

Yes, the NCAA got it right.

And they had to, if not for any other reason, than for a ruling it made in 2019 before the NCAA football season later that fall. In that decision, the NCAA installed a new rule which allowed football players to participate in four games while also retaining their red-shirt status. That's roughly 33.3 percent of the season.

So how could/would the NCAA explain not granting its spring players an extra year of eligibility when baseball, softball and all other sports had played fewer than 33.3 percent of their respective games, most in the 20-25 percent range? It simply could not and should not have been done, and the NCAA Council came through.

The schools also are allowed some freedom when it comes to scholarship management. Underclassmen will continue to receive the same scholarship aid they received in the previous season, but schools have the freedom to give less aid to seniors coming back for a second senior season. Schools can also get help from the NCAA's Student Assistance Fund to pay for those scholarships if they need to.

Now while that's great, it certainly won't be as easy as it seems.

Obviously some schools athletic budgets are much higher than others. For example, in 2017-2018 the University of Texas boasted a budget of \$219,402,579, according to USA Today, while locally UNC had

See **NCAA**, page B3

### 2019-20 South Atlantic Conference Women's Basketball All-Conference

#### FIRST TEAM

Alexy Mollenhauer, Anderson  
Kayla Marosites, Carson-Newman  
Mia Long, Tusculum  
Braelyn Wykle, Carson-Newman  
Madison Baggett, Anderson  
Taisha DeShazo, Catawba

#### SECOND TEAM

Teliyah Jeter, Wingate  
Erin Houser, Coker

Madeline Hardy, Lenoir-Rhyne  
Keli Romas, Newberry  
Caitlyn Ross, UVA-Wise  
Kelsey McDermott, Newberry

#### HONORABLE MENTION

Taylor Hair, Anderson  
Kasey Johnson, Tusculum  
De'Ja Marshall, Mars Hill  
Kristian Eanes, Queens  
Addison Byrd, Carson-Newman  
Lyrik Thorne, Catawba

#### ALL-FRESHMAN

Braelyn Wykle, Carson-Newman  
Caitlyn Ross, UVA-Wise

Hannah Clark, Wingate  
Nia Vanzant, UVA-Wise  
Lyrik Thorne, Catawba

#### PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Alexy Mollenhauer, Anderson

#### FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR

Braelyn Wykle, Carson-Newman

#### DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Teliyah Jeter, Wingate

#### COACH OF THE YEAR

Jonathon Barbaree, Anderson



# It’s a Devilish night as Duke escapes Michigan State for mock national title

**BY DON BEANE**  
News + Record Staff

*Editor’s note: This is the final edition of the mock NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament simulated by the News + Record.*

ATLANTA — Tre Jones connected on a pair of clutch treys down the stretch here in Atlanta on Monday night and Vernon Carey added a pivotal rebound basket with :11.7 seconds remaining to lift Duke to a 77-74 victory over Michigan State in the 2020 Men’s National Championship game.

The title was the sixth all-time for Duke, all under legendary Blue Devils coach Mike Krzyzewski, and all coming since its first in 1991. The championship was also the 14th for Big 4 teams here in NC as UNC has six and N.C. State a pair as well.

Duke closes the season at 33-7 and avenged a 68-67 loss in the Great 8 to Michigan State a year ago.

The Spartans, picked as preseason No. 1, finishes at 30-10.

The contest between the two college basketball heavyweights was nip and tuck the entire way with Michigan State using runs of 6-0 and 7-2 in the opening half to take a 35-30 lead at the intermission. Cassius Winston sank a pair of treys on the way to 11 points in the opening stanza and

Xavier Tillman chipped in seven more to spark the Spartys to the halftime advantage.

Jones has seven points for the Blue Devils in the opening half while Cassius Stanly and Carey chipped in six apiece, and Matthew Hurt drilled a three-pointer from the right corner.

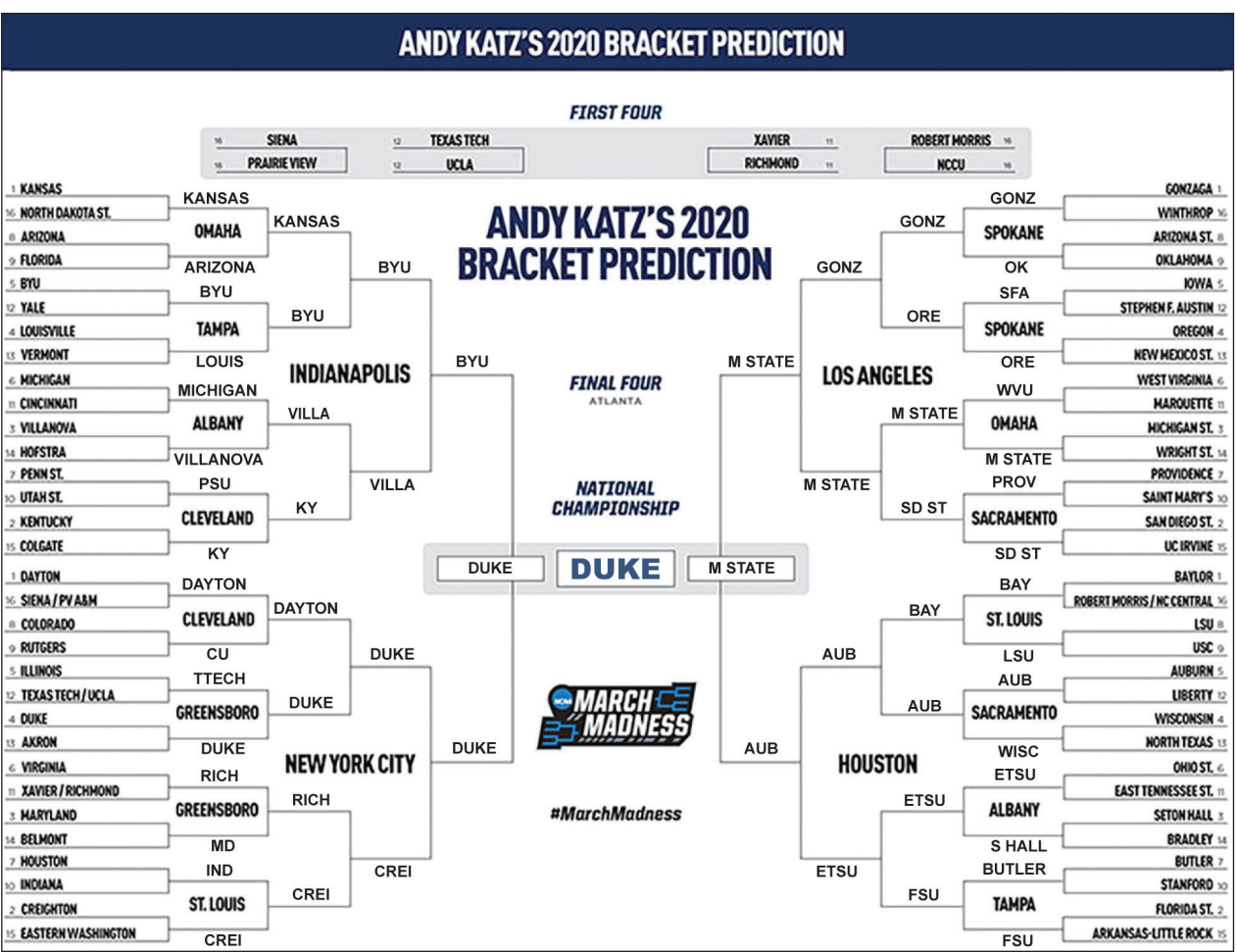
A trey and pair of driving hoops by Tillman and four points from Winston sent Michgian State on a 24-17 tear to open the second half and give Michigan State its biggest lead of the night at 59-47 with 10:51 remaining in he contest.

But out of the Under-12 TV timeout, Jones sank a three-pointer from the left wing and then picked Winston at mid-court and throwing the ball ahead to Stanly for a two-handed dunk to cap a quick 5-0 spurt to close the gap to 59-52 with 10 minutes exactly remaining.

With the momentum, Duke continued to chip away as Carey tallied a pair of inside buckets in the paint, and Jack White swished a three-ball to draw the Blue Devils to within 68-66 with 3:34 left.

Jones proceeded to drain a pair of treys from the top of the circle and Carey seized a rebound late and put the ball back in to give the Blue Devils a 77-74 lead with 11:7 ticks remaining.

Michigan State coach Tom Izzo drew up a well



excuted play for Stanly, but the Spartans star was just off and the ball bounded away as the buzzer sounded to set off a massive celebration in Durham.

Jones, MVP of the contest, closed with 23 points, seven assists, five rebounds and four steals

while Carey chipped in 12, Stanly 11 and Hurt 10. Carey also had 11 boards for a double-dboule.

Tillman had 21 points to lead Michigan State and Stanly chipped in 20 more and nine rebounds.

*Duke national title is dedicated to Greg Jourdan of Siler City who passed away on February 28 of this year after a courageous battle with cancer. Anyone that knew Greg can relate to this; he was just a great guy. He was a lifelong Kansas City Chiefs fan, as well as an*

*avid Duke Blue Devils fan. It was always a good time talking Duke basketball, and sports in general with him and I certainly value all those conversations and miss them. So its only fitting that Duke captured the mock title in his memory for a two-fer in a two months span. RIP Greg.*

## KAYLI

Continued from page B1

I am not really sure where these feelings stemmed from, maybe from my small stature, but I have always felt the need to prove myself,” she said. “My first travel ball team, the Chatham Crocs, I did not fully make the team and I was considered an alternate. This pushed me from the beginning that I needed to prove that I was good enough to be a regular player on the team. There were so many practices where I would come home crying because I was so frustrated with myself, but I am thankful Robyn Allgood even gave me the opportunity to be part of her team, and if she wouldn’t have allowed me to be a member, I probably never would have played travel ball again.

“I was also a little bit older than the girls on the Crocs so I had to move up to play with the older teams during travel ball a year before they had to, making me the youngest girl on the team oftentimes,” she said. “This was a challenge because on every new team and I felt the need to prove myself again because I was young and the new girl, and this mindset continued until I got to high school, where I feel that I was successful and confident all four years. Then college came around and the competition rose, making me again feel the need to prove myself.”

The middle school and high school teams still hold fond memories for Blankenship.

“In middle school at Horton, we went undefeated my 7th and 8th grade years in both softball and basketball, which was something that was very special to be a part of,” she said. “High school was definitely some of the most fun I ever had playing softball. Most of the girls I played with in high school also played on my tee-ball, rec, and travel ball teams growing up. Senior year was so bittersweet because I knew I would never get to play with these girls again. Softball in college has been a transition from playing with the same girls and their families, but I enjoyed getting to meet new girls and create new bonds. I loved the competition of playing against Orange High School every year. We had such an evenly matched battle every time we competed and the stakes always felt so high. These games brought out so much passion in myself and my teammates and it felt like our whole season was riding on one win.”

After a successful career in high school on some of the best teams ever at Northwood, Blankenship made her collegiate choice of Guilford College which presented a great blend of academics and athletics in the Old Dominion Athletic Conference. Ironically it was another former Chatham County softball star that helped lead Blankenship Scott to Guilford College. Morgan (Andrews)

Peterson was a standout at Chatham Central before attending Guilford from 2009-2012 and becoming a four-year starting catcher and captain under Shores and being a four-time Academic All-ODAC selection while graduating with the highest fielding percentage (.984) and most sacrifice flies (8) in school history, and her 228 RBIs and 34 doubles stand second all-time at Guilford. In 2011, Peterson was the first to receive the Jack Jensen Ideal Student-Athlete Award, and she accepted Guilford’s top athletic honor, the Nereus C. English Athletic Leadership Award, the following year.

Peterson now teaches at Southeast Guilford High School and is in her third year as an assistant coach for the Quakers.

