

**Yes, We Are Still Working for Chatham Seniors and Their Families and Yes We Still Very Much Miss You.**

**Notes for Friday Conference Call, April 17, 2020**

- Let me begin by asking if any of you have had difficulty getting into this call today or on previous Fridays. Some persons have said they are getting a busy signal or “network” problem message. It could be because we scheduled the call on the hour when there may be a lot of other phone traffic. Next week we will start the call at 10:15 and we will publicize this change. Please share the word with others who might have been trying to call in and couldn’t.
- Get a pen or pencil and notepad if you want to take some notes. If you are charged for long distance on a landline (your home phone), this call may not be toll-free. Let us know if this is an issue for you.
- At the conclusion of my comments today—we have a special live musical treat for you. And the good news is that it is not me.

**New News**

- CORA will hold a Mobile Market at Chatham Hospital on Tuesday, April 28th from 10AM - 12PM, in partnership with the Western Food Pantry. It is for all who need food. I would just be concerned about a crowd—avoid close quarters—if someone is going there be sure to have them wear a mask and keep safe distance from others. If you have questions about this, call 919-542-5020.
- April 28<sup>th</sup> is the next day that we will be delivering meals and any needed supplies to our Meals on Wheels clients. These will be delivered by staff of Public Health, Emergency Management and the Sheriff’s Office. We really appreciate their help with this.
- In the meantime, we are continuing to deliver meals every week to those who attended our Congregate meals program at our 2 Centers. These meals are being delivered by Chatham Transit every Tuesday.

*If you need to be included on the list of those needing meals—please contact the Eastern Center (919-542-4512) or Western Center (919-742-3975) ahead of time to check on availability. We will do our best to assist.*

*Persons able to drive or have someone pick up meals for them—must also contact us ahead of time to check on availability of meals and to schedule a time for pick-up. Again, we will try and help as best we can. We need to account for every meal and supply that we provide. So forgive our paperwork.*

*We are also still providing frozen meals for individuals who normally received them.*

As of 8 am today, in Chatham, we have 80 of the state’s 5,465 confirmed cases of the coronavirus.

- In a recent press release, the Secretary of the NC Department of Health and Human Services (Dr. Mandy Cohen) said that “*the actions we take now will determine how this virus will impact North Carolina in the weeks and months to come. We need to continue*

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*to do everything in our power so that fewer people get sick at the same time, while also surging the capacity of our health care system so those that do need hospital care will have it. Please stay home now to save lives.”*

- I am sure that all have heard about the number of COVID cases at The Laurels in Pittsboro and the first death in Chatham related to this virus. This is a painful reminder about the importance of all of the precautions we are taking—I am going to pause—so that you can tell me what these are: [thorough handwashing; physical distancing; don't touch your face; clean contact surfaces; sneeze/cough into tissue that you then throw away—or into the bend of your arm]

Clearly one of these is our sheltering-in-place. With this comes the fact that we are potentially isolating ourselves from the outside world—and with that can come so challenges. So that I why I don't want any of us to think that “physical distancing” has to equal “social isolation.” There are many ways you can stay connected. I have talked about these in each of my previous calls. These include the NC BAM Hopeline—866.578.4673 [staffed by the NC Baptist Aging Ministry] and the Friendship Line—800.971.0016. Of course, our Council staff is continuing to make friendly check-in calls as well. Be sure to let us know if you want us to give you a call. You can do this by first calling us at our Pittsboro Center [919.542.4512] or our Siler City Center [919.742.3975].

- For those of us who may be experiencing emotional or mental health distress because of this COVID virus or for some other reason, there is a new resource available to North Carolinians. You could call 1.855.587.3463 for support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is called the **Hope4NC Helpline**. You can also still call the call the **Cardinal Innovations Help-line** at 800.939.5911 (24/7) or better yet, their new shorter # **\*\*ASK [275]**.
- For any of you who may ask for a special delivery of something from us (such as pet food], you could see a new face. A group of UNC medical students are now volunteering to help us. We really appreciate their support. For example, just yesterday they picked up incontinence supplies for us from the NC Diaper Bank in Durham. If you need help with incontinence supplies, you can contact Wynne Fields at our Pittsboro Center at 919.542.4512 or leave a message for Wynne at either of our centers.
- These students have also set up a GoFundMe site to raise funds to help our efforts here in Chatham to assist with needs for which we can't normally meet such as pet supplies and personal hygiene supplies. Their GoFundMe site is called “*Join Us in Helping Our Senior Neighbors.*”
- There is a new online search tool for community resources across NC. This website also has some fact sheets on such topics as evictions and the stimulus payment to qualified individuals. Go to <https://www.nc211.org/> You can also call 2-1-1.

