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CONNECTION

Reston ♦ Herndon ♦ ^{Oak Hill} Chantilly ♦ CENTRE VIEW

Going on a Bear Hunt During COVID-19

NEWS, PAGE 8



Girls Can 'Make Our World a Better Place'

NEWS, PAGE 3

Covid-19 Wisdom From a Child

NEWS, PAGE 8

Bear hunt anyone? The Spear children Jay, 5, Zachary, 2, and Lily, 7, wave from a second-floor window facing the sidewalk of their family home in the Town of Herndon. Beside the children, their biggest bear is tucked in the window in hopes other families see it and put bears somewhere on the sidewalk side of their homes or properties too.

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION OPINION, PAGE 4 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 6

NEWS



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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Pictured - from left: Jimmy Flood, Andrew Westenhoff, Noah Wallace - Master of Ceremonies, John Phillips and Kyle Williams.

Reston Troop 1970 Promotes Four Eagle Scouts

On Saturday, March 7, 2020, four local families hosted a quadruple Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Jimmy Flood, John Phillips, Andrew Westenhoff, and Kyle Williams. These young men earned Scouting's highest rank as members of Boy Scout Troop 1970 in Reston. Troop 1970 is sponsored by the United Christian Parish. Flood, Phillips

and Williams are 2019 graduates from South Lakes High School and Westenhoff is a 2019 graduate of Battlefield High School.

Flood and Phillips are first year students at University of Virginia, Westenhoff is attending George Mason University and Williams is attending Christopher Newport University.



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NEWS



The Raytheon employees, Boys & Girls Club leaders and local children gather for a group photo at the event's end.



(Back row, from left) Adults Whitney Sparks and Adrian McShane of the Boys & Girls Club pose with the young participants.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Girls Can 'Make Our World a Better Place'

Raytheon's Chantilly event encourages them to become engineers.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

According to the National Science Foundation, just 14 percent of America's engineers are women. Yet careers in engineering provide opportunities for young women seeking successful futures.

So Raytheon and the Ox Hill Boys & Girls Club teamed up to introduce girls to women already working in the field, have them do a hands-on activity and encourage them to consider becoming engineers. In celebration of National Engineers Week Girl Day, they held a special event, Feb. 20, at Ox Hill Baptist Church in Chantilly.

"Engineers make the world a better place," said Stephanie Lackey, Raytheon director of engineering business analytics. "A Raytheon engineer designed the protocols for email addresses, and another Raytheon engineer invented the first microwave." She advised the nearly two dozen girls attending to take as much math in school as possible, en route to college degrees and success as engineers.

"The average salary has gone up, over the years, because engineers – especially women engineers – are in great demand," said Lackey. "In 2016, the average engineer's salary was \$101,000. Over the course of their lifetimes, engineering majors will earn \$1.4 million more than a liberal-arts major."

Next, the Raytheon engineers taught them how to write programs for a STEM activity, "Code without Computers." The girls wrote their directions as symbols illustrating each step to create pyramids of colorful, plastic cups. (So if they moved a cup to the right, they'd draw an arrow pointing right). Then, working in teams, they built their pyramids.



Brookfield Elementary students (From left) Jayah Richardson and Za'Liyah Davis display their cup pyramid.

AN ENGINEER guided each team, and senior software engineer Andrew Oldham, who works in cybersecurity, reassured them that "There's more than one right way to do things. The symbols are your code; you can write your programs any way you want, as long as you reach the same result."

Franklin Middle seventh-graders Francesca Ruano and Amy Flores Cortez worked together. "It was easy," said Francesca. "And it was cool hearing them talk to us." Amy also enjoyed herself. "It was fun stacking the cups," she said.

Raytheon's Tiffany Mitchell, also in cybersecurity, was their advisor. "Growing up, there were always people mentoring me," she said. "So I try to give back and mentor others. We don't have enough engineers, let alone women in the industry. And it's a great way for women to help the country and their

families."

"It's important to love what you do and have fun with your career," added Oldham. "We want to promote STEM with young women, so they'll have a bigger influence in technology for the future. Today, they got familiar with coding – learning engineering without realizing it."

"Raytheon lets us share our profession and have fun with our next generation of engineers," said Lackey. "It's a wonderful profession for women – we get to create, innovate and make our world a better place."

