

NORTHSIDE NEWS

PREJUDICE + POWER = RACISM

The Turning Of A Page

A Parting Message from Jackson Center Interim Executive Director, Hudson Vaughan

I have the great honor of sharing that we have a new Executive Director: George Barrett will serve as the Jackson Center’s first full-time “on-site” Executive Director! George has been a staff member of the Jackson Center for the last 6 years and our Associate Director for the last four. George brings the perfect combination of passion, energy, and brilliance for the work, all grounded in community relationships and vision. As community leader Ms. Keith says, “he is one of the community’s claimed sons.”

I will transition out of my leadership role at the end of the month, after a year as Interim Executive Director and over ten years of leadership work at the Jackson Center, to pursue a Master of Divinity Degree at Duke University. I will continue to consult on the Housing Justice and Northside Neighborhood Initiative work with the Jackson Center team. And, of course, Maggie, our son Charlie, and I will also still be an active part of the work as Northside neighbors.

I am proud of how our team approached the leadership transitions over the last two years. Our staff and board worked tirelessly and thoughtfully to ensure that we made the transition from founding directors to new leadership sustainably. We had the privilege to complete a series of oral history interviews as a staff and board with several powerful Black leaders from across the Triangle, including the late Andrea Harris. These interviews grounded our vision of this position and shaped our description, recruitment, process, and structure. They also helped inspire internal leaders like George to step up in this critical time. We completed a national search and an intensive series of interviews and are proud that our internal candidate rose to the top.

The Jackson Center emerged from a movement for community justice and was founded by a broad coalition of neighbors. But 12 years ago, we also started out in the upper room of St. Joseph, with Della Pollock as our volunteer Executive Director and two “part-time” recent college graduates as the staff (myself included). Today, the Jackson Center has 10 permanent staff members, over half of whom have lived or currently live in the community and a majority of whom have been with the Center for three or more years. And by the end of this month, the Jackson Center will complete our 4th year as a Living Wage Employer.

Beyond this, our work is led by community teams of dozens of neighborhood leaders- many of you- and guided by over 200 oral histories by which we collectively work to do justice. The Jackson Center has become a leader in groundbreaking housing justice work that is stemming the tide of gentrification; civil rights and oral history education that is disrupting conventional history and dismantling white supremacy; and community fabric work that is importantly fighting the pandemics of COVID-19 and centuries of entrenched racism. In the midst of this critical work, what makes the Jackson Center and this community so special is the spirit of joyful abundance and radical love that prevails in and powers our struggle for community justice.

This has all been possible because of the incredible strength of Northside leadership and the powerful, generous spirit of our neighbors.

I never would have imagined that sitting down to do a series of oral histories with Mrs. Jackson 13 years ago would change my life. But that’s the beauty of oral history, and the power of community leaders and history makers like Mrs. Jackson. I never planned to stay in Chapel Hill, but I was called by the force of this community’s history and faith, and by the coalition that emerged through listening to help found the Jackson Center. The invitation to join the collective struggle for the future of this community was then and has continued to be one of the great blessings of my life. I am endlessly grateful.

I am especially lucky because even as I transition out of my leadership role at the Jackson Center, my family is rooted in this community. I feel blessed to see Northside grow and change from the eyes of my one year-old son. I think that makes me all the more proud to be passing the baton of leadership to George – who my son will grow up seeing as one of our community’s powerful Black leaders and as another of this neighborhood’s great lineage of history-makers.

With Deepest Thanks,
-Hudson

One Eye On Our Past, One Towards the Future: Jackson Center Board Co-Chairs Recognize Hudson Vaughan

A message from The Marian Cheek Jackson Center Board Co-Chairs:
The Jackson Center is immensely grateful to Hudson for his steady, thoughtful leadership and careful vision over many years, and never more than during the COVID-19 pandemic when so many of our neighbors and friends have rallied together through crisis. With Hudson’s 10+ years of service to the community through the Jackson Center, as a co-founder and long serving Deputy to founding Executive Director, Della Pollock, he has been a rock of stability through times of turbulent change, and has consistently put the community’s interests front and center in the work of the Jackson Center. Hudson will continue to collaborate with us and advise us on the Northside Neighborhood Initiative, and he and his family remain Northside neighbors. We are immensely grateful for his service, and we wish Hudson much success in the next steps of his educational and professional journey.