“Morgan is a family friend and played softball at Guilford and helped coach my first travel ball team in 6th grade,” Blankenship said. “She brought me to Guilford when I was in high school and gave me a tour, which was when I first fell in love with the school, and then ended up joining our coaching staff my sophomore year at Guilford — and it has been so cool to see it come full circle with her. Stepping onto campus and walking the brick paved paths under the shade of the oak trees, I felt right at home — I do not really know how to explain the feeling I felt the first day I stepped on campus, except that I knew it was exactly where I was meant to be. I still toured other schools, but my heart kept going back to Guilford and I ended up getting an offer my junior year and I quickly accepted.”

For Blankenship, it was the right choice and she followed here heart.

“I believe if I would have waited longer, I could have gotten other offers because I did have schools that expressed interest, but I knew I was meant to be at Guilford,” she said. “My family loved Guilford because it was only an hour from home so my parents could come to basically all of my games, and they had been such an important part of my journey getting to college, and I couldn’t imagine playing without them being there.

“My coach emphasized that I was coming to Guilford to get my education, and playing softball was a bonus, and if I ever had class, meetings with professors, or internships at the elementary schools, these things always came above softball in coach’s eyes, which was something that was very important to me. I have absolutely no regrets for coming to Guilford, it was the perfect place for me to grow as a player and a person. Even though my time there was cut short, I am so appreciative of the lessons I have learned and the memories I made at Guilford.”

So what was the difference at the next level, what what advice does Blankenship offer to aspiring young players?

“Honestly high school and college are not even comparable, even at the division three level, a college sport is like a job — every single day you are doing something with your sport, even during the off-season,” she said. “As a college athlete, we have workouts, team practice, individual hitting sessions, and study hall with the team, and playing division three allowed me to pursue a strong academic career as well as continue playing softball. However, this made it very difficult to manage my time, especially early in my career as many of the athletes on campus are deeply involved in their academics, sports teams, clubs, and have work study positions on or off campus.”

Blankenship said high school was much more regulated in comparison.

“In high school, your day is very regulated with school from 8-3, practice, then you go home for dinner and to study,” she said. “In college, the schedule varies daily from athlete to athlete. Time management is the most important aspect of college and learning how to prioritize is critical for success in and out of the classroom and work ethic is also extremely important and will make or break your career. The majority of the athletes in college were the best players on their high school teams, so competition is at an all-time high. And this was a big transition for me because in high school, I knew I was going to start every game in left field, but it college, sometimes I did not know if I was going to play until right before the game started.”

Challenging yourself to continue to work hard, she said — even if playing time is not the immediate result.

“That’s a huge lesson I

learned,” Blankenship said, “and I wanted to be able to look back on my college experience and be able to say that I truly gave it my all, and I can honestly say I do not have any regrets. I feel that I worked hard in the gym, in the classroom, and on the field and that is all I could have asked for myself.”

Her career on the softball diamond at Guilford College certainly backs up her feelings as the local product started all four seasons. Had the season played out like it was going Blankenship would have likely been only the 3rd player in Guilford softball history to play in 150 games, have a batting average of .350, score 100 runs, collect 100 hits, and steal 50 bases. This on top of being chosen as 2017 ODAC All-Conference 1st team, NCFA All-Atlantic Region 2nd team, NCCSIA All-State 1st team, seven times (every semester) on both Dean’s List and Student Athlete Honor Roll, three-time ODAC All-Conference Scholar Athlete and three-time NCFA All-American Scholar Athlete. Of course those would have been added to if the season had not been canceled.

As far as game memories in her career, Blankenship remembers one particular game the most that took place in her sophomore campaign.

“The most exciting moment for my team was my sophomore year in our conference tournament when the ODAC conference has been considered by many to be the strongest Division III conference in the country,” she said. “And that year, we were the eighth seed, and barely made it to the tournament before having to play the number one seed in the first round, undefeated and reigning NCAA champions, Virginia Wesleyan. We ended up beating them in the first round and I remember crying tears of joy because I was so excited. We truly shocked the nation that day! We ended up losing the next two games and Virginia Wesleyan still went on to win the NCAA tournament again, but we can still say we beat them in the ODAC tournament!”

That memory is just one of many with her teammates.

“Some of my favorite memories of playing in college are bus rides, mainly after we won, on the way to games, there were often a lot of nerves, but on the way home after a win everyone was so relaxed,” she said. “We would play games, sing songs, and just spend time talking with one another and some of my favorite conversations with my teammates and coaches have been on the

bus. Because you spend so much time with your teammates, you get close very quickly and my team felt like my family on campus and there was always someone I could hit with or eat meals with.

“From the minute I stepped on campus, I felt supported by my teammates and I am so thankful for the friendships I made and I still talk to many of my former teammates regularly, and it is so cool to see where life has taken them already. My junior year for home games, my whole team would get in the dugout and we would line dance to copperhead road before the game. This was such a fun time to get the nerves out, let loose, and have fun before the game started. It was always so fun to see the reactions of the opposing team when they saw all of us dancing, sometimes they even joined in and danced with us!”

And there was more dug-out fun during the games.

“My junior year, some of the other girls that did not play regularly and I made a talk show during the game and we would commentate play by play, with Gatorade cup microphones,” Blankenship recalls with a laugh. “This was such a fun way to stay engaged during the game but to also enjoy yourself and even if we were not on the field, we always found ways to have fun! When the coaches and girls from the opposing team were near our dugout they would get such a kick out of our commentary and tell us how much fun they had listening to us.”

Given that Blankenship and Conrad were so close as the only seniors, it was only fitting that the local standout had some special words for her fellow co-captain.

“Natalie and I were the only seniors left this year, and with us both being slappers and playing the

same position, we were easily each other’s competition from day one,” she said. “Nat is one of the hardest workers Guilford has ever seen and I believe we pushed one another to always be great. It was difficult in our early years to want each other to succeed, if I am being honest, because sometimes the competition got the best of us. However, as we got older, we were each other’s biggest cheerleaders, but we never let up on pushing one another and we would be the first to call one another out if they made a mistake, but also the first person to encourage when we needed it.

“A beautiful friendship came from meeting Nat and it was so amazing to see how close we became, even amidst our intense competition. She said one time that we are just like sisters because we will argue and push one another, but at the end of the day it is because we care so much about one another and want to see each other succeed. Now, we are both bridesmaids in each other’s wedding and I know we will be lifelong friends.”

Now beginning the next chapter of her life away from softball and married to Garrett, and awaiting a job offer as a teacher, Blankenship hasn’t given up on being connected to the sport she loves just yet.

“My dad and I have always dreamed of coaching together, so I definitely see us doing this sometime in the future, and although right now I am trying to navigate what life looks like for me without playing, I hope to find other ways to be involved with the sport in the future,” she said. “I have considered playing in an adult league eventually, but I think it is too soon for me right now to imagine playing without having my Guilford jersey on.”

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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-8pm, Pittsboro 11 am-8pm). **ORDER & PAY via our mobile app: HEARTLAND GUEST (Apple & Android)**...we'll deliver to your vehicle upon arrival. We will be serving a limited to-go menu and weekly FAMILY SPECIAL. Kids eat free\* on Monday (\*from the kid's menu w/ purchase of an adult meal, phone orders only). Our limited food menu will posted on our website ([carolinabrewery.com](http://carolinabrewery.com)) and social media (@carolinabrewerybrewpubs on IG and FB @carolinabrewery on Twitter). Beer Delivery now available! To-go beer specials including: \$25 cases of Chapel Hill Toffee Stout, \$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. Email: [info@carolinabrewery.com](mailto:info@carolinabrewery.com) 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

**COMPADRES:** Serving full menu (subject to availability) for CALL AHEAD take out orders and curbside delivery. Open daily 11:30am-9pm, **Local delivery** within 10 mile radius, minimum delivery of \$30 (fees may apply), Follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CompadresTequilaLounge/>, <http://www.compadresnc.com> Locations: 193 Lowes Drive, Pittsboro 919-704-8374 or 115 Siler Crossing, Siler City 919-663-5600,

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**ELIZABETH'S PIZZA OF PITTSBORO:** Full menu available for take-out, curbside service, and **delivery**. We will be offering delivery within 5 mile radius with a \$35 minimum order (add \$2 delivery fee). Gift certificates are available in restaurant or purchase by phone. Hours are subject to change, so please call ahead. 160 Hillsboro Street, Pittsboro NC, Phone: 919-545-9292, Online: [elizabethspizzapittsboro.com](http://elizabethspizzapittsboro.com) or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/elizabethspittsboro/>

**ELIZABETH'S OF SILER CITY:** Currently accepting call ahead or walk-in orders (allow 30 minutes) of full menu, offering **delivery** within 10 mile radius with minimum of \$35 order (allow 45 minutes), open regular hours but delivery cut-off times apply (Sun-Thursday 9 pm, Friday & Saturday 10 pm). Visit us online at <https://www.elizabethspizzaofsilercity.com>, Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ElizabethspizzaSilerCity/> 119 Siler Crossing Siler City NC Phone: 919-663-5555

**GREEK KOUZINA:** Full menu available for take-out and curbside service. Open daily 11 am-8pm. Your support of our restaurant allows us to pay it forward and donate to local nonprofits providing outreach to our community! 964 East Street, Pittsboro NC, 919-542-9950, Online: <http://greekkouzina.com> or Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Greek-Kouzina-288058741212128/>

**NERICCIO'S FAMILY RESTAURANT:** Open Monday-Friday with amended temporary hours of 3:30pm-7pm (Closed weekends). Offering takeout and **free delivery** within 10 miles (call ahead ordering available). Follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Nericcios-Family-Restaurant-101180477933858/>) ATTENTION ALL TRUCKERS, we have a large parking lot and look forward to seeing you soon. Phone: 919-799-7647 1110 North 2nd Street in Siler City (site of the old Copper Penny restaurant).

**OASIS MARKET & DELI:** Open Wednesday-Friday (11am-3pm) & Saturday (noon-3pm), Please call ahead to place your to-go order. Keep up with us, our menu, and specials\* on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/OasisMarketnDeli/> Want us to shop for you? Let us know your market order and we'll bring it to your car! \*FREE pint of ice cream with qualifying purchase! <https://oasisfreshmarket.com> 117 South Chatham Avenue Siler City, Phone: 919-799-7434

**PITTSBORO ROADHOUSE:** Offering pickup or **delivery** for items on a limited menu including Family Meals and a la cart items as long as we can. Order from 11 am-5pm for pickup between noon-7pm. RECENTLY ADDED: front room "convenience store" complete with beer, wine, family games, local products (including Carolina Cravings), pork, micro greens, lettuce, cheese, beef, chicken and even TP! Expanding regularly! Our menu is updated daily. Please visit our website for the most up-to-date daily menu and bookmark the page for future reference: [PittsboroRoadhouse.com/pickup-and-delivery/](http://PittsboroRoadhouse.com/pickup-and-delivery/) 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](mailto: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/>

**ROJO CANELA MEXICAN CUISINE:** Open Monday-Saturday 11am-9pm for curbside & take out. Serving our full menu (<https://www.facebook.com/rojocanelamexicancuisine/>) including appetizers, vegetarian options, classic & favorite Mexican selections, sandwiches, soup, children's menu, and desserts. Call ahead for faster service 919-799-7733. 315 E. Third Street (Siler City)

**SMALL B&B CAFE:** Operating on a call ahead basis, so please contact us to place ALL orders (take out & delivery) Continuing to offer **delivery** within 10 miles of the cafe with minimum order of \$20 (addl \$3 fee), Please call our phone number to place ALL orders. We are planning to be open Wednesday thru Sunday (7:30 am- 2 pm) Keep up to date with us & menu options via Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Small-BB-Cafe-128435270586175/>) or our website (<http://smallbandbcafe.com/cafe-menu/pick-up-order-menu.html>) Located at 219 East St, Pittsboro, NC 27312, Phone: 919-537-1909