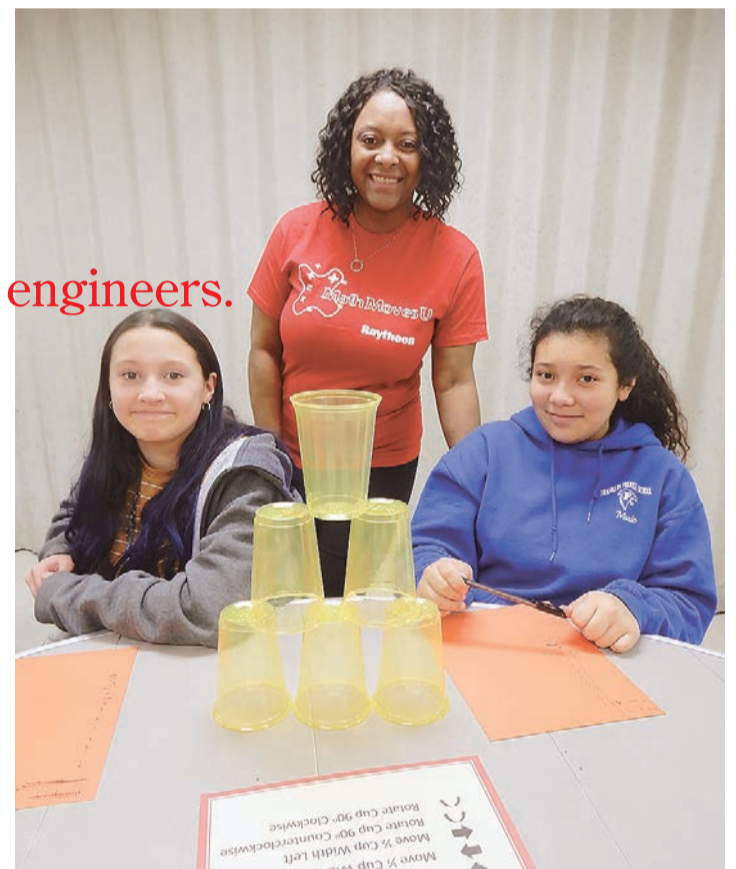
Kandice Ferrell, spokeswoman for Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, called the Chantilly presentation "amazing. The girls were happy and excited, and they got to see women on top of their fields in science and engineering. It helps them dream that big dream and shows them what's possible –

that someday, they can do this, too."

BROOKFIELD ELEMENTARY sixth-grader Yayra Escobar said their project was "challenging, but fun – like a puzzle to figure out. And afterward, I felt happy and accomplished that we did it."

Joselyn Gonzalez, a Brookfield fourth-grader, said, "You had to follow directions carefully and stack the cups a certain way. I liked it, though. It was hard, but we didn't give up."

"I'm glad Raytheon came and did this presentation so the girls could learn something new," said Whitney Sparks, a program aid with the Ox Hill Boys & Girls Club. "It was cool seeing the kids being challenged and then feeling a sense of accomplishment when they finished their projects."



Raytheon's Tiffany Mitchell is flanked by (from left) Franklin Middle students Francesca Ruano and Amy Flores Cortez, showing their cup pyramid.

Community Helping the Hungry

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)



At a critical time in our history when our federal administration is displaying a level of ineptness that is head-shakingly unbelievable, the importance of community becomes more evident to us. Whether that community is at the state level as we live-stream on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 2 p.m. the quiet bed-side manner of our physician now Governor Ralph Northam as he tells us the steps we need to get through the COVID-19 crisis as best as humanly possible or whether it is the neighbors on the street who emerge to the stoops of their homes at noon one day to sing happy birthday to a young person who is celebrating a mile-marking 18th birthday, we as members of multiple communities are facing a history-changing crisis. The way we emerge on the other side is likely to be dependent more

COMMENTARY

on our community support system than on government action.

The federal Congress has already passed legislation of historic proportions that at any other time in our history would have been called socialism. There seems to be wide-spread agreement that it is not enough and that further federal assistance will be required both for individuals and families as well as the economy. To ensure that you are aware of the various programs of assistance that might be available to you and your family, visit my website at www.kenplum.com for a description of programs.