All of us at the Marian Cheek Jackson Center, staff and Directors, remain profoundly committed to honoring, renewing and building communities in the historic Northside and Pine Knolls neighborhoods of Chapel Hill, NC. We are confident that, with George Barrett as our new Executive Director, the Jackson Center is well poised to extend and intensify our engagement with the community, working with one eye on our past and one eye towards the future.

-Rev. Dr. Mark Royster & Dr. Seth Murray
Co-chairs, Board of Directors, Marian Cheek Jackson Center



Clockwise from top left : Hudson (1) with the Center’s namesake Ms. Marian Cheek Jackson; co-founder Della Pollock, new Executive Director, George Barrett, and staff member Brentton Harrison; (2) with Ms. Jakini Adissa, Ms. Sallie Pendergraft, and staff members Yvonne Cleveland, Kathy Atwater and Brentton;(3) with George and Ms. Katherine “Mama Kat” Council; (4) with Alex Stephens, George, Brentton, Ms. Keith Edwards, Della, wife, Maggie, and son, Charlie.

Words From George Barrett, MCJC’s new Executive Director, next month!!

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING DURING COVID

It’s a brand new situation for everyone, I tell my mom. At 101, she struggles to make sense of the news, the science behind the epidemic, what to do, and how to respond.

Officially, the crisis is less than five months old; however, for most of us it feels much longer. We have all been made aware of how to lessen the spread of the virus through masks, hand washing, etc. But how do we lessen the effects of sheltering in place (quarantining) on our emotional wellbeing?

Here are some proven methods to stay emotionally grounded:

Take care of your physical health: keep up with appointments and medications; exercise and eat right limit snacks and foods with empty calories; do some hobbying- work on a scrapbook, write, draw or paint, garden; communicate- talk to relatives and connect with old friends; practice deep breathing, prayer, and meditation; keep your mind sharp with word games, sudoku, jigsaw puzzles; set expectations to give yourself something to look forward to each day; and support others.

As we adjust to this new normal remember that during this time it’s okay to be angry, but don’t let it take a hold. Monitoring how much time you spend watching, reading or listening to the news also helps, as well as choosing trustworthy news sources such as PBS news. Also consider limiting how much time is spent talking about the virus and possible outcomes.

Some of the symptoms to look out for in ourselves, our children, and loved ones during this time are:muscle tension and/or unusual aches and pains; excessive worry; changes in sleep patterns; fatigue; withdrawing from friends and family; changes in appetite; irritability; loss of interest in activities or hobbies; and, ongoing feelings of sadness or emptiness.

If you can’t shake one or more of these symptoms, resources are available for assistance:

COVID-19 phone line: 866-462-3821
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service (SAMHSA) National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): (866) 615-6464
Crisis Text Line: Text CONNECT to 741741
1-800-273-TALK

Other possibilities for assistance include your church or religious organization and consulting with your doctor or therapist.

In the spirit of protecting and preserving our emotional wellbeing, let’s remember to be kind to ourselves, considerate of those around us, and remain calm and centered as we chart the unknown territories of the Covid-19 crises. Most of all, let’s keep in mind that although we are physically distant, as a Northside Community, we are all in this together.

-Ms. Jakini Adisa

The COVID Crisis: Reducing Risk for the Long Haul

This is a hard update for me to write. As a public health researcher, I know that we shouldn't be here. There are more than 150,000 people in the United States who shouldn't be dead. There's another huge number who shouldn't have had to be hospitalized or in recovery from illness. Our small businesses shouldn't be suffering like they are. There shouldn't be tens of millions of people out of work. Our children's schools shouldn't have to be closed.