**THE MODERN LIFE DELI:** Open Tuesday-Saturday from noon-8pm for carry-out or curbside delivery. Currently serving our full menu and pizza. We've added PIZZA KITS you can make and bake at home (dough, sauce, cheese, pepperoni, and basil). Gift cards are also available. Our menu is online at [www.themodernlifedeli.com](http://www.themodernlifedeli.com) Keep up with us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheModlife/> Feel free to call ahead to place your carry-out order. 46 Sanford Road, Pittsboro Phone: 919-533-6883

**THE PHOENIX BAKERY: DELIVERY PROGRAM,** visit our website delivery page for all info! Currently open Tuesday-Friday (8:30am-5pm) & Weekends (8:30am-2:30pm), providing full breakfast & lunch menu to-go as well as breads, pastries, and cakes. Come in & shop or order ahead for curbside delivery. Let's connect on Facebook! (<https://www.facebook.com/ThePhoenixBakery/>) You'll be able to find the ordering menu, pricing, delivery limitations, and details on our website: <http://www.thephoenixbakerync.com> 664 West Street, Pittsboro, 919-542-4452, email us: [thephoenixbakery@yahoo.com](mailto:thephoenixbakery@yahoo.com)

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**TOWN HALL BURGERS & BEER: DELIVERY** via Take Out Central website ([www.takeoutcentral.com](http://www.takeoutcentral.com)). Limited To-Go menu offered from 11am - 8pm daily includes shared plates, salads, sides, burgers, tacos, and wings (see our menu at <https://www.facebook.com/thbbbc/>). Call ahead ordering with curbside pickup only with credit card payment (must pay in advance by phone). GIFT CARDS available, we are taking care of our first responders and have also set up a fund to help our part-time employees (contact the restaurant for more info), 58 Chapelton Ct, Suite 140 Chapel Hill, NC 27516, Phone: 984-234-3504 ONLINE: <https://townhallburgerandbeer.com/locations/briar-chapel/>

**VIRLIE'S GRILL:** Call ahead orders (pick up inside, one person at a time, please wait under awning or in your vehicle), full menu and daily specials are being served 11 am-7pm Monday-Friday (closed temporarily on weekends), gift cards available 58 Hillsborough Street, Pittsboro NC 27312 Phone: 919-542-0376 Follow us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/Virlies-Grill-410167659129954/> or online at <https://virliesgrill.com>

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## NCAA

Continued from page B1

revenue of \$104,571,404; N.C. State had revenue of \$87,976,532; East Carolina received \$46,861,190; Charlotte received \$37,919,619; Appalachian State received \$36,940,867; UNC-Wilmington received \$18,815,244; UNC-Greensboro received \$17,115,914; Western Carolina received \$14,720,226; North Carolina A&T received \$14,420,476; North Carolina Central received \$13,861,765; and UNC-Asheville received \$8,868,914.

The obvious disparity is glaring on a national and even a state level, while also displaying why North Carolina A&T is jumping to Division 1 football and exactly what schools like UNC-Wilmington, UNC-Asheville and UNC-Greensboro are missing by not fielding football programs.

So exactly how these schools will pay for the athletes to stay will be the issue, and how much the NCAA is going to help, is also a bit foggy at the present time. You have to remember, all these seniors who opt to return were set to be replaced by incoming recruits, possibly sending rosters of 35 in baseball to 45 or more. How would you like to be a coach with four or five players now at each position?

The same could be said of soccer, tennis, golf, track, softball, and all the sports played in the spring. It's going to be an issue, a challenge, but in the end, it will be all worked through, in my opinion, and in the end it was all that could be done.

The NCAA faces some interesting rulings ahead in April, such as the grad transfer and one transfer rulings that they will also deal with, as well as name, imaging and likeness for student-athletes. To me this is setting up a lot of chaos in the future, especially the one transfer and the name, imaging and likeness. You want to talk about some Wild West, under-the-table dealings — good luck with that.

The biggest issue for me that hopefully will be corrected down the line is full scholarships across the board for student athletes. Why do volleyball, football, basketball players get full rides while baseball and softball get 11.7 and 12.0 scholarships per year. Makes no sense whatsoever and it's time to address that over everything else.

But for now, at least this week, the NCAA has done its job and made two good decisions in difficult times. Maybe that's a ray of sunshine and hope for the future.

Worth knowing.  
Worth reading.

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# Coronavirus fears amplify needs, mistrust for NC undocumented workers

**BY COURTNEY MABEUS**  
Carolina Public Press

When U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents pulled over an undocumented man in Cary late last week, the incident sent a shock wave through the state's immigrant community, amplifying the mistrust and fear many have of the federal government amid the largest national public health crisis to grip the U.S. in more than a century.

"It was definitely frightening," Andrew Willis Garcés, director of Siembra NC, said. The group advocates for thousands of undocumented workers in Durham, Orange, Alamance, Forsyth, Randolph and Guilford counties.

Across North Carolina, advocates say the new coronavirus pandemic is magnifying vulnerabilities already faced by one of the state's most marginalized workforces, many of whom live paycheck to paycheck, lack access to health care and are not eligible for unemployment or other federal benefits.

But while advocates said they were not aware of any positive cases among communities that they work with, they are bracing for that possibility while also trying to bridge gaps in communication about the virus as well as in services to try and keep people healthy.

Confirmed cases of COVID-19 are assigned to states and counties geographically based on the patient's permanent residence, not the current place of residence or where the test was administered.

A spokesperson for the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services told Carolina Public Press late Friday in tracking tracking COVID-19 cases among the state's large population of immigrant workers, including those who are undocumented, it is following CDC guidelines, under which DHHS is assigning any positive tests to the U.S. county of residence for these individuals.

**Economic disruption and poor conditions**

Many undocumented people who work in hotels and restaurants have lost jobs or seen their hours severely cut across the state, advocates said.

To help counter those losses, Magaly Urdiales, a co-director for Western North Carolina Workers Center, based in Hickory, said the organization is setting up a rapid response fund.

"Many of these workers are head of the house," she said.

But workers in industries that have not shut down remain at risk from the virus' spread through crowded condi-

tions. Hunter Ogletree, who also helps to lead the WNC Workers Center, said he's heard of poultry plant laborers working shoulder to shoulder in shifts lasting up to 10 hours, despite pleas from health officials to practice social distancing.

"They're running the line and production as normal," Ogletree said, adding that workers have received "minimal advice," including to stay home from work if they feel sick.

"Even that's not good advice because workers, they don't have paid sick leave, so they're going to come to work if they're able to come to work despite the fact that they might feel sick," Ogletree said.

The lack of protections extends beyond meat processors.

"I think the challenge is that the agricultural system is not set up for a pandemic," Lariza Garzon, executive director of the Episcopal Farmworker Ministry, said.

The Dunn-based ministry advocates for those who labor on farms, in meat processors and packing plants as well as in nurseries in Sampson, Duplin, Johnston, Lenoir and Wayne counties.

"We're worried about the mental health of a population that was already under a lot of stress," Garzon said.

"So, for those families who are either undocumented or have mixed-status family members in the family, we're worried about the constant fear and the constant issues that they experience because of their immigration status."

"We also are working with a community that was already experiencing a lot of stress because of the 2018 hurricane, so a lot of the families have not been able to recover."

The organization has scheduled a drive-thru food bank for Saturday and, though the group often gets 70-120 families, it's bracing for more, Garzon said.

"I think there's going to be an economic crisis that is going to highlight the inequality that our society already has," she said.

Garzon's concerns also include the health and safety of seasonal farmworkers, some of whom are already arriving, she said.

Many are living in camps with shared facilities, with little privacy and without transportation. If someone tests positive for the virus, isolation could be a challenge.

"How are they going to be isolated when they live in a camp that maybe has 30 guys there?" Garzon asked.

"How are they going to be provided a private bathroom? That's not the current way in which camps work. Workers share

bathrooms, and they share rooms."

**Access to information**

Garzon said she speaks daily with other advocacy groups to coordinate efforts and is working to provide reliable information in Spanish.

She also cited misinformation she said she's seen about the virus, including that eating garlic can be a cure — a rumor she said is not exclusive to the largely Latino community she represents — and said more interpreters are needed in clinics beyond normal working hours.

"I think that we need for the state government to come up with a plan on how they're going to prioritize the health of agricultural workers in the states because they are essential workers and our economy really depends on agriculture," she said.

Lack of information in Spanish is an issue that Siembra NC is also working to counter, Willis Garcés said.

When a Spanish-speaking woman tried calling the Guilford County Health Department with concerns about her husband's cough and fever, instead of getting answers, she got passed around for about a half-hour, he said.

"I don't know if she hung up or they hung up, but she said, 'It didn't work. I couldn't get through,' and we had given her that number because that's what we were told," Willis Garcés said.

The county's Health Department does offer Spanish options, and it was not clear what happened in that instance. A spokesperson for the county did not return phone messages from CPP.

The state DHHS links to COVID-19 briefings in both English and Spanish, and its text-based 211 system is offered in Spanish. But text messages link back to information in English and a Spanish-based reader must scroll to find those links.

To help provide accurate information, Willis Garcés said Siembra NC is translating information and graphics put out by local agencies and sharing other resources. A livestream with a doctor from Cone Health about the virus on the organization's Facebook from last week has been viewed more than 7,000 times.

"We have a lot of people who trust what we say about other topics, and so we figured we'll try to use that to support public health in this time and to encourage people to do basically what the (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) is saying and the state's saying, because otherwise there just aren't a lot of credible voices, especially

not from the federal government, that they can trust, who are telling people to take this seriously," Willis Garcés said.

**Fears of reprisals against undocumented residents**

While advocates say they are working to address the community's immediate needs, there's also a lingering fear that coming forward for testing for the virus might lead to later detention and deportation.

The March 18 Cary stop, which was criticized on Siembra NC's Facebook page, only served to erode that trust during a critical time, Willis Garcés said.

"I think that that's one of the big concerns we have right now is we all need to be united against this pandemic, against the virus, and doing everything we can, and at least one agency in the federal government is doing a lot to encourage part of the population to not do that, to not take it seriously, to not pay attention, basically," Willis Garcés said. "Because how can you trust the federal government if they're doing one thing and saying another?"

Concerns about the spread of the virus in ICE detention facilities are also stressful for families of detainees, including several from North Carolina. On Thursday, Siembra NC held an on-line press conference to draw attention to conditions at the Stewart Detention Center, an ICE facility in Georgia, where detainees say the conditions are ripe for the easy spread of COVID-19.

A detainee at the Bergen County Jail in Hackensack, N.J., tested positive for the virus earlier this week, ICE said.

ICE's website says it is continuing enforcement operations during the pandemic, though it does not conduct them at doctor's offices or other medical facilities without prior approval or under extreme circumstances.

ICE spokesperson Lindsay Williams told Carolina Public Press that the agency has not stopped enforcement actions but on March 18 scaled back amid the pandemic to focus on public safety threats and those who'd be subject to mandatory detention.

"For those individuals who do not fall into those categories, (Enforcement and Removal Operations) will exercise discretion to delay enforcement actions until after the crisis or utilize alternatives to detention, as appropriate," Williams wrote in an email.

ICE's website also says it does not conduct enforcement operations at doctor's offices or other medical facilities without prior approval or under extreme circumstances.

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# AG: Scammers, price gougers exploiting coronavirus crisis in NC

BY IMARI SCARBROUGH  
Carolina Public Press

North Carolina residents should keep a watchful eye out for coronavirus-related scams and price gouging, according to the office N.C. Attorney General Josh Stein.

"Our office has received reports of scammers going door to door in neighborhoods selling coronavirus testing kits and cleaning supplies," announced a recent consumer alert from Stein's office.

