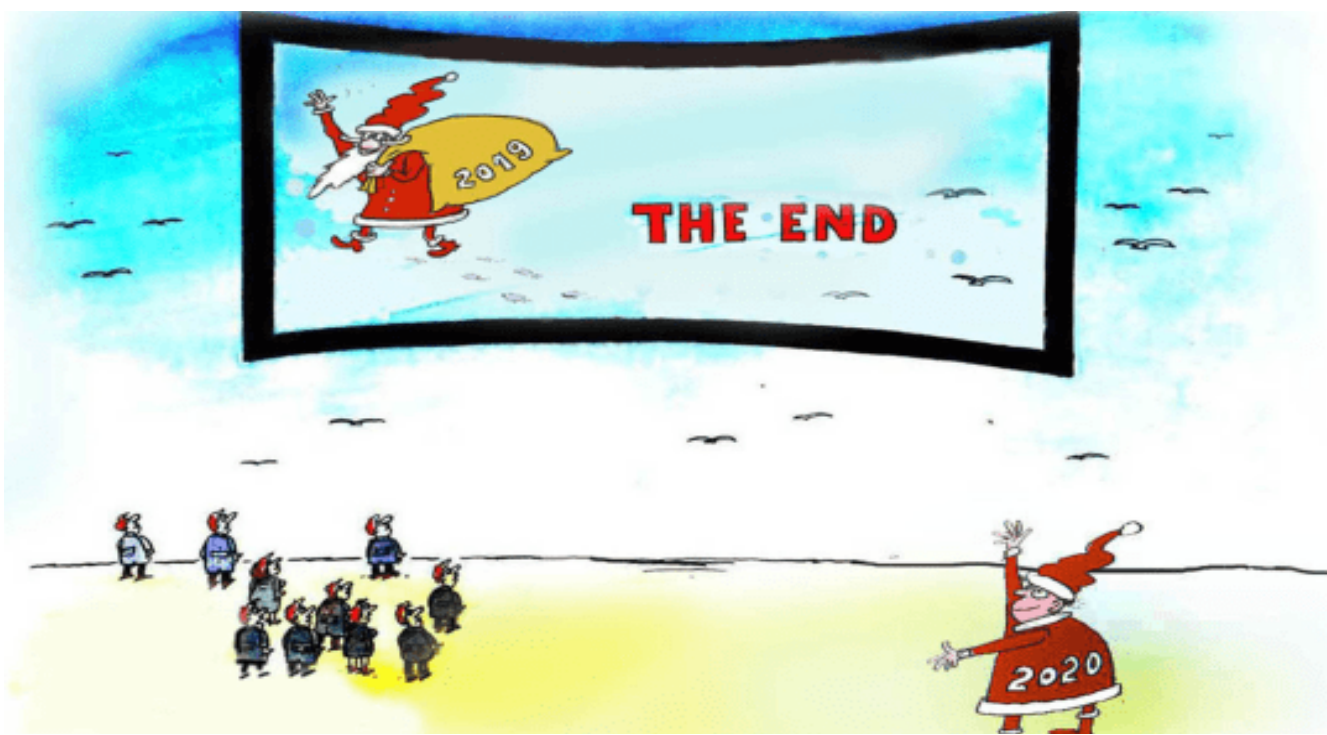


Editorial & Opinions ENOUGH

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"Create an interactive environment that facilitates debate among readers on issues concerning them," Jeff Jobe, 1998

"Because you have stood with us in the past; we commit to never allow pressures to stop us from standing for you today," Jeff Jobe, 2010



Views expressed on this page are those of the author alone and not necessarily endorsed by this newspaper.

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My dream for SCKY; realizing our value

By **JEFF JOBE**
Publisher
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Without a doubt 2019 has been a year of effort. We have seen a tremendous amount of effort expensed from all levels of government; city, county, state and national leaders wanting to help spur some much needed economic development growth.

If you have lived long enough you will more than likely recognize that good or bad, national and state trends make their way to us but it just takes a little time.

This came true when the national markets were suffering and we are beginning to see it with growth as well. Knowledgeable business developers know this and they are in full swing reaching into new areas of possibilities for their interests. All of us need to embrace it and step out together to take full advantage of a growth trending market.

All levels of government are so very important and desperately needed in order to facilitate growth and we are seeing mayors, economic developers and county leaders working closely with state officials looking for ways to make dreams become a reality.

Entrepreneurship is the key to our community success and we are beginning to see hints of growth and it is encouraging. We have so much uniqueness in the heart of our town sitting right on Main Street that hold the key to our best first impression possible.

In my 22-years of covering local news, I have seen few downtown revitalization initiatives and even less follow through in regards to encouraging a unified facelift or real estate rehabilitation. Yet, I have seen millions spent on land, vacant lots or community projects at the edge of town or in building new government offices during this same time. These investments are certainly good for our community but until the downtown is active with life we are missing our true potential for making a first impression needed to attract and maintain real community growth.