The General Assembly is required by the state Constitution to meet in a reconvened session after the Governor has reviewed and signed, vetoed or proposed amendments to bills passed in the recent regular session. The reconvened session is scheduled for April 22 this year, but there are serious questions as to whether it is a good idea to have 100 delegates and staff meeting in one room while 40 senators and staff meet in another room. However the issue is re-

solved we will be ploughing new legal ground. Whenever the General Assembly meets it will not bring good news; the sharp decline in revenue will wreck what was an historically good budget. The reductions will be many, and they will be deep.

What can we as a community do while we are hunkered down? As people are demonstrating in communities throughout the country, there are many life-saving and useful things we can do. First, we can, and we must respond to the needs of people who are hungry. On my website, www.kenplum.com, is a directory of food banks and pantries that are responding to the needs of the hungry. Congratulations and thank you to all who have put together these wonderful efforts. All of the rest of us can help them. Without leav-

ing your home you can donate online to the food banks that can use your contribution to buy food. You can buy groceries online and have them shipped to the local food bank. Or if you choose you can buy extra when you are doing your own shopping and contribute it to a food pantry. We are community, and we can help our neighbors who are hungry.

Japanese Experience: Distancing Ingrained in Culture

BY LUCY CHEN

You have seen the statistics. More than twenty-thousand dead worldwide as of today. You have seen China, you have seen Italy. I weep for them.

People are dying in their homes and no one is coming to help them. Doctors and nurses are exhausted from treating the sick. The impact is devastating.

Now it's in America. The US now has the most number of cases in the world. Hospitals are running out of much-needed masks, ventilators, and hospital beds. Healthcare professionals are now re-using protective gear. Is it too late, or can we still stop Covid-19 from spreading?

I was looking through the statistics to try to find an answer. One thing caught my eye. It's Japan. Japan used to have the 3rd most number of Covid-19 cases, but it has since dropped to number 31. How? After all, Japan was one of the first countries to get the virus. It has an aging population and high population density. It hasn't put in any strict regulations until recently. Shouldn't Japan be the epicenter of this virus? Yet, only 1866 people got the virus, and only 54 have died.

Perhaps the Japanese government hasn't carried out enough tests. But if Japan was just under-reporting, then its hospitals would have been overrun with sick patients weeks ago, regardless of the number of cases confirmed. This



Lucy Chen, 17, is a junior at Langley High School. She is interested in current events, public health, and technology. She is also an avid debater and enjoys having cultivated discussions.

means that the Japanese people are doing something against the coronavirus that is working. So what is it?

I decided to call my uncle in Japan, and I asked him, what is Japan doing that other countries are not? He didn't know. He told me that the coronavirus hadn't changed much in Japan. But people also continue to go to work on a daily basis and they still commute on crowded trains. Shouldn't the virus spread faster with crowded public transportation? I was confused.

After scrupulously comparing my life to my uncle's, I found a couple of important differences between the strategy of the US and

Japanese to combat the virus. Here are the two key takeaways:

1. Social Distancing

We hear this phrase all the time. Maintain a 6-foot distance away from everyone.

That's because it's important.

The social distancing already ingrained in Japanese culture has allowed the Japanese to naturally mitigate the spread of the coronavirus. They do not hug, shake hands, or kiss in greeting. Instead, they bow to each other. They also refrain from touching each other and even family members socially. It's working.

It's hard to stay cooped up in your own home. But it's just something you have to do temporarily. Stay at home. Avoid contact with others. It's not easy, but everyone needs to do it together. Don't be selfish. Don't endanger the lives of other people.

Unfortunately, there's one problem with social distancing. It's not fool-proof. For social distancing to work, you also need to practice good hygiene.

2. Good Hygiene

The Japanese practice a "combination of wearing masks when sick, regular doctor's visits, and a willingness to follow the advice of health officials, among others," says Dr. Matthieu Felt, a professor of Japanese culture at the University of Florida. Good hygiene has been very effective for Japan in combating the coronavirus. We should learn from them.

If you are sick, or frequently

come in contact with someone who is sick, wear a mask. It is very disrespectful in Japanese culture to disregard good hygiene habits because doing so could endanger other people.

"Wash your hands with soap and water." We hear this from doctors all the time, but we don't take it seriously. At least, not as serious as people in Japan do. My uncle washes his hands before he goes to bed, after he wakes up, before and after he eats, after he goes to the store or to the bank, after using the restroom, after he touches money, or a doorknob...you get the point. Now he does it even more. It's just the cultural norm in Japan.