"This activity could be both a scam and a pretense to enter your home, possibly to commit robbery or other criminal acts."

Laura Brewer, communications director for the N.C. Department of Justice, said that Stein's office has already received many complaints.

Last Monday morning, Brewer reported that as of the end of the day Friday, Stein's office had received 561 complaints about price gouging.

"We have also received three formal complaints about scams and are actively working with partner organizations to share information about scams about which they've been notified," Brewer said. "Doing so helps to let North Carolinians know what to look out for and can prevent scams."

Brewer shared examples of various scams.

In one, a text directs the recipient to click on a link to get the N95 masks that health care workers around the country have been desperately seeking to reduce their risk of catching or transmitting COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus.

Another example of a scam text message begins with "Good evening, Honey" and tries to entice the reader with a "\$0 deductible, \$0 copay" insurance plan due to COVID-19.

"We've also seen a number of scams around miracle cures and PPE," Brewer said this week, referring to personal protective

equipment.

As examples, she provided screen grabs that complainants have shared with the Department of Justice, including the insurance scam, a "face masks back in stock" scam and a "steps you can take to avoid infection" scam.

## Price gouging

In addition to scams, price gouging has posed a problem. Many items, including N95 masks, have increased significantly in price during the pandemic.

"Attorney General Josh Stein today announced that he is working with Amazon to investigate nine North Carolina businesses and sellers over price gouging concerns," the N.C. Department of Justice announced Friday.

"Attorney General Stein was notified by Amazon that these sellers had raised prices dramatically for items that have been in high demand during the coronavirus pandemic, including hand sanitizer and N95 masks."

While some alleged price gougers are operating across state lines, some are in North Carolina.

"Amazon identified these North Carolina-based sellers having raised prices on coronavirus-related products more than 40 percent between Feb. 10 and March 16, and as a group having generated more than \$100,000 in sales as a result of those higher prices," according to Department of Justice.

The complaints have come from across the state and out of state but tend to come from the largest urban counties, Mecklenburg, Wake, Guilford and Forsyth.

An outlier was mostly rural Robeson County, which has generated more complaints than several more populous counties. Complaints about specific vendors in Robeson County have also been unusually high. Most of the complaints there have been about

absurdly high prices for cleaning products and groceries, which are among the most reported items being price-gouged statewide.

The most frequently price-gouged individual items, based on the complaints DOJ has received, have been toilet paper, food items, disinfectant, gasoline, face masks and hand sanitizer.

## The scourge of robocalls from scammers

The Federal Trade Commission has also warned about coronavirus scams using phones across the United States.

"Hang up on robocalls," the FTC advises. "Don't press any numbers. Scammers are using illegal robocalls to pitch everything from scam coronavirus treatments to work-at-home schemes. The recording might say that pressing a number will let you speak to a live operator or remove you from their call list, but it might lead to more robocalls instead."

The FTC also warned that on-line sales of coronavirus vaccinations and home test kits should also be avoided.

"The FTC and FDA have jointly issued warning letters to seven sellers of unapproved and misbranded products, claiming that you can treat or prevent the coronavirus," the FTC added. "The companies' products include teas, essential oils and colloidal silver. The FTC says the companies have no evidence to back up their claims — as required by law. The FDA says there are no approved vaccines, drugs or investigational products currently available to treat or prevent the virus."

The North Carolina robocall hotline is 844-8-NO-ROBO. Any other complaints can be made after calling 877-5-NO-SCAM. Price gouging complaints can also be filed at [ncdoj.gov/pricegouging](http://ncdoj.gov/pricegouging).

Those outside North Carolina may call 919-716-6000.

## What we like — and don't like — about spring



Photos by Kim Hawks

Spring brings pine pollen, the source of which is seen in this close-up photo from Kim Hawks. The worst of the pine pollen season is over...we hope.



Pittsboro gardener Suza White's collection of flowering plants were active in this past week's warmer temperatures. Here, a creeping phlox subulanta shows off.

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# POLICE REPORTS

## CHATHAM COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE

Alicia Jones, 35, of Siler City, was charged March 27 for possession of methamphetamine, for which she was issued a written promise with an April also charged with misdemeanor or probation violations and possession of drug paraphernalia, for which she was held under a \$5,000 bond with a May 13 court date in Pittsboro.

Jodie Marshall, 32, of Moncure, was charged March 27 with assault and battery. Marshall was held under a 48-hour

domestic violence hold with a May 6 court date in Pittsboro.

Melissa Milsom, 48, of Chapel Hill, was charged March 27 with driving while impaired. Milsom was issued a written promise with a June 10 court date in Pittsboro.

Troy Ellis, 35, of Apex, was charged March 30 with possession of firearm by a felon and assault on a female. Ellis was issued a written promise with an April 27 court date in Pittsboro and held under a 48-hour domestic violence hold with an April 29 court date in Pittsboro.

Jaquan Woodard, 25, of Chapel Hill, was charged March 31 with intimidating a witness, felony stalking, assault on an unborn child, assault on a female, violation of a domestic violence protective order and false imprisonment. Woodard was held under a 48-hour domestic violence hold with a May 6 court date in Pittsboro.

Adam Webster, 33, of Bear Creek, was charged March 31 with violation of a domestic violence protective order. Webster was held under a 48-hour domestic violence hold with a May 7 court date in Carthage.

Jaron Smith, 33, of Siler City, was charged March 31 with breaking and entering and injury to personal property. Smith was issued a written promise with an April 27 court date in Pittsboro.

### STATE HIGHWAY PATROL

Richard Vazquez of Pittsboro was cited April 1 for unsafe movement in the Food Lion parking lot in Pittsboro.

Angelo Marrone of Durham was cited April 3 for driving left of center on Jones Ferry Road in Pittsboro.

CHATHAM CH@T | MARK DAVIS, ASSOCIATE JUSTICE, N.C. SUPREME COURT

# N.C. Supreme Court justice’s book explores connection between courts at federal, state level

*This week, we chat with Mark Davis, currently an associate justice on the N.C. Supreme Court. An Onslow County native, Davis earned his Juris Doctor at the UNC School of Law in 1991 and spent 13 years as a private practice attorney before becoming a Special Deputy Attorney General in the N.C. Department of Justice for five years. He was appointed to the N.C. Court of Appeals in 2012 and elected to a full term in 2014. Gov. Roy Cooper named Davis as an associate justice of the N.C. Supreme Court in March 2019 and he was installed a month later. Davis recently released a book entitled “A Warren Court of Our Own: The Exum Court and the Expansion on Individual Rights,” available now.*



Submitted photo

N.C. Supreme Court Justice Mark Davis

**You’ve entitled your book, “A Warren Court of Our Own,” drawing similarities between the “judicial boldness” of Earl Warren’s U.S. Supreme Court (1953-1969) and Chief Justice Exum’s N.C. Supreme Court (1986-1994). For a generation which might be unfamiliar with the Warren Court, how would you characterize it and summarize that time in the federal judiciary?**

The Warren Court was a time of unprecedented expansion of individual liberties under the federal Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment. During Earl Warren’s tenure as Chief Justice, the U.S. Supreme Court consistently ruled in favor of litigants seeking a vindication of their federal constitutional rights.

**The North Carolina Supreme Court, during former Chief Justice Jim Exum’s tenure, was a time, you write, of the “expansion of individual rights” in North Carolina, despite stark differences in the judicial philosophies of some of its members and changes in the state’s political structure. In the 200-year history of our state’s Supreme Court, how unique is this brief period of time that you examine in your book?**

It was extremely unique. Prior to the era I write about, the N.C. Supreme Court was widely perceived as being a very conservative and tradition-bound court. The period during which Jim Exum served as Chief Justice was really unprecedented. The Court was willing to depart from tradition in virtually all areas of the law, particularly in cases involving individual rights.

**You briefly walk readers through N.C.’s 1986 Supreme Court elections, and then-justice Exum’s decision to resign from the court to run for Chief Justice against his colleague, friend — and one-time tennis doubles partner — Rhoda Billings. It seems that alone would be a topic worthy of a book, especially given the growth of the Republican Party in N.C. at the time. What struck you most about that race, and about Exum’s decision?**

I agree that this topic warrants a book all by itself, and I hope someone writes one. It truly was a fascinating turn of events from a branch of government whose election cycles were rarely deemed

exciting and were instead often extremely predictable. To me, it was a very courageous decision by Exum to resign from a “safe seat” as an Associate Justice in order to challenge Billings in the Chief Justice race.

**Justice Exum also writes in the forward about the question of whether his court was an “activist” court, and also at how “progressive” it was during an important time in the state’s history. It feels like, in reading your book, that the legal ground in North Carolina shifted during that critical period in the state’s history. What makes that so compelling to you as a jurist, a researcher, and a writer? And how would you define “progressive” for observers of the Court?**

The subject was very interesting to me as a judge and as someone who has been following North Carolina’s judiciary for several decades. During this era, the N.C. Supreme Court was receptive to arguments that previous incarnations of the Court would have dismissed out of hand. As a result, “progressive” rulings ensued, by which I mean rulings that often favored criminal defendants and civil plaintiffs who had sued the government or corporations.

**You write that the court’s jurisprudence was “modernized” during Exum’s time as Chief Justice. What do you mean by that?**

Prior to the Exum Court, the N.C. Supreme Court had typically applied longstanding doctrines from its prior cases without any real thought to whether changing times warranted relaxing the rigidity of those doctrines. For example, I write about a case involving the employment at will doctrine, which historically had been applied so as to allow an employer to fire an employee lacking an employment contract for any reason whatsoever. But the Exum Court created an exception to the doctrine for firings that occurred for reasons that violated public policy. This is just one example of the Exum Court showing a willingness to examine longstanding doctrines to see if they were being fairly applied. The Court also demonstrated a willingness to look at what other courts around the country were doing and sometimes follow those courts in new directions.

**Former Chief Justice Exum writes in the forward to your book about he and his colleagues having moments of “disagreeableness,” yet they still managed to remain friends and develop close relationships with each other. Does that match up to your experience during your tenure on the N.C. Supreme Court?**

Yes, it does. Happily, the tradition of our Court being a very collegial one remains strong. Our current Court has members who bring different perspectives and insights, which is not at all unusual and is, in fact, a positive thing as it ensures that all aspects of a case are fully considered by the Court as a whole. But we all get along extremely well personally.

**The bulk of your book is devoted to looking at specific state Supreme Court cases from the Exum era. Can you talk about one or two of them, and share with us — from your perspective as a jurist — what makes them so important in N.C. legal history?**

To me, the one case that epitomizes the Exum Court is a case I write about called State v. Carter. It had to do with the “exclusionary rule” under the North Carolina Constitution, which provides that when evidence is obtained illegally from a criminal defendant, the evidence cannot be used to convict him at his trial. In Carter, police officers obtained a sample of the defendant’s blood in good faith reliance on a search warrant that had been


issued by a magistrate allowing the blood sample to be taken. In hindsight, everyone agreed the warrant had not been supported by probable cause so the question was whether the blood evidence was nevertheless properly admitted into evidence at trial under these circumstances.

The U.S. Supreme Court had recently ruled in a similar case arising under the federal exclusionary rule that when officers rely in good faith on the issuance of a warrant, the exclusionary rule doesn’t apply even in cases where the warrant was erroneously issued because the rule is designed to deter intentional police misconduct. So it would have been very easy for the Exum Court to simply follow the U.S. Supreme Court ruling and similar hold that North Carolina’s exclusionary rule likewise contained a good faith exception. But the Exum Court refused to do that. It rejected the notion that our version of the exclusionary rule contained that same good faith exception. In a nutshell, that case exemplifies the determination of the Exum Court to blaze its own path in the law.

