

FROM THE PUBLISHER...



COVID-19 has ushered in a new reality for us to process and reconcile.

We are complying with the orders to stay home, practice social distancing, wash our hands and wear masks.

These efforts have helped to slow the spread of the virus, while scientists learn more about this particular coronavirus and ultimately test, manufacture, and distribute a safe vaccination to the public.

As I wrote last month, the effects of the virus have revealed structural problems within our system that need to be solved.

The CARES Act was an imperfect, two-trillion-dollar attempt by the US federal government to provide assistance to corporations, small businesses, employees, state and local governments, public health organizations, education, safety net programs, and citizens.

A full quarter of the amount (\$500 billion dollars) was allocated to corporations, while approximately \$377 billion dollars was set aside for the Small Business Administration (SBA) to administer as potentially forgivable loans and grants.

The SBA was subsequently overwhelmed by requests indicating the depth of the economic problems we face. The approximately \$350 billion dollars set aside for the small business Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) is now gone and Congress is working on legislation to add another \$250 billion dollars to the PPP, intended to help businesses affected by the coronavirus if they commit to paying their employees.

While this is all happening we run the risk of losing local businesses in real time as many of them are down 75% in revenue. They need our patronage—whether it's online or via pick up.

This is where teamwork can make the dream work to save locally owned businesses from closing.

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"where all voices are heard"
<https://ChathamCountyLine.org>



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Chatham County Line is a community newspaper serving all of Chatham County as well as the southern part of Orange. Our mission is to inform our community by providing a forum "where all voices are heard." We seek all views and ideas about our community, and we report on important matters — including our cultural life — comprehensively and in-depth. Our commitment is to create the best-written, best-edited and most stylish community newspaper anywhere. Chatham County Line is published ten times a year.

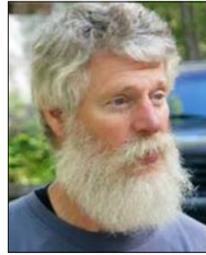
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Today is a gift. That's why it's called the present.

by Joe Jacob



because for me it was not until I was a lot older that the saying entered into my consciousness. It has become a kind of beacon in my life when things either looked grim or at least were not going the way I had hoped they would. Those were the times when I did not feel as though I had control over my life. Times like war, death of family members, health issues of people I love, the constant destruction of our natural environment, and now, the COVID-19 virus.

The saying has helped me cope with those sad, anxious times in the past by realizing there was nothing I could do to change how I perceived them or how I reacted. I now realize that I did the best that I could. If I had been able to do any better, I would have. It is so easy for me to look at the past and be critical instead of learning from it and now doing the best that I can. The past is dead. It is not worth living there. It robs you of now. It was only an opportunity to learn and then move on.

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living there.
It robs you of now.**

Like most of us, I have tried to control the future by working hard in the present. Isn't that what we Americans are supposed to do, that is, "nose to the grindstone"? Isn't that the American dream, to work hard so that at some point in the future we have arrived? As I have grown older I have come to believe that the future is a never ending trap, especially if you are living your life waiting for the future to arrive. I feel fortunate that most of the time that I have kept my "nose to the grindstone" I have been doing the things that I love to do that have supported me both spiritually and financially. Have I gotten rich? No. Am I poor? No. Do I forget how lucky I am? All the time until I remember to be grateful. That is when I feel spiritually wealthy.

For all of us, here comes the COVID-19 virus, and suddenly we cannot go back to the past and the future is totally unknown. All we have is right now. What we do right now can have a tremendous

impact and is very important. We have to live in the moment and be satisfied with what we have. Wanting what we had in the past will not help our current situation. For example, if we have a craving for particular items we do not have and go out to get it, we are not only taking a chance that we will get the virus and bring it back to the people we love, but if we already have it without symptoms, we will be putting others at risk. Is it really worth it? Why would we want to take that risk? I guess it is because we live in a society where we want it and we want it now. We are not used to not getting what we want. We either do not care, are spoiled rotten, or are incapable of understanding the risk. That is sad.

I recently read an article about the difference between worry, stress, and anxiety. They are not the same. Worry is something of the mind, an emotional response to something imagined. It is a thought or thoughts that come up that produce fear. Regardless of what is really occurring, we can experience a great deal of fear. Stress is a physical response to something that has happened outside of our mental control. If you hit yourself with a hammer or burn yourself on the stove, you cannot help but experience physical stress. Anxiety is the combina-

tion of worry and stress occurring at the same time. You have a physical response to an emotional thought or thoughts. We are stressed out by the thoughts of the COVID-19 virus, and have no clue as to what is currently happening to us or what our future might look like. We are experiencing anxiety big time.

Mother Nature has been trying to get our attention for a long time. She has been trying to tell us how fragile we are and how dependent we are on her good will. We have not been listening to her warnings; e.g., climate chaos. If there is a silver lining in this situation we find ourselves in right now, it is the realization of how dependent we are on each other and the services provided by Nature. She is trying to tell us to stop, listen, and pay attention to what is happening on this little sphere in the middle of nowhere and to how important life is. Take this time to live in the moment and be grateful for what you have if for no other reason than because we do not know what is next. All we have is right now.

Joe Jacob, a 30+ year Chatham resident and a marine biologist by training, is president The Haw River Canoe & Kayak Co., www.hawrivercanoe.com

ClydeFEST-to-Go: a Creative Pick-Me-Up

#ClydeFestToGo.

The Chatham Arts Council's 18th annual ClydeFEST, an old-school kids' arts carnival celebrating folk artist Clyde Jones, is taking a creative spin this year to keep the community safe amid COVID-19. ClydeFEST-to-Go, sponsored by The Jester Group at Baird, will take the place of this year's event – bringing a little fun to the community in a time of social-distancing, while still celebrating the "critter artist," Clyde Jones, and his creative works of folk art.

The Chatham Arts Council will place cedar critter cut-outs (with a few art supplies) at the Chatham Marketplace in Pittsboro and Oasis Market in Siler City.

Community members are encouraged to pick up their critter on their essential weekly grocery runs (April 18-25) and embellish it with paint, markers, glitter—anything to make a unique piece of art. The virtual event will culminate on April 25 when participants post photos of their critters via social media under the

"Social distancing is the best thing we can do right now, and in this circumstance of being 'alone together,' creative expression can be hugely helpful for kids and their grown-ups," explained Cheryl Chamblee, Executive Director of the Chatham Arts Council.

"ClydeFEST-to-Go allows us to bring the spirit of ClydeFEST to Chatham families in a unique way, but also, in a manner that will continue to keep our community safe"

"Our hope is that ClydeFEST-to-Go will bring a little cheer during a time of global uncertainty," said Taylor Hobbs, Chatham Arts Council Board President.

For more information, visit



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