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- This week we sent to our Congregate participants a wide array of information. This included: a dental hygiene guide, information about making your own mask/face covering and homemade hand sanitizer, strategies to sleep better, a food safety fact sheet, and a disaster preparedness checklist from the Sheriff's Office. Unfortunately we are not just dealing with the virus but also the occasional bad weather—we had quite a storm on Sunday into Monday. In looking over these various materials, I found some interesting tidbits—here a just a few: the correct amount of toothpaste on your toothbrush is a “pea” size amount—not the long string that I sometimes use; we should brush our teeth 2x day for 2 minutes and floss twice also. To help you sleep better during these times—here's some advice: when you get up in the morning—get some light as light is the main controller of the natural body clock. Step outside –at a distance from others—for at least 20 minutes—as natural sunlight is best.
- And we sent out some trivia questions. I am going to ask you a few now—let's open up the line Krista for three of these:
  - (1) What is the name of the woman who refused to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955? Rosa Parks—*She was arrested and became one of four plaintiffs in Browder v. Gayle, which ruled that Montgomery's segregated bus system was unconstitutional.*
  - (2) Who beat Babe Ruth's home run record in 1974?—*“Hammerin” Hank Aaron hit his 715<sup>th</sup> home run on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1974. Baseball is one of many things I am missing right now. But I am still eating peanuts as though I am at a game.*
  - (3) What movie from the 1970s made many people afraid to go swimming in the ocean? *Jaws in 1975, by Steven Spielberg who just recently donated a tremendous amount of food to doctors and nurses treating patients at a hospital in Burbank, California. Celebrities like Speilberg are really stepping forward to help. Oprah reportedly gave \$10 million to help feed families affected by the virus.*

Also we completed and have begun distributing our spring newsletter. I think there is a lot of great content in it. I am going to let Krista tell you a bit about it as I get a drink of water.

One thing I will reiterate is the article from Public Health about smoking cessation. If you are a smoker or otherwise use tobacco—this is a great time to stop and there are readily available resources here in Chatham to help you do that. To begin with, you can call: 984.214.2060

Calls wanting to schedule Tax appointments

Someone called me yesterday to check about whether we are still scheduling VITA (tax assistance) appointments or plan to do so before July 15<sup>th</sup>, when taxes are due. Unfortunately we are unable to do so.

Comments of Dennis Streets, Chatham CCCOA Director

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### Medical rides

We are still working through Chatham Transit to schedule essential medical rides. Again, before you call us though, contact your medical provider to be sure they still want you to come to their office. If they do and you need a Chatham Transit ride, you can schedule through Sigi Markworth by calling 919-542-4512.

### Assistive Equipment

If you need assistive equipment (such as a walker, shower chair), you need to call 919-542-4512 and ask for Wynne Fields. She will try and schedule a time for the equipment pick-up, if we have it. You must call ahead of time—please don't just show up seeking help. I know that we have given out several items of equipment this week; but we were not able to meet several other requests because we didn't have the equipment needed—so again call ahead of time.

### SHIP

All NC SHIP/Medicare related calls are still being handled by the State SHIP Office through their toll free line at 1-855-408-1212.

### Activities

Someone called yesterday asking if they could come to the center to exercise. Unfortunately that is still not possible—we are still closed to the public at both centers.

The good news is that our staff have developed an amazing range of ways that you can participate in many activities both my phone and on the Internet. **Krista—can you tell them something about what is now available through our "Online & Distance Offerings"?** Our website address is [www.chathamcoa.org](http://www.chathamcoa.org)

Thanks Krista. And always, I want to encourage all to get some exercise within your house or by taking a stroll around your yard. Listen to the birds, smell the flowers, enjoy the sun. Keep your mind exercising too—either working puzzles, reading, writing those letters to friends and possibly even make amends to former adversaries. And keep your social contacts—call a friend to share memories and think about the time when we will all be back together at our centers.

### *So, when are we opening back up?*

There is no real update to this. I am still following information provided by scientists and public health officials—not politicians. Unfortunately, the number of cases in Chatham and the state and nation are continuing to rise. This is why we must all be smart and take proper precautions to protect ourselves and our entire community.

Comments of Dennis Streets, Chatham CCCOA Director

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### Census

**Don't forget to participate in the Census. This is very important.** We want every person counted—it makes a difference in our funding.

### Scams

Continue to be aware of scams. If someone tells you something or tries to sell you something that doesn't make sense—it probably doesn't make sense. **Stop** before acting. That way you won't have to worry about making a costly mistake. Don't give out your personal information to strangers in person or on the phone.

Call us if you need to check or report on what you think could be a scam so we can alert the Sheriff's Office.

**Just continue to be smart and careful.**

**Take care of yourself and let us know if you think we can assist in some way.**

**Remember to wash your hands often – especially if you go out or have visitors (do so by singing Happy Birthday twice); try not to touch your face; and keep your distance from others.**

Before we enjoy the sounds of Don and Marian Lein [*Line*], let's open up the phone [Krista] for any questions and comments.

**If you want to say something, just state your name first. Please try not to speak over someone who is already talking.**

**Thanks for sharing. Remember we will try 10:15 next Friday, instead of 10 to see if this allows more people to participate.**

**Now it is my pleasure to reintroduce Don and Marian [*Line*] who regularly entertain our congregate participants at the Pittsboro Center. Thanks so much for joining us today. Take it away.**

Thanks so much Don and Marian.

Talk to you next Friday at 10:15. In the meantime, take care. Know that we at the Council on Aging will continue to work as hard as we can for Chatham seniors and their families.