**This book had its genesis as a master’s thesis for you. What was the experience like meeting with, interviewing, and getting to know members of the Exum court? Has that changed you and your approach to the bench in any way?**

The greatest part of this entire experience for me has been getting to

## A WARREN COURT OF OUR OWN



*The Exum Court and the Expansion of Individual Rights in North Carolina*

MARK A. DAVIS

Submitted photo

**N.C. Supreme Court Justice Mark Davis recently published the book ‘A Warren Court of Our Own,’ examining the similarities between the Chief Justice Earl Warren’s leadership of the U.S. Supreme Court and the N.C. Supreme Court under Chief Justice Jim Exum.**

spend extended periods of time with Exum and the other surviving members of the Exum Court. I think having the oppor-

tunity to speak with them about the types of issues I write about in the book cannot help but make me a better judge.

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A household is defined for the purposes of the Lifeline program as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Lifeline service is not transferable, and only eligible consumers may enroll in the program. Consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain a Lifeline discount can be punished by fine or imprisonment and can be barred from the program.

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# Let’s make this virus unwelcome

**BY DR. JOHN DYKERS**  
Retired Physician

It's a nasty virus, COVID-19. But it is just a virus. The damn thing depends on a cell, in this case primarily a human cell, to live and reproduce and multiply. It's killed by alcohol wipes and by soap and water and scrubbing our hands. Let's make this a very hostile world for COVID19.

First, let's cut off its human cell supply. Don't any of us get around it and give it a new home. COVID-19 is not a pleasant house guest. Let's make lots of masks and gowns and gloves so those of us who must care for our friends who have already let the little stinker in by mistake let COVID-19 know she is not welcome at our house.

We will stop smoking cigarettes or vaping to keep COVID-19 from having an easy road into pneumonia.

If COVID-19 tries to hitch a ride on a package coming to our house, we can bake her in the sun sitting outside for a couple of hours. That'll show her how unwelcome she is. And just in case she

tries to slip inside on our hands, we'll wash her off vigorously. We'll even turn the box over so the sun will bake her sisters on the other side.

We just had a plastic grocery bag with some frozen ground beef brought by a neighbor. We kept our distance and had an important conversation. The plastic bag stayed in one hand and went straight into the chest freezer, opened by the other hand. Now that's a COLD reception. COVID-19 would not live over three days on the plastic anyway; there is no food for her there outside a cell, and she really will have a short life in the freezer. And I washed my hands.

Earlier I talked with a dentist friend in Charlotte who had no locums practice income now. He and his wife stay inside the house as they are fragile, elderly. They give no hospitality to COVID-19. Their daughter lives with them and goes out daily to her accounting work, but she is very unfriendly to COVID-19. She keeps a six-to-eight-foot distance so COVID-19 can't hitch a ride on the breath of her clients to ride in on hers and hook up with her cells in

**‘First, let’s cut off its human cell supply. Don’t any of us get around it and give it a new home. COVID-19 is not a pleasant house guest.’**

**DR. JOHN DYKERS**, long-time Siler City physician

mouth, eyes, lungs, and nose to carry home to Mom and Dad. COVID-19 is kinda overweight — .7-.9 microns — and can't travel far without falling. She can't jump at all. My cousin in New Orleans was glad to hear that; she offered to let a displaced friend store some boxes in her garage and was glad to know that they could sit there a while and not attack her.

I talked to the Charlotte Country Club where my dentist friend recently relinquished his membership. A country club's reason for being is social gatherings or sit-down meals. COVID-19 will not be offered a membership, but the club may make my friend an honorary member. Talked with Lauren at the golf shop. We are being mean to COVID-19 by not having caddies, but we have learned to carefully clean pull carts and are starting to use them again. That will make for good exercise to help keep a strong immune system and keep the door closed to COVID-19.

Ward and Faust called me that my tax return was ready to file. She reminded me that it was curb service, and she would be wearing a mask and gloves. I should make a racket or call on the cell. She would come to the car to bring forms to sign and give me my copy of the tax return. We laughed that even in Siler City we are being unfriendly to COVID-19. I will take her check for her fee on the same exchange.

Meanwhile we attack COVID-19. Kill her with Clorox and wipe those



Submitted photo

**Dr. John Dykers**

door handles at the post office with an alcohol wipe. And kill her on the mail tables. Wipe the car door handles and the steering wheel. The Postal Service is attacking COVID19 by encouraging any employees with sickness to stay home; if COVID-19 has found a home in any of their cells they will not sneeze on the mail! They are keeping their distance in the mail room so as not to be hospitable to COVID-19 there.

She is a nasty bug and we won't give her a home with any of us. Mostly we won't sneeze or cough or blow her to a new person for a new home, and we won't let her come in to us. I miss shaking hands or scratching my nose, but COVID-19 is not welcome. Wash your hands. Don't touch your face.

*Dr. John Dykers is retired from a career in family practice in Siler City that lasted from 1964 to 2010. He is widely published in the medical literature and N.C. newspapers. He has published three books: "God Made Men Too," "The Price Of Ebbs Is Down," and "How To Be A Happy Former Smoker; Even If You Don't Want To," all available on Amazon. Details on Dykers.com.*

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Submitted photos



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**WAIT!** Don't do this page alone. If this page looks **TOO HARD**, find an older buddy to help you. If it looks **EASY**, find a younger buddy and help them!

## The Bunny Buddies' Giggle Garden

Why did Bart Bunny get arrested for running Through The farmer's garden?

What did Bella Bunny say To The Last bite of her carrot?

Circle every third letter to reveal the answer.

**D G I R S T C B S V W  
B J S E Y M E P H N X  
B N Q V I G B C D T E  
K P G R T N F O A H G  
W S D I Z A N B W G  
E T Y D V O S C U**

I \_\_\_\_\_!

Use the code to answer the above riddle.

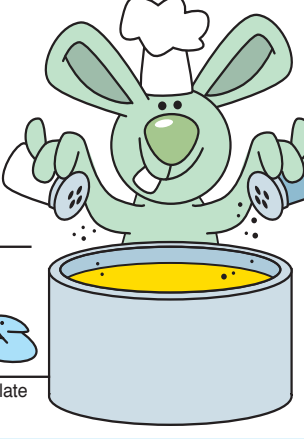
7 = A 2 = E 6 = I 5 = R 1 = U  
13 = B 15 = G 14 = N 11 = S 10 = V  
9 = D 8 = H 12 = P 21 = T 3 = W

Do the math to reveal the answer to this riddle:

### How does Bosco Bunny make gold soup?

15 - 10 = \_\_\_\_\_  
21 - 8 = \_\_\_\_\_  
9 - 6 = \_\_\_\_\_  
24 - 8 = \_\_\_\_\_ 36 - 28 = \_\_\_\_\_  
26 - 12 = \_\_\_\_\_

**Standards Link:** Number Sense: Calculate sums and differences.



Use the clues to fill in the missing letters. The letters in the second vertical row reveal the punchline to this riddle:

## How does Brianna Bunny stay healthy?

1.	C				
2.		A			
3.				Z	
4.			E		
5.	M				
6.		B			
7.				E	
8.					N
9.			H		

### CLUES

- Your teacher writes on a blackboard with this.
- What ghosts like to do to houses.
- A reward for winning.
- Farmers plant these to grow crops.
- Another word for engine.
- The opposite of below.
- What you are when you need rest.
- A very large expanse of sea.
- What is left after something burns.

**Standards Link:** Vocabulary: Spell grade-level appropriate words correctly.

The Bunny Buddies have hidden marshmallow chickies all over this page. How many can you find in two minutes? Now have your buddy try. Who found the most?

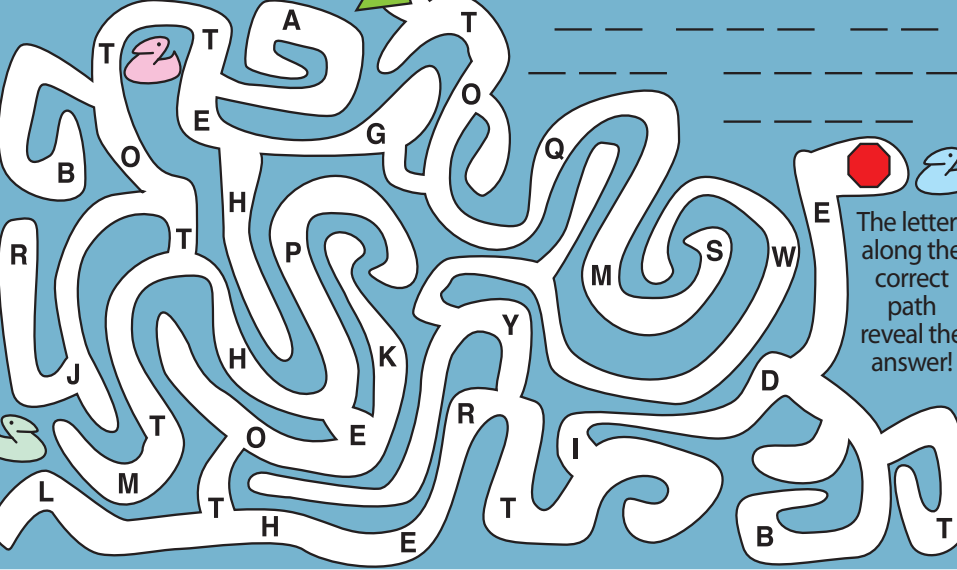
### Eggstra! Eggstra!

#### Scrambled Easter Eggs

Look through the newspaper for letters that spell "Easter Eggs." Cut them out. With your buddy, take turns mixing up the letters and spelling a new word. A player gets one point for each letter used.

**Standards Link:** Spelling: Recognize common spelling patterns.

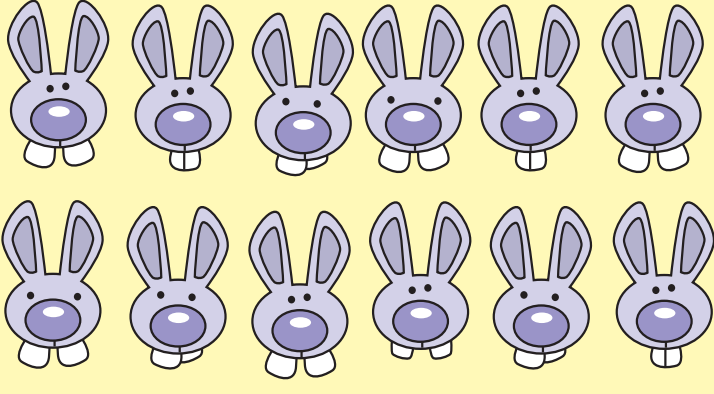
### Why did Bayley Bunny swim across The Atlantic?



The letters along the correct path reveal the answer!

### Kid Scoop Puzzler

Each of the Bunny Buddies below has at least one look-alike, except for one. Can you find the unique bunny?



How do you catch a unique bunny?

**Standards Link:** Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

### Double Double Word Search

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

B	O	S	W	I	M	G	R	W	D
T	P	A	E	K	J	G	S	E	Y
L	A	S	T	A	Y	E	T	N	E
A	G	C	E	G	G	S	S	G	L
E	E	G	A	Z	E	W	O	I	D
V	N	E	D	R	A	G	H	N	D
E	U	E	R	T	R	V	G	E	I
R	S	A	G	E	G	O	S	B	R
U	L	Y	N	N	U	B	T	A	K

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

## Funny Filler

Have a buddy give you each type of word to fill in the blanks. Then, read the story aloud for lots of laughs!

### Growing Problems

"This can't be right," said \_\_\_\_\_.