We shouldn't be here, but here we are. And we face a new challenge as UNC brings tens of thousands of people from all over the country back to campus.

I don't have a lot of new things to say. You all know what to do because you've been doing it. You've been keeping 6 feet of distance from others who don't live with you. You've been wearing masks when you need to be indoors with others or can't avoid standing close to people. You've been getting tested when you think you might have been exposed or are sick. You've been staying home when you can. And you've been watching out for your neighbors.

Given how widespread the virus is now, this is all going to last for a long time, probably another year. So now's the time to think about the calculated risks you'll take over the fall and winter. For instance, my kids are in daycare. The daycare is doing a good job with safety, but there's still a small risk involved. So I reduce other risks by staying home most of the time and wearing masks any time I'm close to other people, especially indoors. Now's a good time to think about the risks that are important to you and how to reduce other risks. How will your family adapt holiday gatherings? How will you see older or high-risk folks in your life? How will you take care of your mental health and well-being?

Below are a few thoughts I have:

- Take walks outside as much as you can. Being outdoors helps anxiety and depression. Walking and other movement improves overall health. And the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus does not spread well outdoors. When in doubt, go outside.
- Ventilation, ventilation, ventilation. When it comes to preventing COVID-19 from spreading, outside is better than inside. An open window is better than a closed one. An indoor office with a HEPA air purifier is better than an office with closed stuffy air.
- Take care of your health. Don't skip important health care appointments. If you're sick, call a doctor. They might be able to give you advice over the phone. If you need to come in person, they should have protocols to keep you safe.
- Keep your kids on their vaccination schedules. (I just took my toddler to his pediatrician for a checkup and his vaccinations. I've never been more grateful for those shots.)
- Different masks for different purposes. For low-risk situations (grocery store, talking to a neighbor outside on their porch), I use one of my washable cloth masks. For higher-risk situations (crowded indoor space like the DMV or a busy workplace), I use one of the surgical masks I bought because they are lighter weight (comfortable to wear longer) and filter viruses better than my cloth mask.
- If you're riding in a car with someone who doesn't live with you, roll down the windows and wear a mask.
- Fill out your census form (in the mail or online). A good census count is the only way to make sure that everyone gets accurate political representation. And political leadership matters.
- If you're interested in possibly being part of a trial of vaccines being developed for SARS-CoV-2, you can get more info here: <https://coronaviruspreventionnetwork.org/>
- If you want to track UNC coronavirus cases, go to the UNC COVID-19 "dashboard" website here: <https://carolinatogether.unc.edu/dashboard/>
- You've got this. I've seen you taking care to prevent the spread of this virus. I see you. Thank you.

By: Prof. Whitney Robinson, Northside Neighbor

Maskin' for a Friend

Ask Keith

We posted this article in June 2020, and we ran it before the UNC school system decided to re-open. Now that the UNC system has opened for classes in person, we have the same concerns we did in June when the first article was written. The only difference is that the Chapel Hill system is doing virtual learning. We're reprinting the article since what we said then bears repeating. The Jackson Center will extend any help we can to the Town, the University, or anyone else that we can reach out to. Please feel free to give us a call at 919-960-1670. Don't forget to wash your hands, be six feet apart, and please don't forget to wear your mask because you will be saving your life and other lives as well.

Q: Since North Carolina is one of the states seeing significant increases of Covid-19 cases, it really concerns me that UNC plans to open up in August. Many of the students are coming from out of state and many of these states have a very high number of coronavirus cases. The surge of people from all over the globe coming here soon frightens me. Should I be concerned?

A: It's summer time now, and not many students are here; so many elders and others have been able to manage and stay safe during this time. Many of Northside's neighbors are at high risk since they are over the age of 60, and I'm not sure that many of the young people coming into our community will stick to the CDC's guidelines. This really concerns me! The Northside Community has always weathered any storm.

