

Opinion

The fabric of Bertie County since 1832

# "It's chow time..."

Each generation will face their fair share of challenges and heartbreak.

As my generation evolved, we couldn't even fathom what the year 2020 would be like. We are a generation who wrote reports for class using encyclopedias, not Wikipedia. We have seen technological advances which we only dreamed of as we watched Star Trek.

We saw this technology push the economy to unforeseen summits where goods were abundant, and the thought of empty shelves and shuttered businesses never entered our minds.

Along the way, we have had our fair share of heartbreak. The Space Shuttle Challenger explosion and September 11 just to name a couple, but we pressed on and overcame. We survived these tragedies like every generation before us. We worked hard, we worked as one, a country united, with one sole purpose, to help our fellow man.



**TODD LANE**  
Common Sense Corner

Today we face a new challenge. A challenge from an enemy we were not prepared to fight, an enemy we can't even see. An enemy that has brought our government, schools and businesses to a halt and is shattering our economy.

This enemy is a virus, yes, a simple virus. A virus capable of taking the lives of our loved ones, overwhelming our medical facilities and causing an unforeseen panic.

That's the bad news.

The good news, we live in the greatest country in the world and we will not be defeated. We will come together, putting our differences aside and we will come out of this stronger and better than any time in history. All it requires is we just do our part.

It is no secret I was a transplant to Bertie County and Windsor. Heck, I grew up in the city with no idea what terms like "pig pickin" and "fixin to" even meant. I thought everyone had Farm Fresh grocery stores and McDonalds.

I was in my twenties before I learned what a country store was and how these family-owned stores are a staple of rural life. Who would have ever thought you could buy everything needed for a Thanksgiving dinner out of a small white wood sided store?

In the mist of this pandemic, with quarantines and limits on gatherings, it's these small businesses owners, the mom and pop owned groceries, hardware stores, diners, and restaurants who need us to step up. These are the very businesses we call on routinely to sponsor civic activities from little league teams to fire department fundraisers to Christmas parades. These owners are always there for the community, now it's time for the community to be there for them.

These are the people who are too often overlooked when the government rolls out a stimulus package to bail out the banks or airlines after events resulting in economic chaos. These are the same people who stayed in the community and rebuilt after so many floods I have lost count. They are you neighbors, they are you friends, they are what makes Windsor a great place to live.

So, step up to the plate - a plate of fried chicken, BBQ, pizza or some of the best chicken wings you have ever eaten and show your support for these small businesses.