Baxter Bunny as he looked at \_\_\_\_\_

his garden. Instead of a row \_\_\_\_\_

of carrots, there were \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ADJECTIVE PLURAL NOUN

sprouting from the \_\_\_\_\_ NOUN

He used a \_\_\_\_\_ to dig NOUN

into the \_\_\_\_\_ NOUN

Bobbi Bunny saw her brother \_\_\_\_\_

carrying a \_\_\_\_\_ basket ADJECTIVE

of \_\_\_\_\_ PLURAL NOUN

she cried. "How will we make \_\_\_\_\_ INTERJECTION!"

\_\_\_\_\_ stew for dinner NOUN

with nothing but \_\_\_\_\_ ADJECTIVE

\_\_\_\_\_ PLURAL NOUN

Baxter said, "Don't worry, \_\_\_\_\_

Sis. I have a \_\_\_\_\_ ADJECTIVE

idea!" He painted a sign that \_\_\_\_\_

said: "Buy one \_\_\_\_\_ NOUN

get a \_\_\_\_\_ FREE!" NOUN

\_\_\_\_\_ PLURAL NOUN

\_\_\_\_\_ came from PLURAL NOUN

miles around as word spread.

Baxter and Bobbi soon had \_\_\_\_\_

enough money to buy a \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ADJECTIVE NOUN

their favorite \_\_\_\_\_ PLURAL NOUN

"Who knew there was a \_\_\_\_\_

market for \_\_\_\_\_ PLURAL NOUN

said Bobbi as they walked to \_\_\_\_\_

the \_\_\_\_\_ NOUN

**Standards Link:** Spelling: Recognize common spelling patterns.

### Kid Scoo-doku

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

B	A	S	K	E	T
T					S
E	T	A	B		K
A		T	S		E
S				T	A
K	S	E	T	A	B

### FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

#### Silly News Story

Mix and match news stories to create silly stories. Select a **who**, **what**, **when**, **where**, **why** and **how** from different stories. Write a silly news story with these facts. For extra silliness, use quotes from other news stories.

**Standards Link:** Writing Applications: Write in a variety of forms and genres.



### What is the Easter Bunny's favorite sport?

ANSWER: Basket-ball

### Write On!

#### Easter Scientist

If you were a scientist and could invent something to help the Easter Bunny, what would it be? Explain how it would work.



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# Abundance or scarcity? How will we emerge?

BY ALLY DEJONG  
Abundance NC

For once, everyone in the world is sharing an experience. We have the time to reflect on the world we've created; the systems and resources that are in place. We're seeing businesses adapt, people pick up old hobbies, and start to do the things that have been on the back burner for years. The energy around the world is both uncertain yet inspiring. Humans, at their core, are resilient. Taking this time to scale down and do a deep dive into each of our deepest desires could be a catalyst for a healthy, healing world.

We can come out of this pandemic in two ways: abundance or scarcity. There will be people who will hoard resources always reflecting back to the months of COVID-19. These people will be prepared but not without sacrifices and living in fear. The other side could be more beautiful. As a community, we could focus on the small ways of support during this time with a deep intention to demand more of ourselves and our situations when this

**'Read a book on your list. Go outside. Work on home projects. Meditate. Sign up for therapy. Exercise. Take a long bubble bath. Take a free online class. Catch up with family and friends. Create and curate. Set habits now.'**

ALLY DEJONG, *Abundance NC*

is all over.

Focus on the small things you can do each day. Do what you can. If the most you can contribute is staying in your home, that's OK. If you're healthy and can volunteer, there are numerous initiatives that could use your skills. If you have money to spend, do your research and support local businesses or donate to your favorite non-profit. Words matter and our voices are important. Reflect and write down where your thoughts take you because there is always a reason why.

Perhaps the greatest things we can do are for ourselves. To be selfish. Reconnect with yourself and tend to your mind, body, and spirit. Read a book on your list. Go outside. Work on home projects. Meditate. Sign

up for therapy. Exercise. Take a long bubble bath. Take a free online class. Catch up with family and friends. Create and curate. Set habits now. Just be and let it all be.

We will never forget this time and dare I say we might miss when we could wake up every morning and assess what we needed from the day with the biggest expectation of us being to stay in our family units and out of public. We are living in history — in a time that we will always remember what street we lived on, who we were with, and what we did during this great equalizer.

We are moving from the beginning stages to more of a collective spiritual awakening. We are feeling restless and making impulse buys while trying to resist the imbalance we

feel in our hearts. We are starting to question and acknowledge the difference between stimulation and numbness. We are being shown that technological advancements are not making life easier but only setting the bar higher and higher leading to less intention and more exhaustion. This is our wake-up call, a warning from our world. A reminder that there is no hierarchy, and if there was, a virus is sitting at the top of it.

This is the only time in our lives that the world has stopped and could be the only time it ever will. If we rise to the occasion, heal, and recognize things can be different — we could be liberated and start to live happier and more fulfilling, sustainable lives. By each of us taking care of ourselves and our circles, the momentum grows.

This time is precious — you are precious. It took the world to shut down for us to be reminded of that.

*Ally DeJong is the associate director of Abundance NC. She can be reached at [allison@abundancenc.org](mailto:allison@abundancenc.org).*



Staff photo by David Bradley

Ally DeJong

## My heart sinks for our schoolchildren

BY TRACY MAGLIOCCO  
Substitute Teacher,  
Chatham County  
Schools

Thirty rescue animals, including two horses, and two foster children. A mortgage, three jobs to keep up and a husband working, full-time.

Somehow, we made ends meet, even after our own two children were born.

In 2013, it all tumbled down because I had lost my full-time job. My son was in kindergarten and daughter in 2nd grade. Being home with them for the first time since they were born was a new gift. I missed my kids' first years of their lives, like many parents, trying not to lose it all.

I volunteered in my son's kindergarten class. What a struggle for the teachers and 33 students — a hard decision how to move forward with the children who got it and the children who just didn't.

One Hispanic girl spoke no English, but she took every opportunity to read my lips and savor the chance to learn. Her drive and willingness hooked me. That summer, I took my tests to become a substitute teacher.

There were positives and negatives to this job. The positives: being around my kids, on their same schedule. If you had other jobs, a sick child home — you could take the sub jobs that morning or not.

Once teachers got to know you, they scheduled you ahead of time. You got to follow kids as



Submitted photo

Tracy Magliocco Rader and her family, including husband Alan Rader, ninth-grader Destyn and sixth-grader Jaedyn.

they grew and changed, getting to know them, and them getting to know me. Year after year, in all of the grades, it made our days together easy. Knowing each other, both of our expectations were already established.

The negatives to this job were the financial aspects. In seven years, substitute teachers have gotten no raises. We get no benefits at all. Substitutes deal with stereotypical behaviors and attitudes from students

a bit more problematic than teachers experience.

The reality is that you do get to know the children well. Year after year. In kindergarten, holding their hands as they cry, for the first two months, begging for their parents. They learn to be mean and taunt and fight with kids who used to be their friends. They wear their hearts on their sleeves when they don't make the team, or their mom gets diagnosed with breast

cancer. You know their parents are separating when you see a normal, happy kid at a table "until further notice" because he's acting out.

My 6th-grader worked hard for years. He had just tried out for and made the starting lineup for the middle school baseball team. My quiet, shy, freshman daughter, branched out in the spring and made the varsity tennis team. She was managing the boys' tennis team, just passed her drivers ed test and

**'I want all of these kids to know this from Ms. Tracy: You are NOT ALONE, you never were. We are in this together. It's going be tough, all around. Don't take this time for granted. Take advantage of it!'**

TRACY MAGLIOCCO, *substitute teacher*

had a birthday in a few weeks, then onto the driving part. Two of millions, of flourishing kids across this country, experiencing joy, disappointment, and life, with spring activities, graduation, band concerts, college preps, too much homework. Normalcy, of the day in the life of a student.

The two weeks before our Chatham County Schools closed, I had subbed two days. The kids joked in middle school. They saw me, open-armed hugs, followed with, "Watch out! She could have 'carona.'" Everyone laughed.

March 5th, the first middle school scrimmage: few parents talked about COVID-19. Their first game was to be the following Monday, March 9th. So many kids, with years of hard work in their back pockets. The first slap in the face came, as so many children's hope and ambitions crumbled: all team sports, canceled. Reality just hit home.

The week before CCS' shutdown, I'd worked three days in two different schools. Week before last, the atmosphere was different. A few kids, excited for the possibility of no school. More were distantly climbing into a shell — children that I have know for more than seven years, scared and concerned. None of these kids would know the dire extremes, of changes that would become in their new, safer world. I witnessed their last glimmer of innocence.

The last two days of substitute teaching, I watched the anxiety starting to creep into many of these children's mind, knowing that this was the last day of what we've known as "school" for a while. My heart sank for all of these children, mostly for the challenge they all faced ahead.

I know for sure that every teacher walked out the door that day with shock, despair and more concern for these children than for themselves.

Monday, March 23rd, was a surreal experience as to the future that we are all facing. Driving up to our middle school, grade-segregated, loved teachers on the opposite side of cars, passing packets of school work, zip-locked computers.

Distance and gloves on, warmth, replaced with fear. So it begins. I thought. How do we all get through this?

On the first day of home schooling, a post from some of the parents, stated the obvious: "What the hell?!"

Day two asked, "How are the new substitute teachers all doing today?" Comments like, "1-800-Netflix," "Two-hour delay here, teacher and students no-shows," and "If schools continue to stay closed, parents will come up with a vaccine before scientists do."

We all need this light-heartedness.

Substitutes don't get paid. We have no benefits, no insurance. I personally had 10 sub jobs scheduled over three weeks. Some substitutes had weeks or months straight scheduled. Substitutes cannot apply for unemployment, but the Governor's office said apply anyway, things change constantly.

The opportunity of school not resuming this year — where is our income going to come from? Can we all get our children through this situation and keep them normal, safe, on task, educated, as they should be? It's scary!

I want all of these kids to know this from Ms. Tracy: You are NOT ALONE, you never were. We are in this together. It's going be tough, all around. Don't take this time for granted. Take advantage of it! We are the experiment. The tested. Let others learn from your positivity.

This time is to learn from, grow from, and educate others. You will walk out of this being the teacher because of your experiences. Being a story teller. A more adaptable person, with this "new normal."

Uncharted, you are still, your own future. Chart that path! Stay safe and well. You are all very missed. You've been my on and off kids for the last seven years. When we all finally come back, I am betting that the hugs won't be allowed anymore, though. So perfect that elbow bump, while adapting to our new normalcy.