Saving Grace: Neighbors Count Their Blessings

Our communities have all been affected and impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. In the beginning, who would have imagined there would be food shortages and races for the last package of toilet tissue and paper towels? How many times did we wonder if we would find not just the necessities but a treat or snacks to bring joy to our families, especially our children? Did you find yourself not only thinking about your household or your family but your neighbor? Possibly it has been a time of unexpected emergencies: illness, loneliness, death of a loved one, job loss, home schooling or worry about survival? Regardless, there have been some who endured much and shared their SAVING GRACE during troubled times:

Ms. Lillian Alston told me: I laid in the hospital and asked the Lord to come see about me. He came, and I left the hospital. My saving grace in my times of loneliness because I am a people person were: the Jackson Center ladies singing and praising God with me in my yard; Pastor Cradle calling and praying with me; and the Seymour Center calls three days a week to check on me and ask me what I need. I am the last survivor of my parents' eight children and I wonder what I am to do. I don't have much but I always have something to give! Finally, God has my back -He did not bring me this far to drop me off!!

Mr. Roy Atwater began simply by saying: The Lord woke me/us up this morning. Not one life but all lives matter; it's not about race, because everything God made is good. With what I have been through, His grace and mercy kept me! The good Lord is blessing us to go through this pandemic and His will will be done.

Ms. Kay Gattis has faced the death of a loved one during the pandemic but found it necessary to participate in the Community Solidarity March: I wake up every morning and ask God to lead me in the way to go every day. God led me to participate in the march. It was the grace of God!

These neighbors have endured and continue to survive during this pandemic. Their faith in God has been a Keeper, Provider and their SAVING GRACE!

-Dr. Phyllis Joyner

In Memoriam



Mr. Major Geer, Jr.
April 13, 1969 -
July 2, 2020



Mrs. Ethel Jean
Riggsbee Jackson
February 9, 1938 -
July 5, 2020



Mrs. Marthenia
Fearrington
May 9, 1932 -
August 9, 2020



Mrs. Jimmie Lee
Bynum
October 18, 1923 -
August 4, 2020

Birthdays

Aug / Sept Birthdays

- 8/2 Sheila Alston
- 8/4 Polly Webb
- 8/5 Kathy Atwater,
Steve Pendergraft
- 8/6 Mae McLendon
- 8/8 Kathy Wilson
- 8/10 Seth Murray
- 8/13 Etta Wilson
- 8/16 Rev. Kevin Brown
- 8/19 Jesse Chavis
- 8/20 Marvin Chambers
- 8/22 Tiffany Watson
- 8/28 Sherdena Weaver;
Rosalyn Alston
- 8/29 Keith Edwards
- 9/6 Cory Jones
- 9/11 Emma Thompson
- 9/14 Joe Alston
- 9/15 Stan Foushee
- 9/16 Nessie Riggsbee
- 9/17 Charles Booth
- 9/29 Jane Farrar

ABSENTEE BALLOTS:
REQUEST ONE NOW!

Don't forget to request an absentee ballot for the upcoming Presidential election! You may have received a letter in the mail from the Center for Voter Information that includes an application and a prepaid envelope addressed to the Orange County Board of Elections in Hillsborough. If you haven't yet applied for an absentee ballot, fill it out and send it in. It's easy!!! If you didn't get this, you can request an absentee ballot by calling (919) 245-2350. They are also available at the DMV.

Face Mask Updates



The Town continues to distribute free face masks to anyone in need, every Wednesday and Saturday from 2-5 pm.

If you or your organization need masks and are not able to visit the Fire Stations, please email Jackie Thompson at jthompson@townofchapelhill.org

CHOOSING THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS, IS STILL CHOOSING EVIL.
WE DESERVE BETTER CHOICES FOR LEADERSHIP! KEEP ON PUSHIN'!

Housing Crisis
Assistance

If you need help with rent, utilities, and other critical household expenses, call: Orange County Housing Hotline: 919-245-2655, M-F, 12-4 or email: HousingHelp@orangecountync.gov Inter-Faith Council: 919-929-6380 ext. 19, M-F, 9am-5pm.