You absolutely can not ignore this. Hand washing is the last barrier between you and the virus. Even if you self-quarantine, you will still get in contact with the outside world; whether it be through shopping at the store or online. Because of the coronavirus, we must treat every surface as unsanitary.

These actions will dramatically decrease the spread of the coronavirus and reduce the pressure on our healthcare system. We are now at a critical moment, and everyone needs to do their part. So please. I don't care if you're young or old, sick or not, but I ask you to do yourself, your family, your friends, and your country a favor. Practice social distancing. Wash your hands with soap regularly. Remember, that the killer is in your hands, and it is in your hands to stop it.

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Published by
Local Media Connection LLC

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Lacking Face Masks and Face Shields

Doing their part during PPE supply shortages.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Kitty Bernard of Reston is sewing away. Ran Farmer, owner of 3D Herndon and the company's employees are working near 24 hours a day to keep production running. The lives of their families, friends and people they don't know are in their hands and the hands of so many other area residents. According to Gov. Ralph Northam's news briefing Wed. April 1, the worst is yet to come. More cases of COVID-19 and more deaths. Northam said the peak is not expected until late April or May.

Across the area, local volunteers and businesses are scrambling to support the need for nonmedical face masks, effective at reducing the spread of the virus when worn by someone who is asymptomatic or is sick, while others are providing CDC-compliant face masks. Individuals and companies are working to relieve supply shortages of medical face shields in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

BERNARD dug out her 45-year old sewing machine from the garage. Referencing a post by Deaconess Hospital, Inc., titled: "Coronavirus: Deaconess asks public to sew CDC-compliant face masks for staff," Bernard said she was set to work. She sewed masks using CDC guidelines. "The first people I thought of, besides myself and hubby... were neighbors of mine who were considered to be in the high-risk age group, ...post-cancer patients in their 80s."

From there, Bernard sewed more masks, this time for the medical oncology team and immunocompromised cancer patients at Virginia Cancer Specialists in Reston. The practice's March 27 Blog read: "Face Masks Needed at Virginia Cancer Specialists: Calling All People Who Sew." According to Bernard, an Oncology Liaison from the practice drove to her home for curbside pickup of her masks. "Each batch of masks that I made was washed in a 2-hour sanitary cycle. Then handled by me while wearing latex gloves. When dry, they were packaged into Ziploc bags so they'd be ready for each recipient to wear immediately," Bernard said.

Fairfax County Emergency Information posted on Monday, April 6, www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



Kitty Bernard of Reston sewing CDC-compliant face masks.



Ran Farmer, owner of 3D Herndon.



Bill and Peg O'Brien wearing their Bernard's face masks.

More Information

For more information, visit:
<https://3dherndon.com/services.html>

Virginia Cancer Specialists in Reston Need Face Masks- <https://virginia-cancerspecialists.com/face-masks-needed-virginia-cancer-specialists-calling-people-sew/?fbclid=IwAR1ZjyQW10dV34N-zlIO6SBdfLeN6T4pM-weZ3Sy7nEF3JaMDV4w8keTorOM#.Xn4hTrobfMU.facebook>

Text FFXCOVID to 888777 to receive updates from Fairfax County about COVID-19.

that the CDC recommended individuals wear simple face coverings in public when it is difficult to stay six feet apart in public places like the grocery store. "These simple cloth face coverings are meant to protect people around you if you are infected but don't have symptoms. A cloth face covering is not intended to protect the person wearing it," according to the post.

RAN FARMER in the Town of Herndon owns and operates 3D Herndon. He and staff are fighting COVID-19 with 50 printers. They are working within organized programs and print for them, to get protective equipment into medical channels where they are needed. Farmer said that 3D Herndon partnered with companies like Ultimaker, which connects medical institutions and hospitals to printing

hubs in the company's customer network to help in printing parts based on available designs.

"Sinterit has tested and deployed one solution... It's clever, it's simple and it works. What is it? A set of connector clips that instantly converts any standard set of safety glasses or personal eyeglasses to a face shield... It's easy. Slide the clips onto each earpiece temple, hang a sheet of standard vinyl plastic (A4 sheets of vinyl foil around 0.1mm thick) on the clips, and lock them in place." according to the 3D Herndon. Farmer cautioned that if a product is going into direct use, then the maker has to make sure that it's medically safe.