*Tracy Magliocco (Rader) is one of the many substitute teachers in Chatham County. She is also an executive chef, culinary instructor, wedding cake baker and food magazine author. She's been in Chatham County for 30 years and lives here with her husband, two children and rescue animals.*

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HELP WANTED

TOWN OF SILER CITY, POLICE SERGEANT - General Statement of Duties: Performs difficult protective service work participating in and supervising a squad of police officers on an assigned shift or performing a specialized activity in the Police Department; supervises the community-oriented policing program; maintains files and records; prepares reports. -- Required Education and Experience Qualifications: Graduation from a community college with an associate degree in criminal justice, or related field and considerable experience in law enforcement, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Possession of Intermediate Law Enforcement certification upon hire. Possession of a valid North Carolina driver's license. -- Preferred Education and Experience Qualifications: Bilingual in both written and spoken English and Spanish. -- Hiring Salary:\$45,004 depending on experience. TO APPLY: This posting is open until filled. A completed application, current resume, and cover letter are required. An application can be found at www.silercity.org. Documents may be mailed or delivered to Nancy Darden at City Hall, 311 N Second Avenue, PO Box 769, Siler City, NC 27344 or submitted via email to ndarden@silercity.org. Pre-employment drug testing, DMV check, and background checks are required upon job offer. -- EOE. The Town of Siler City is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Town of Siler City's applicants are considered for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, disability, or other legally protected status. The Town invites the submission of proposals from minority and women-owned firms and certified Section 3 business concerns if the contract is over \$100,000 for non-construction contracts. The Town of Siler City will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that disabled persons are provided other accommodations, such as arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for the deaf, providing taped cassettes of materials for the blind, or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. This information is available in Spanish or any other language upon request. Please contact Nancy Hannah at 919-726-8625, 311 North Second Avenue, Siler City, North Carolina 27344, or nhannah@silercity.org for accommodations for this request. -- Esta información está disponible en español o en cualquier otro idioma bajo petición. Por favor, póngase en contacto con Nancy Hannah al nhannah@silercity.org o 919-726-8625 o en 311 North Second Avenue, Siler City, North Carolina 27344 de alojamiento para esta solicitud. A9,1tc

enue, PO Box 769, Siler City, NC 27344 or submitted via email to ndarden@silercity.org. Pre-employment drug testing, DMV check, and background checks are required upon job offer. -- EOE. The Town of Siler City is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Town of Siler City's applicants are considered for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, disability, or other legally protected status. The Town invites the submission of proposals from minority and women-owned firms and certified Section 3 business concerns if the contract is over \$100,000 for non-construction contracts. The Town of Siler City will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that disabled persons are provided other accommodations, such as arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for the deaf, providing taped cassettes of materials for the blind, or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. This information is available in Spanish or any other language upon request. Please contact Nancy Hannah at 919-726-8625, 311 North Second Avenue, Siler City, North Carolina 27344, or nhannah@silercity.org for accommodations for this request. -- Esta información está disponible en español o en cualquier otro idioma bajo petición. Por favor, póngase en contacto con Nancy Hannah al nhannah@silercity.org o 919-726-8625 o en 311 North Second Avenue, Siler City, North Carolina 27344 de alojamiento para esta solicitud. A9,1tc

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LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS 19 E 560 NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of DANIEL ENRIQUE SALGADO, JR., deceased, of Chatham County, North Carolina, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before June 19, 2020 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said estate will please make immediate payment. This the 19th day of March, 2020. DANIEL ENRIQUE SALGADO SR. Administrator 1 Carolina Meadows; Apt 307 Chapel Hill, NC 27517 M19,M26,A2,A9,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF SHIRLEY G. HARTMAN NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY All persons, firms and corporations having claims against SHIRLEY G. HARTMAN, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit them to Gregory Herman-Giddens, as Executor of the decedent's estate on or before June 19, 2020, c/o Gregory Herman-Giddens, Attorney at Law, 8889 Pelican Bay Boulevard, Suite 400, Naples, FL 34108, or be barred from their recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment to the above named Executor. This the 11th day of March, 2020. Gregory Herman-Giddens, Executor c/o Gregory Herman-Giddens, Atty. Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt, P.A. 8889 Pelican Bay Boulevard, Suite 400 Naples, FL 34108 M19,M27,A2,A9,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY HAVING QUALIFIED as Executor of the Estate of CARROLL WILLIS WRENN a/k/a C. WILLIS WRENN, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned on or before the 17th day of June, 2020, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. This the 10th day of March, 2020. Neil A. Wrenn, Executor of The Estate of Carroll Willis Wrenn a/k/a C. Willis Wrenn Post Office Box 665 Siler City, North Carolina 27344 MOODY, WILLIAMS, ROPER &

LEE, LLP ATTORNEYS AT LAW BOX 665 SILER CITY, NORTH CAROLINA 27344 (919) 742-5614 M19,M26,A2,A9,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS 19 E 518 NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of LISELOTTE EDELTRUD SMITH, deceased, of Chatham County, North Carolina, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before June 19, 2020 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said estate will please make immediate payment. This the 12th day of March, 2020. Walter Butler, Executor 3004 Silk Hope-Gum Springs Rd Pittsboro, NC 27312 M19,M26,A2,A9,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY The undersigned, having qualified as Co-Executors of the Estate of FRANK PRESS, Deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate to exhibit them to the undersigned at the offices of Tillman, Whichard & Cagle, PLLC, 501 Eastowne Drive, Suite 130, Chapel Hill, NC 27514, on or before the 19th day of June, 2020, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the estate will please make immediate payment. This the 19th day of March, 2020. PAULA PRESS & FREDRIC PRESS, CO-EXECUTORS ESTATE OF FRANK PRESS Tillman, Whichard & Cagle, PLLC 501 Eastowne Drive, Suite 130 Chapel Hill, NC 27514 M19,M26,A2,A9,4tc

PUBLIC NOTICE Chatham County Schools is developing the following federal projects in keeping with the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act: Title I (Helping Disadvantaged Children Meet High Standards) Title II (Preparing, Training and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers) Title III (Language Acquisition) Title IV A (Student Support, Academic Enrichment, Career and Technical Education) McKinney-Vento (Homeless Education) Migrant education program IDEA (Students with Disabilities) — The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-Part B, Public Law 108.446): This project, which is being amended, pertains to the special education programs that Chatham County Schools proposes for federal funding for the 2020-21 school year. Interested persons are encouraged to review amendments to the project and make comments concerning the implementation of special education under this federal program. All comments will be considered prior to submission of the amended project to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in Raleigh, North Carolina. The IDEA-Part B Project is open for public review and comments during the week of April 20-24, 2020, in the office of Melvin Diggs, the executive director of exceptional children and academically and intellectually gifted programs in Chatham County Schools, located at 79 South Horton Street, Pittsboro, NC, 27312. These projects describe the programs that Chatham County Schools proposes for federal funding for the 2020-21 school year. Interested persons are encouraged to review the federal guidelines for the projects listed above and indicate their interest in participation if qualified. These projects are being developed in April and May and are due to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction by June 30, 2020. The initial meeting regarding equitable services for private schools is April 28, 2020, at 2 p.m. in the Chatham County Schools Boardroom, 369 West Street, Pittsboro, NC 27312. Interested parties should contact Carol Little, executive director federal programs and school improvement for Chatham County Schools. M26,A2,A9,A16,A23,5tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY The undersigned, having qualified on the 16th day of March, 2020 as Executrix, of the Estate of JOYCE ANN

WEISER, deceased, of Chatham County, North Carolina does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 26th day of June, 2020, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned. This 26th day of March 2020. William Edward Weiser of the Estate of Joyce Ann Weiser PO Box 51579 Durham, NC 27717-1579 Gwendolyn C. Brooks, Esquire Kennon Craver, PLLC 4011 University Drive, Suite 300 Durham, North Carolina 27707 M26,A2,A9,A16,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS 2020 E 68 NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY The undersigned, having qualified as Executor of the Estate of BETTY WALL BREWINGTON, deceased, late of Chatham County, hereby notifies all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned at 85B Rocky Knolls, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 27516, on or before the 26th day of June, 2020, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned. This 19th day of March, 2020. Ricky Lee Austin 85B Rocky Knolls Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516 Gunn & Messick, LLP Post Office Box 880 Pittsboro, North Carolina 27312 M26,A2,A9,A16,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS 20 E 131 NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY Having qualified as Executrix of the Estate of WILLIAM WOOLSEY AKA WILLIAM HENRY WOOLSEY, deceased, of Chatham County, North Carolina, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before June 26, 2020 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said estate will please make immediate payment. This the 23rd day of March, 2020. Evelyn Woolsey Burger, Executrix 909 Beltline Blvd Columbia, SC 29205 M26,A2,A9,A16,4tp

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE SUPERIOR COURT DIVISION BEFORE THE CLERK 20 E 126 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF CHATHAM NOTICE TO CREDITORS HAVING qualified before the Honorable Dana Hackney, Clerk of Superior Court of Chatham County, North Carolina, as executor of the estate of KATHLEEN SUE KAZEMIAN, deceased, this is to notify all persons having claims against said estate to present them to the undersigned on or before the 24th day of June, 2020, or this notice shall be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate please make immediate payment. This the 26th day of March, 2020, and the 2nd, 9th, and 16th days of April, 2020. Mohammad A. Kazemian, Executor of the Estate of Kathleen Sue Kazemian 12020 Iredell Chapel Hill, NC 27517 Harry B. Crow, Jr. Attorney for the Estate 315-B North Main Street Monroe, NC 28112 Telephone: 704-283-1175 M26,A2,A9,A16,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF DONALD E. HUNTER NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY All persons, firms and corporations having claims against DONALD E. HUNTER, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit them to Lewis N. Lampiris, as Executor of the decedent's estate on or before June 26, 2020, c/o Gregory Herman-Giddens, Attorney at Law, 8889 Pelican Bay Boulevard, Suite 400, Naples, FL 34108, or be barred from their recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment to the above named Executor. This the 24th day of March, 2020. Gregory Herman-Giddens, Executor c/o Gregory Herman-Giddens, Atty. Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt, P.A. 8889 Pelican Bay Boulevard, Suite 400 Naples, FL 34108 M26,A2,A9,A16,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS 20 E 141 NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of RHONDA L. SMITH, deceased, of Chatham County, North Carolina, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before June 26, 2020 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said estate will please make immediate payment. This the 26th day of March, 2020. Willissa C. Smith, Administrator 2322 NC Hwy 902 Pittsboro, NC 27312 M26,A2,A9,A16,4tp

LEGAL NOTICE NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY Having qualified as Executor of The Estate of MARIE KIVETT ISELEY AKA CLADIE MARIE KIVETT ISELEY of Chatham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons having claims against her estate to present them to the undersigned on or before the 7th day of July, 2020, or this notice will be pled in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to her estate please make immediate payment. This is the 2nd day of April, 2020. John Monte Iseley, Executor 11007 S. NC Hwy 49 Liberty, NC 27298 Andrew M. Brower Wilson, Carlson & Brower, PLLC 605 N. Asheboro St. Liberty, NC 27298 Telephone: (336)-622-2267 A2,A9,A16,A23,4tc

CREDITOR'S NOTICE NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY Having qualified on the 26 day of March, 2020, as Administrator of the Estate of BRAD JACKSON CRACE, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the decedent to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 1st day of July, 2020, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the estate should make immediate payment. This the 27th day of March, 2020. Shelly A. Crace, Administrator of The Estate of Brad Jackson Crace 172 Canopy Pittsboro, NC 27312 c/o Attorneys: Law Offices of W. Woods Doster, P.A. 115 Chatham Street, Suite 302 Sanford, NC 27330 A2,A9,A16,A23,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against PATRICK A. CABE, deceased, of Chatham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before July 2nd, 2020, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This 2nd day of April, 2020. Suellen Cabe, Executor Estate of Patrick A. Cabe c/o Roberson Law Firm 1829 E. Franklin St., Ste. 800C Chapel Hill, NC 27514 A2,A9,A16,A23,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS 20 E 151 NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY Having qualified as Co-Executors of the Estate of BETTY JEAN MERRITT, deceased,

CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

Line ad deadline Tuesday — Noon Display ad deadline Monday — 5 p.m. Rates and payment Minimum charge of \$5 for each classified advertisement of 25 words or less per week. For each additional word, no matter how many insertions, add 20¢ per word. Payable in advance. Blind ads No information will be given out by this office to the identity of person placing "keyed" or "blind" ads. Errors In advertisements that run more than one week, we are responsible for errors appearing in the first week only. If you find an error in your ad, report it immediately.

of Chatham County, North Carolina, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before July 2, 2020 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said estate will please make immediate payment. This the 27th day of March, 2020. Co-Executors: Christopher P. Cox 795 Thomas Kelly Rd Sanford, NC 27330 Shawn A. Cox 370 Thomas Kelly Rd Sanford, NC 27330 A2,A9,A16,A23,4tp