Google indicates that small town life and vacation destinations increased by 287% in 2019 and the trend is growing exponentially. Large out-of-state real estate companies are cross marketing rural communities as build your own market opportunities. Our central United States location is perfect for not only entrepreneurial but proven dot-com businesses and we need to lay the ground work to make it attractive for these investors.

I believe the time is here for us all to take a look at the buildings and land in the heart of our community and offer incentives to encourage property owners to upgrade them and others to utilize them. We need second floor apartments, Airbnb's, condominiums and penthouse styled living and first floor small business incubators.

Each should be geared toward the uniqueness in our town. Whether it is caves, lakes, hunting, rivers, locks and dams, farm life or other attractions like community theatre, breweries, outdoor life and museums we can reinvent our destiny by embracing what we have taken for granted.

Public/private partnerships are an amazing avenue to help bridge this need for community rehabilitation. Just imagine what could be accomplished if each of our communities matched 50% of store front revitalization up to a fixed amount payable when a building has been upgraded to offer code approved rentals. These same rentals could be given tax incentives for small downtown startup shops, restaurants or pubs geared to bringing life back to downtown.

Incentives are a positive ways to partner with real estate owners and one I believe would work but there also needs to be a recognizable amount of tough love. There is no acceptable reason that any of our public squares should have boarded up windows, or safety hazards that come from buildings not protected from the elements. I'm comfortable that each of our towns have ordinances already on the books and all that is needed is elected officials willing to place individuals in governing positions willing to do their jobs and assure compliance. Again, identifying the specific issue and offering a one-time incentive would benefit us all and probably go a long way in balancing the political fall-out sure to come from pushing these appointed boards to do their job.

These partnerships are essential and I'm hopeful we can take the lessons realized from ignoring who we are from the past, the hard work and efforts expenses in 2019 and carry them into 2020 with confidence in realizing our value.

We are a community of wonderful people with a history worth honoring and a future worth a tax dollars investment match.

Jeff Jobe is founder and CEO of Jobe Publishing, Inc. His commentary reflects his personal views and does not reflect the views of personal or professional associations and affiliations. Reach him at jobe@jobeinc.com. Read his previously published commentary at sckentucky.com

Community Meeting Schedules

Russell Springs Council – 2nd Thursday of each month at the municipal room at the City Hall at 6 p.m.

Jamestown Council – 3rd Thursday of each month in the basement of Jamestown City Hall at 6 p.m.

Fiscal Court – 2nd Monday of each month in the Russell County Courthouse at 6 p.m.

School Board – 3rd Monday of each month at various locations at 6 p.m.

Russell County Chamber of Commerce – 3rd Tuesday of each month at various local businesses at 12 noon (CST). Contact the chamber office at (270) 866-4303 for details of this month's meeting location.

Lake Cumberland Area Development District – Board of Directors – 4th Thursday of every odd numbered month at the Area Development District Office at 11 a.m.

Russell County Health Department Board – Local health board meetings are held annually and occur in February. District board meetings are held quarterly.

Russell County Ambulance Board – 2nd Tuesday of each month.

Russell County Library Board – 2nd Tuesday of each month at Jamestown Library at 5 p.m.

County Extension Office Board – 3 meetings a year, one in September; no time set yet for the remaining meetings. Located at the Extension Office.

Partners In Prevention – 4th Thursday of each month at the Russell County Auditorium/Natatorium Complex at 12 noon.

Airport Board – 1st Tuesday of each month at the airport at 5 p.m.

Lake Cumberland Tourist Commission Board – 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Tourist Commission, located at 650 S. Hwy. 127 between Arby's and Long John Silver's restaurants, at 12:30 p.m.

County Conservation District – 1st Monday of each month at the district conference room, located at 159 Ferco Way, Jamestown, at 12 noon.

Russell County Industrial Development Authority – 4th Monday of each month at Duo County Telephone, at 8:30 a.m.

What we should do for the Environment



By **JERRY MATERA**
print@jpinews.com
Times-Journal Reporter

With the new year here it's time to make some serious resolutions. One serious resolution and the most benefit you can do for the world is make an effort to do something about the environment. Your children and grandchildren will thank you.

With climate change a reality, and it is according to the people who know, our scientists, there are a few things we can do, and should do, as individuals to slow down the eroding of our environment.

I am sympathetic to people who depend on gasoline as a cost item for their livelihood, independent truck drivers for example. These people are really hurt when gasoline prices rise. The rest of us should think about how we can conserve gas and bring the price down for those who have to use it.

Here are some things you can do:

- Walk when possible.
- Don't speed. The slower you go the more fuel efficient your car becomes.
- Buy local food. Visit the Farmers Market. The average food item has traveled 1500 miles to reach you.
- Make an effort to use less plastic. Plastic is made from oil. Cut back on plastic bottled beverages. Use re-useable bags at the grocery and other stores

Many more practices can make you a friend of the earth and we will discuss them in future columns.

Reduce, Recycle, Reuse.