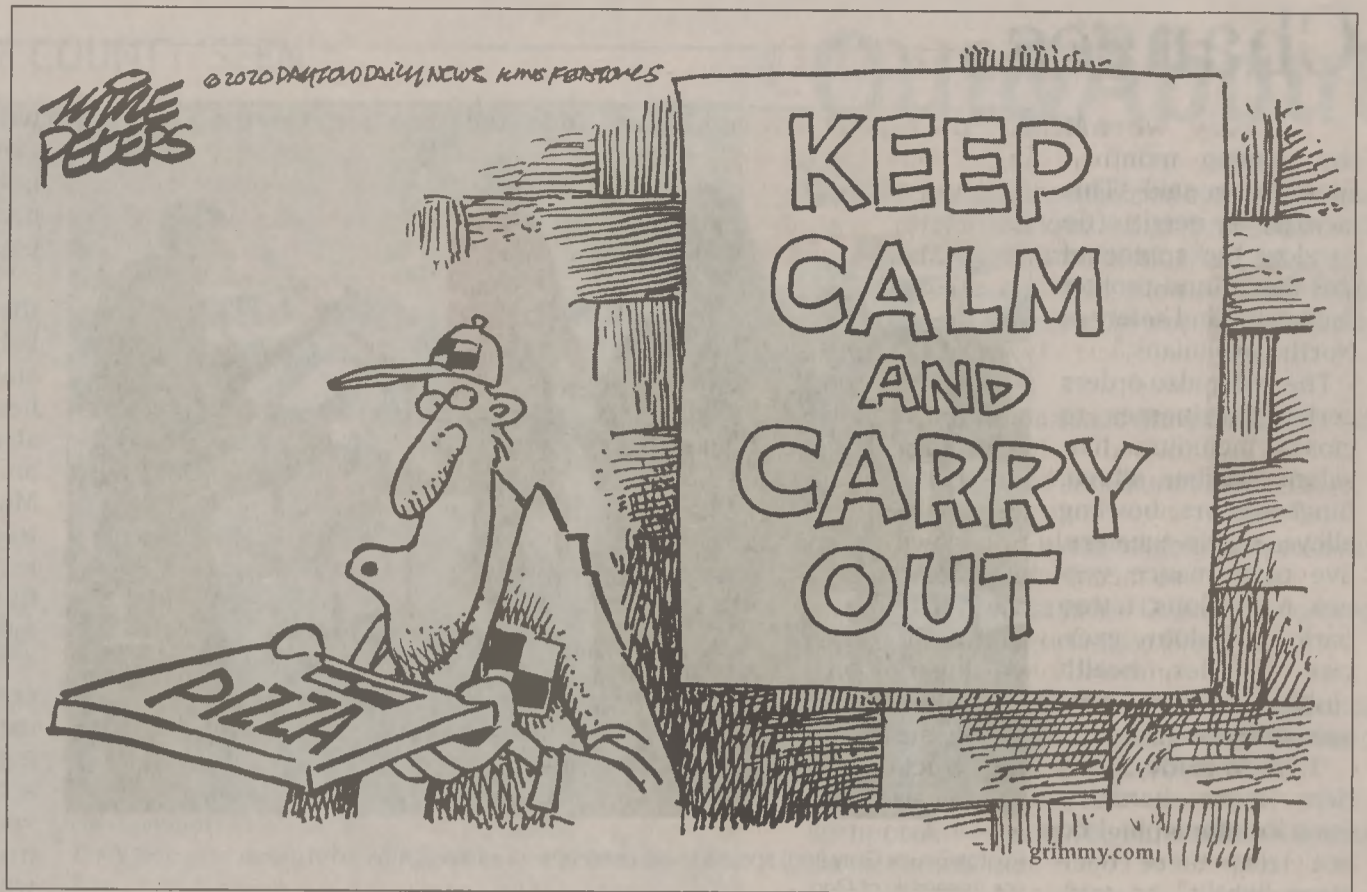
Oh yea, I almost forgot, wash your hands!!!!!!

*Todd Lane is a retired Windsor Police Chief and First Sgt. of the N.C. Highway Patrol who resides in Johnston County with his wife, Pam. He has served in law enforcement for more than 30 years.*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Bertie Ledger-Advance encourages Letters to the Editor.

Email Letters To: [twhite@ncweeklies.com](mailto:twhite@ncweeklies.com)



# We're all doing the best we can...

We are in uncharted waters. Our schools are closed. Our restaurants are serving take-out only.

We can't go get our hair cut at the local salon. Some people can't even go to work.

The COVID-19 virus has disrupted the lives of every American, and most people worldwide.

And, as we have found out, we weren't prepared for this. In fact, our lack of preparation should be one of the things we work to fix once this situation is behind us.

Yet, here we are.

And while we try to navigate our way through these uncharted waters, so too are our leaders. They never imagined being in this situation either I'd be willing to wager.

At the beginning, I think President Donald J. Trump had the same reaction most of us did - basically, "yea, right." He didn't believe the virus was going to disrupt our lives any more than the rest of us did.

But, when the smartest people in the world told him it would - he

began to act. He made decisions and he offered us a plan forward.

The President of the United States even went so far as to recommend people not gather in groups of more than 10 - an unprecedented (forgive the figure of speech) move.

And while POTUS is navigating the country through this pandemic, Gov. Roy Cooper is doing the same in North Carolina. He has been thoughtful and deliberate, and has done everything he can to protect our state.