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING At its April 20, 2020 meeting, the Board of Commissioners (the "Board") of the County of Chatham, North Carolina (the "County") will consider the adoption of a resolution which would authorize the County to: (1) enter into an installment financing contract (the "Contract") with a financial institution to be determined (the "Bank"), in a principal amount not to exceed \$18,300,000, under which the County will make certain installment payments, in order to construct and buy new communication towers, radio equipment, generators etc. to enhance its public safety and emergency communication system (collectively, the "Project"); and (2) to secure the County's obligations under the Contract, grant a security interest in the radio equipment. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Sections 160A-20 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, that on April 20, 2020 at 6:00 p.m., a public hearing will be conducted concerning the approval of the execution and delivery of the Contract and the County's financing of the Project. The County will hold the public hearing at the Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center, 1192 US 64 Business W, Pittsboro, North Carolina. Due to the Governor's Executive Order 121, the public will not be allowed to attend the meeting. All interested parties are invited to submit their comments regarding the execution and delivery of the Contract and the financing of the Project thereby to the Clerk at Lindsay. ray@chathamnc.org by 4:00pm on Monday, April 20, 2020. The Clerk will read all comments into the record during the public hearing. /s/ Lindsay Ray Clerk to the Board of Commissioners County of Chatham, North

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Carolina  
A9,1tc

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION LEVYING ADDITIONAL ONE-QUARTER (1/4¢) COUNTY SALES AND USE TAX**

At its regular meeting on April 20, 2020, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners intends to adopt a resolution authorizing the levy of the Article 46 local option sales and use tax. This tax is an additional one-quarter (1/4¢) local option sales and use tax and was approved by the voters of Chatham County during the March 3, 2020 primary election. At its November 18, 2019 meeting, the Board of Commissioners passed a resolution confirming the intended use of these additional sales tax funds to “support and enhance the County’s efforts in the areas of: Affordable Housing, Education, Parks & Recreation, and Agricultural Preservation & Enhancement”. Adoption of this resolution will allow staff to move forward with implementation of the levy of this local option sales tax, with the tax becoming effective on October 1, 2020. The County Board of Commissioners will hold its regular **meeting on April 20, 2020** at 6:00pm at the Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center, 1192 US 64 Business W, Pittsboro, North Carolina. Due to the Governor’s Executive Order 121, the public will not be allowed to

attend the meeting. Residents are welcome to **send public comments to the Clerk at Lindsay.ray@chathamnc.org by 4:00pm on Monday, April 20, 2020.** The Clerk will read all comments into the record during the public input period of the meeting.  
BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
LINDSAY K. RAY, NCCCC  
Chatham County Clerk  
Dated April 9, 2020

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY**

All persons having claims against **JAMES H. DIGGS aka JAMES HENRY DIGGS** of Chatham County, North Carolina, who died on the 20th day of March, 2020, are notified to present them to Fred Edgar Diggs, Executor of the Estate of James H. Diggs aka James Henry Diggs in c/o David R. Frankstone, Attorney for the Estate, at Higgins, Frankstone, Graves & Morris, P. A., 1414 Raleigh Road, Suite 203, Exchange West at Meadowmont, Chapel Hill, NC 27517-8834 on or before July 16, 2020. Failure to present a claim in timely fashion will result in this Notice being pleaded in bar of recovery against the estate, the Executor, and the devisees of James H. Diggs aka James Henry Diggs. Those indebted

to James H. Diggs aka James Henry Diggs are asked to make prompt payment to the Estate. David R. Frankstone  
Higgins, Frankstone, Graves & Morris, P.A.  
1414 Raleigh Road, Suite 203  
Exchange West at Meadowmont  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517-8834

A9,A16,A23,A30,4tc

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY**

All persons having claims against **NORMA NORTON DIGGS aka NORMA N. DIGGS** of Chatham County, North Carolina, who died on the 18th day of December, 2019, are notified to present them to Fred Edgar Diggs, Executor of the Estate of Norma Norton Diggs aka Norma N. Diggs in c/o David R. Frankstone, Attorney for the Estate, at Higgins, Frankstone, Graves & Morris, P. A., 1414 Raleigh Road, Suite 203, Exchange West at Meadowmont, Chapel Hill, NC 27517-8834 on or before July 16, 2020. Failure to present a claim in timely fashion will result in this Notice being pleaded in bar of recovery against the estate, the Executor, and the devisees of Norma Norton Diggs aka Norma N. Diggs. Those indebted to Norma Norton Diggs aka Norma N. Diggs are asked to make prompt payment to the Estate. David R. Frankstone

Higgins, Frankstone, Graves & Morris, P.A.  
1414 Raleigh Road, Suite 203  
Exchange West at Meadowmont  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517-8834

A9,A16,A23,A30,4tc

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY**

20 E 161  
The undersigned, having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of JENNIFER DAWN SIEFKE, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, notifies all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned at her address, 1699 Cedar Grove Road, Pittsboro, North Carolina, 27312, on or before the 9th day of July, 2020, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment. This 6th day of April, 2020.  
Pamela J. Johncox, Administrator  
1699 Cedar Grove Road  
Pittsboro, North Carolina 27312  
GUNN & MESSICK, LLP  
P. O. Box 880  
Pittsboro, North Carolina 27312-0880

A9,A16,A23,A30,4tc

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# What Chatham’s chains are going through during COVID-19 pandemic

There has been a never-ending list of business-related news that



**ZACHARY HORNER**  
Corner Store

has infiltrated my inbox on a daily basis since the COVID-19 pandemic hit the United States. Mainly, it’s been the economy’s struggle, dropping stock prices, rising unemployment. I don’t pretend to have the answers to how to properly respond to this from a business standpoint. But what I can do is tell you how the chains, restaurant and retailers that populate Chatham are handling the pandemic and adjusting their efforts to meet social distancing requirements and stay-at-home orders.

So here’s the latest on how Chatham’s chains are responding to COVID-19.

## Walmart

The huge department store chain has two locations in Chatham County, one in Siler City off of U.S. Hwy. 64 and the other on the Chatham-Orange county line on U.S. Hwy 15-501.

On April 3, Walmart corporate announced some major changes to its shopping procedures. Stores would only allow five shoppers per 1,000 square feet, around 20 percent of a store’s capacity, and instituted “one-way movement” through aisles.

The chain has been a hotspot in recent weeks for people who, well, feel they’re invincible. On March 18, a 31-year-old North Carolina man was arrested inside an Albermarle County Walmart and charged with perpetrating a hoax after he went on Facebook Live and said he had tested positive for COVID-19. This past Sunday, Carrollton, Texas, police said they

were looking for an 18-year-old who had done something similar using SnapChat, according to The Dallas Morning News.

“While many of our customers have been following the advice of the medical community regarding social distancing and safety, we have been concerned to still see some behaviors in our stores that put undue risk on our people,” Dacona Smith, the executive vice president and COO of Walmart U.S., wrote in a post on Walmart’s corporate website on April 3. “We want to encourage customers to bring the fewest number of people per family necessary to shop, allow for space with other customers while shopping, and practice social distancing while waiting in lines.”

## Lowe’s Home Improvement

The hardware store chain, which has a Pittsboro location off of U.S. Hwy. 15-501, said in a news release April 2 that it has committed \$170 million to its coronavirus response. The announcement said Lowe’s, which is based out of nearby Morrisville, would temporarily increase hourly wage for all associates by \$2, close all stores by 7 p.m. for cleaning and supply replenishing and increase third-party cleaning shifts for incremental cleaning.

“We are continually working on ways to protect and support our associates and our customers during this time when we are all adjusting how we work and live,” Marvin Ellison, Lowe’s president and CEO, said in the news release. “I’m announcing these new operational changes as we continue to keep the health and well-being of our associates and customers top of mind, especially as they look to us now more than ever for essential products, services and support.”

## Domino’s Pizza

The pizza chain announced April

6 that it would be giving “roughly 10 million slices of pizza” to its local communities, and that every individual Domino’s store would be giving away 200 pizzas. A news release stated that franchisees would be making the decision where to distribute, and that all of the 6,126 Domino’s stores — including the East Street location in Pittsboro — would be participating.

## Dollar General

While many businesses are having to lay off employees, some like Dollar General are hiring. The chain of small department stores, which has locations in Pittsboro, Siler City, Goldston and Bennett, said on March 23 it was planning to hire up to 50,000 more employees by the end of April and announced March 30 that it was giving a 10 percent discount on “qualifying purchases” to medical personnel first responders and activated National Guardsmen.

## Taco Bell

The Mexi-merican chain has a new stand-alone location in Siler City along with its joint KFC-Taco Bell location in Pittsboro, and according to its CEO Mark King, it’s taking some active steps to both “feed our heroes” and “support our communities.” King said in a March 27 post on the company’s website that it would be turning “Taco Trucks into mobile commissaries, bringing food to community heroes and those who work in essential roles every day,” as well as donating \$1 million to No Kid Hungry, a national initiative whose goal is to end childhood hunger.

*See any other chains doing something different, good or better during the COVID-19 pandemic? Let me know by emailing [zhorner@chathamnr.com](mailto:zhorner@chathamnr.com) or hitting me up on Twitter at @ZachHornerCNR.*

# NC’s Carolina Tiger Rescue knows all about ‘Tiger King,’ and they are not amused

**BY BROOKE CAIN**  
Raleigh News & Observer

The Pittsboro-based big cat rescue group Carolina Tiger Rescue posted a graphic on social media recently criticizing the popular Netflix documentary “Tiger King: Murder, Mayhem and Madness” for “missing the opportunity to provide essential information about the suffering that big cats endure when exploited for profit.”

They aren’t wrong. The Netflix series tells the story of Joseph Allen Maldonado-Passage, also known as Joe Exotic. A stranger man has likely never existed.

Joe Exotic ran a private zoo in Oklahoma before being caught up in a murder-for-hire plot that eventually sent him to prison. It’s all documented in the series, which landed on Netflix on March 20 and has become a bit of a national obsession.

The 7-episode series does show Joe’s mistreatment and neglect of the hundreds of animals that were in his care, but the focus of the show seems to be more about his odd personality, his eccentric lifestyle and his relationships (both good and bad) with other people in the “big cat” world.

When not focused on Joe’s quirks and strange behavior, much of the series focuses on other unusual people like Bhagavan “Doc” Antle, who owns an animal park in Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Tim Stark, owner of a roadside zoo in Indiana; Jeff Lowe, a purported millionaire who mostly uses tiger cubs to get women; and Joe Exotic’s nemesis, Carole Baskin, a Florida conservationist and owner of Big Cat Rescue, who has accused Joe Exotic of abusing and exploiting wild animals (and who may or may not have a skeleton or two in her own closet.)

Let’s just say when discussing the show with others who have watched, the word “cult” comes up a lot.

Much has already been written about the bizarre worlds depicted in the series (not to mention the haircuts, wardrobe choices and dental work of the characters), and much as already been debated about whether it’s good or terrible, or somewhere in between.

Carolina Tiger Rescue is firmly in the “terrible” camp, calling the series — which can be entertaining but also truly heartbreaking for animal lovers to watch — “sensationalized.”

Watch it if you must, but Carolina Tiger Rescue and the

Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance, who often end up cleaning up the messes these private collectors and zoos make, also want you to know the following about big cats:

- Animals suffer terribly in cub petting operations.
- Exhibitors “speed breed” female cats at the expense of mothers and cubs.
- Commercial big cat breeders don’t care about the animals’ health.
- The cub petting business is based on a never-ending cycle of animal cruelty.
- Handling stressed cubs can make you or your family sick.
- There is nothing educational about handling a wild animal.
- Big cats are extremely dangerous and should never be kept as pets.
- Legitimate sanctuaries are often the only safe havens for captive big cats.
- Big cat attractions are found in many places, including your own community.
- You can help captive big cats by not patronizing places that exploit them.

Learn more about Carolina Tiger Rescue at [carolinatigerrescue.org](http://carolinatigerrescue.org) and see the full text of their “Tiger King” post at [facebook.com/CarolinaTigerRescue](https://facebook.com/CarolinaTigerRescue).





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