"That's why we stay in a very narrow range of what we're capable of doing with 3D printing," he said.



Herndon Town Councilmember Cesar del Aguila installed the sign at no cost on the Town Square based on Fairfax County's and Commonwealth of Virginia's recommendations to stop the spread of COVID-19. "Protect Lives in Our Town."

The Signboard

Stay home, wash up, social distance, and mask up.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

By early evening Monday, April 6, 2020, the United States reached COVID-19 milestones, 10,000 deaths, 360,000 confirmed cases and the peak not yet reached.

That morning, in the Town of Herndon, population 24,545, Councilmember Cesar del Aguila relays to Town Manager Bill Ashton, it's time to fight COVID-19.

Fairfax County Emergency Information and Governor Northam have been recommending: Wash Up, Socially Distance and Mask Up. Come on folks, get with it. The plan is a grassroots effort-make a signboard and post it in front of the Old Town Hall on the main thoroughfare through the town, Elden Street, Herndon.

Local business, Signarama Herndon/Chantilly Yesco Northern Virginia at 316 Victory Drive, donates design time and materials to produce a 66-inch by 46-inch coroplast signboard, big thanks to Chelsey Bashorun, Owner/Office Manager. Bashorun says, "This is important."

The plan is to install the sign on the vacant tri-board located on Town Square in front of the

Old Town Hall. Constructed to announce town events, it's been empty for weeks. With local hands working together toward one common goal, get the signboard up immediately, and urge people to protect others and themselves, Councilmember del Aguila picks up and delivers the sign to the Town Square. Masked and gloved, del Aguila installs it at the intersection of Elden Street and the W & OD Trail, ironically in front of the local funeral home.

Former Town Councilmember Richard Downer presented the idea for the tri-sided marquee decades ago. Downer said that he never, ever thought his idea for the tri-board would be used for this, during a pandemic and a plea for citizens to abide by the Fairfax County's and the VA Governor Northam's recommendations.

Downer, del Aguila and others agree, all parties in the effort to produce the sign and the whole town will toast with champagne and fruit juice, the day the signboard comes down and COVID-19 no longer threatens their little town, the county, the state, the union and the globe.

Stay home, wash up, social distance, and mask up. Here's to tomorrow...Let's make it happen.

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-Werner Heisenberg

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NEWS

Fireworks-Fueled Blaze at Centreville Home

A fire Saturday night at a Centreville home caused approximately \$112,500 damage and left five people displaced. Fire investigators determined that the fire was accidental and started in the garage because of improperly discarded fireworks.

According to the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, firefighters were dispatched, April 4, around 9:04 p.m., to the 5500 block of Village Center Drive. First-arriving units discovered a two-story, single-family home with fire showing from the garage. A second alarm was struck, bringing additional units from two other jurisdictions.

The blaze was quickly brought under control without any injuries. The homeowner had heard a loud noise in the garage and, upon checking, saw the flames. Five people were home at the time but were able to evacuate.

-BONNIE HOBBS

Firefighters quelled a two-alarm fire at this Centreville home.

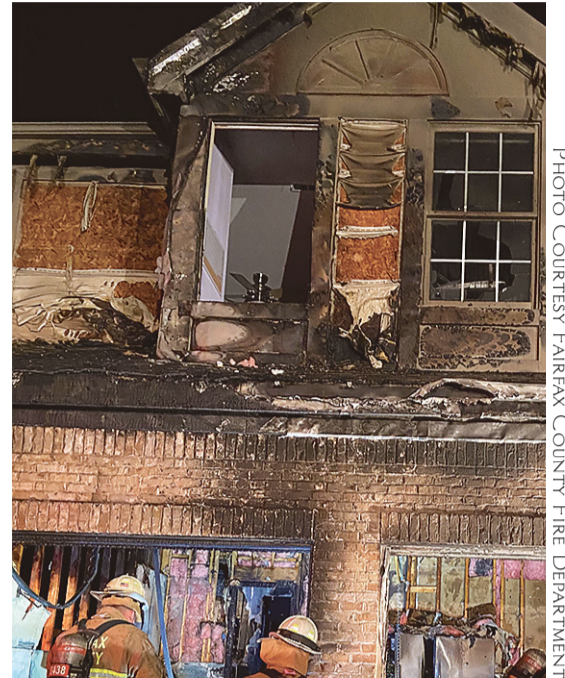


PHOTO COURTESY FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

AREA ROUNDUPS

Dulles Expo Will Be Alternative Care Center

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly is being turned into an alternative care center, for the foreseeable future. It'll basically function as a field hospital, able to accept 315 acute-care patients or 510 non-acute patients.