In both cases, I'm sure they have made mistakes. They probably could have reacted sooner among other things.

But, in this case, I'm willing to give them a break. They're doing quite simply the best they can with the information they have in front of them. I hope you'll give them the benefit of the doubt as well.

On that same subject, I'm extremely proud of Bertie County officials, and those in our municipalities throughout Bertie County. They have reacted but not overreacted.

Emergency Services Director Mitch Cooper has done a good job of informing the public, and keeping the county's citizens aware of

how things are progressing, and what steps should be taken if they feel sick.

I can't say enough about the intelligent and thoughtful way things have been handled locally.

While we're on the subject of COVID-19, I strongly urge you to support your local businesses as much as you can. Most of the restaurants are still open and providing take-out service.

Our local restaurants provide an unbelievable service to our community. They are our backbone in many ways. I hope you'll do all you can to support them.

If you don't feel safe going out to eat, go online and buy gift certificates or ask someone to pick one up for you. Any way we can help our local businesses, I pray we will.

I look forward to next week when we make the shift to Thursday, and we hope you'll enjoy the new day and the more timely news coverage.

Be safe - and, as Todd Lane reminds you in his column - wash your hands!

*Thadd White is Editor of the Bertie Ledger-Advance. He can be reached via email at [twhite@ncweeklies.com](mailto:twhite@ncweeklies.com).*



**THADD WHITE**  
Out Here in Left Field

# The message remains...

One of the great joys of my life has been being a part of "The Message of Easter" at Piney Grove Baptist Church in Farm Life.

"The Message of Easter" is a 90-minute outdoor drama which depicts the last days of Christ as told in the Bible. Compiled strictly from scripture, the production was the vision of my friend, extra father and unofficial mentor, E.T. Taylor.

I have been a part of this production a majority of the 40 years it has been in existence.

One of my toughest responsibilities ever came this year when I had to be a part of deciding to cancel the 41st season of "The Message of Easter."

As the governor's guidance regarding COVID-19 slowly turned to executive orders and numbers began to climb, the drama team - which is a small group from within our church family - knew what had to be done.

It was not going to be about making sure we were following the rules; it was about looking after one another and looking out

for our fellow man.

The performances would have run for eight nights, ending on Easter Sunday. Included in those nights would have been a performance in Spanish and a night where there was American Sign Language interpretation for deaf attendees.

My role in the drama has evolved over the years. As a child and teen, I was in the cast. After being gone for a few years, I came back and landed in the tower as a technical director running lights or sound. A few years ago, I found myself directing the performances. And like so many involved, I absolutely love being involved.

Every single role is important in this production, no one more so than the other. Whether it is the men parking cars or the ladies ironing costumes, it takes everyone.

Everyone is working for the same goal - to use this unique opportunity to share the Gospel with as many people as possible.

As a child, I have the best memories of sitting on the church steps, at the original building across the road from the drama set, watching the buses roll in on performance nights.

It was a regular thing to hear

the adult ladies yell, "Bus, bus, there's another one."

As adults, their excitement was so contagious and so obvious.

I still carry that excitement, which made canceling this year's season of eight performances so hard.

Many in our church family have been called home over the years since "The Message of Easter" began, including my buddy, E.T. Taylor.

We know they would tell us we made the right decision by canceling the season this year in this unprecedented time.

And with the same faith E.T. and others had in those early days, we'll simply keep the faith and be confident we will be back next year.

So, from everyone at "The Message of Easter," we pray you stay safe and find your way celebrate the story behind the message.

Easter may need to be modified this year, but it has not been canceled - unless we chose not to observe it.

*Sarah Hodges Stalls is a Staff Writer for the Martin County Enterprise & Weekly Herald. She can be reached via email at [shstalls@ncweeklies.com](mailto:shstalls@ncweeklies.com).*



**SARAH H. STALLS**  
Wandering But Not Lost

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