Gov. Ralph Northam made the announcement during a press conference, last Friday, April 3. The move will free up capacity at other, nearby hospitals, including Inova Fair Oaks, Inova Fairfax and the Reston Hospital Center.

The repurposed facility is expected to be ready for use in six weeks.

Located at 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, the popular Expo Center normally hosts a full slate of craft fairs, shows and other exhibitions, all year 'round. Now, though, said Northam, it's been selected as the best spot for Northern Virginia's alternative care site because it's the place "where construction can proceed the fastest."

Fatal Hit-and-Run in Centreville

A woman died in the early-morning hours of Thursday, April 2, from injuries suffered in a hit-and-run crash, around 12:51 a.m. at Lee Highway and Prince Way in Centreville. Fairfax County police said she was a pedestrian and have identified her as Adriana Swinson, 60, of Centreville.

Detectives from the Crash Reconstruction Unit pre-

liminarily determined that she was in the southbound lanes of Lee Highway when she was struck by a passing car. The driver fled the scene, and a description of the car is currently not available.

Anyone with information about the driver or car is asked to call the Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips may also be submitted anonymously to Crime Solvers, by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477), by texting "FCCS" plus the tip to 847411, and at <http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org/>. Tipsters are eligible for cash rewards of \$100 to \$1,000 if their information leads to an arrest.

Discarded Smoking Materials Cause Townhouse Fire

Fire officials say improperly discarded smoking materials caused a townhouse fire, last Thursday, April 2, in the 14600 block of Flower Hill Court in Centreville. Units were dispatched around 3:36 p.m., with the first arrivals encountering smoke showing from the front of the two-story structure.

A large amount of fire was also coming from the back, but firefighters quickly extinguished the blaze to limit extension into the home. Two people were home when it started; one noticed fire coming from an outlet and then saw the flames on the back deck. They left the house and called 911.

Fire investigators determined that the fire was accidental and started on the deck. No one was injured, but both residents were displaced. Damages were estimated at approximately \$93,750.

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at Connection-Newspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

GOVERNOR ORDERS STAY-AT-HOME ORDER
Governor Ralph Northam issued a statewide Stay-at-Home Order to protect the health and safety of Virginians and mitigate the spread of the novel coronavirus, or COVID-19. The executive order takes effect immediately and will remain in place until June 10, 2020, unless amended or rescinded by a further executive order. The order directs all Virginians to stay home except in extremely limited circumstances. Individuals may leave their residence for allowable travel, including to seek

medical attention, work, care for family or household members, obtain goods and services like groceries, prescriptions, and others as outlined in Executive Order 53, and engage in outdoor activity with strict social distancing requirements. The executive order also directs all Virginia institutions of higher education to stop in-person classes and instruction. Private campgrounds must close for short-term stays, and beaches will be closed statewide except for fishing and exercise.

DULLES TOLL ROAD CHANGES
The Dulles Toll Road will suspend manual cash-exchange toll collecting until further notice beginning Monday, April 6 due to COVID-19; toll booths will be unattended.
SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 6

ed. Only electronic and exact change coin payments will be accepted. Motorists without E-ZPass, other electronic forms of payment or exact change will receive bills through the mail. All lanes and toll booths on the Dulles Toll Road are equipped with electronic tolling features. Any lane can be used with a valid E-ZPass account or other form of electronic tolling. Customers can visit E-ZPass Virginia at <https://www.ezpassva.com/> for information on how to obtain an E-ZPass, or the GoToll mobile phone app at <https://www.gotoll.com/>. Customers are encouraged to visit <https://www.tollroadsinvirginia.com/> ViolationToll/PayViolation for information on paying toll violations.

YMCA OFFERS FREE PRODUCE

The local YMCAs are offering free produce distribution during the coronavirus crisis. Produce is available for anyone, free of charge, regardless of their affiliation with the YMCA. Produce will be distributed at the following location:

YMCA Reston, 12196 Sunset Hills Rd., Reston. Available Wednesdays 4-6 p.m., Thursdays 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

CHANGES TO THE COURTS

The Fairfax County courts are making new changes to their schedules and procedures in response to the coronavirus, including further postponing dockets. While the Fairfax County Courthouse remains open to the public, the Circuit Court, General District Court and Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court have changed their bond and arraignment schedule until further notice:

General District Court: Bonds and Arraignments — 8:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Circuit Court: Bonds and Arraignments — 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court: Bonds and Arraignments — 2:30 p.m.

The Circuit Court introduced a temporary process to waive oral argument for motions in an effort to encourage social distancing. To be eligible, the waiver must meet certain conditions, including that all parties agree and evidence is not required. The Circuit Court continues to postpone non-essential, non-emergency proceedings through Monday, April 27.

The General District Courts have now postponed most dockets through Thursday, April 30, except for bonds, arraignments, emergency motions, protective orders and attorney court. Regular court hearings for incarcerated individuals are expected to begin Monday, April 13, as technology permits.

For people who aren't in jail, any civil, criminal and traffic court cases that were previously scheduled for this month will be continued. Look up the specific status of your case using the Online Case Information System.

FIRE STATIONS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC

In order to protect the health of firefighters and medics, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue is closing all fire stations to the public, effective March 27. These closures are in coordination with Fairfax County government's decision to close county government buildings to the public. Notices will be posted to the front door of each station directing visitors to call the station for any inquiries. Exceptions will be made for any emergency that would require members of the public to enter the station for treatment.

DMVS ARE CLOSED

Until at least April 23, all 75 DMV customer service centers are closed and all DMV 2 Go and DMV Connect services postponed in response to the continued spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). DMV weigh stations have also suspended operations for the same duration. Driver's licenses and identification cards set to expire between March 15 and May 15 are extended 60 days from the original date of expiration. This includes credentials for individuals aged 75 and older who are typically required to make an in-person visit to renew. Vehicle registrations that expire in March and April are extended for 60 days.

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Manual Labor



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Having recently received in the mail the three-ring binder/manual on the dos, don'ts and what-fors concerning the upcoming treatment for my stage II papillary thyroid cancer; and information as well (including a cookbook) about the low iodine diet I am instructed to start two weeks before my actual treatment begins, my takeaway is that it is going to be long and hard six weeks from start to post-quarantine finish.

The reason for my apprehension is twofold. First and foremost is that I am an extremely picky/limited eater. There's only a handful of foods that I will eat on my best day ('best day' meaning completely normal circumstances where cancer is not involved), let alone on my worst day ('worst day' meaning in the midst of cancer treatment where what I eat is restricted). As a direct anticipated result, I fear there may be some heavy lifting - metaphorically speaking, ahead, specifically between April 27 and June 4.

The second reason which compounds the problem referred to in the previous paragraph is that we happen to be in the midst of a pandemic. Accordingly, the pandemic and the associated stay-at-home directives will minimize casual visits to the supermarket, restrictions intended to prevent the spread of the virus. Moreover, due to panic buying and the likely employee/staffing shortages at the supermarkets as the virus continues to take its toll, there may be more and more food shortages which will further eliminate what few food choices I had in the first place, before I even start this specialized diet.

This second reason is made even problematic because I am very much in an at-risk category: over 60, underlying medical condition with a compromised immune system, which prevents me or rather empowers my wife to prevent me from doing what I have done (the shopping) primarily, for the entirety of our marriage. That process never suited my wife, but it has always suited me. Consequently, I have become dependent on my wife to perform many of the tasks I have spent a lifetime perfecting: what to buy where, and when, and how to save some money doing it. Let's just say I am, as Sy Sims and his daughter Marci used to say, "an educated consumer." In our marriage, I have always described my role as the one taking care of the "business side," whereas my wife has always been the one taking care of the "social side." However, as we all try to navigate this pandemic, she is fulfilling both roles.

Now, as I roll the dice, so to speak, and plan/purchase for the present and the low iodine diet in the very near future, I am, to a certain degree, at her mercy. Given that the shopping process is hardly the adventure for her that it has always been for me, I have to rely, a little bit, on her benevolence and hope she keeps an open mind while in-store on the various indulgences that I require. Indulgences which, unfortunately, are very different from hers. As but one example, she loves a tuna fish sandwich whereas all I ever need is a cheese sandwich (and let's not even discuss the chocolate issue which is likewise not her priority as it is mine); and to quote my father: "the twain will never meet on the twack."

What many of us in this country have long taken for granted: 100 percent availability of food, medicine, health and miscellaneous household products is presently not so true anymore. Not purchasing some of these products until they go on sale is a pattern I likely won't be able to follow. If I do, their purchase may be too little, too late. The last thing my future diet/medical treatment can tolerate is 'too little, too late.' And I would imagine that unless I stay on track, the "twain" will be the least of my problems.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

Covid-19 Wisdom from a Child

These chalk drawings and messages on a residential street in Fair Oaks give good advice in scary times.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

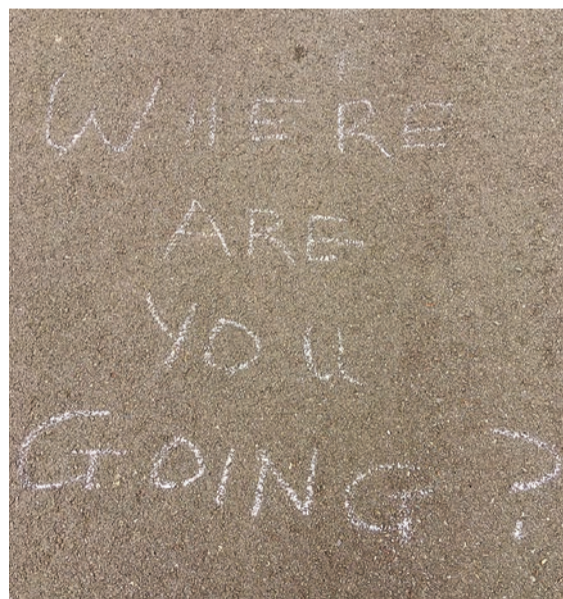


PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

The Spear family of the Town of Herndon, Jay, 5, mom Christin, dad Mike, Zach, 2, and Lily, 5, stay behind the new driveway fence Mike installed. On the other side, a 6-foot social distancing chalk line keeps others a safe COVID-distance away from the family.

Going on a Bear Hunt During COVID-19

But, there's barely any bears!

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Locked behind the new fence, no friends and no extended family visiting, the three young Spear children of the Town of Herndon, Lily, 7, Jay, 5, and even Zach, 2, know the word COVID-19. Zach fills in the word “nineteen” when mom, Christin, says grandpa and grandma can’t visit because of COVID. “I guess I’m saying it too much,” she says. Lily and Jay remember not to cross the chalk line 6 feet from the end of the driveway. “COVID-19,” they say.

The children understand there is only one way out—when dad, mom or the new nanny opens the gate, and it’s time for another walk. “We go on a bear hunt; that’s what we do,” says Lily. According to Lily, they sing the song, ‘Going on a Bear Hunt.’ Asked if they had seen any bears, Lily shakes her head and says, “No... And I want to see infinity bears.” “Sixty hundred,” says Jay.

“We’re Going On A Bear Hunt” is the animated story cartoon version of the classic Bear Hunt children’s storybook by Michael Rosen, illustrated

by Helen Oxenbury. Created by King Rollo Films, according to Cartoons for Kids, the song caught the hearts of children and parents across the globe before COVID-19. People in Australia, England and Richmond, Va., put teddy bears in their windows, on lamp posts and up in trees to make walks around the neighborhood fun for little tykes during the pandemic. “We’re going on a bear hunt; we’re going to catch a big one — what a beautiful day, we’re not scared,” sing the children modeling the words the characters sing.

The Spear children sing the words walk, after walk, after fruitless walk, but no bears. Christin says she and the children are looking really hard. “We were just hoping someone would see our bear and put one in their window. We’re at the tail end of things to do here... I saw this (The Going on the Bear Hunt) viral post down in Richmond, and then someone posted something here on the Herndon Facebook page. I was like; we will be totally into that. So we put out our bear, but nothing... We’re still hoping,” she says. “That’s why it’s a bear hunt,” says Christin’s husband, Mike.