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Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

APRIL 23, 2020



Chef José Andrés monitors the efforts to get the food out to communities that need it.



PHOTO BY SAMANTHA HIGGINS, WORLD CENTRAL KITCHEN

Filling boxes and bags of food with all the coronavirus safety precautions in place – face shield, mouth cover and rubber gloves.

Chef Andres' World Central Kitchen Feeding Hundreds in Mount Vernon

In the pandemic, need for food is great around Rising Hope United Methodist Church.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

Chef José Andrés' recipe was a combination of meat, corn, rice and spices that really hit the spot on Thursday, April 16, as the Rising Hope United Methodist Church set up camp with the World Central Kitchen to feed hundreds of people in the Mount Zephyr area.

"We gave out 300 meals in 30 minutes," said Pastor Keary Kincannon, who lead a team of church and county volunteers to make this event possible. "It was a wonderful dish," he said. "They got to take what they needed."

When word got out that Chef Andrés' and the World Central Kitchen was involved, folks started lining up and they were not disappointed.

The Mount Zephyr area has been hit hard by the virus because it's a low-income area where there are a lot of residents who work

Meals Will Be Served

The meals will be served at 3:30 p.m. for at least the next three Wednesdays and Thursdays, at the church at 8220 Russell Road in the Mount Zephyr area of Mount Vernon.

To make contributions, call the church at 703-360-1976.

hourly jobs, many in the food service industry, and they are now out of work.

"We're an area of Fairfax County and Alexandria that's hit a little harder," said Kincannon.

Ramona Carroll, Community Interfaith Coordinator for Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, made the connection that brought World Central Kitchen to Rising Hope.

"She helped make the connection for us," said Kincannon.

The World Central Kitchen is a team of food first-responders, mobilizing to get meals to those who need them most. They activate hundreds of restaurants and kitchens to feed marginalized and vulnerable communities and medical professionals on the front lines,

in order to make an impact in the fight to keep everyone fed, and to support the distressed restaurant industry.

"We know that a nourishing meal in a time of crisis is so much more than a plate of food -- it's hope, it's dignity, it's a sign that someone cares about you and that you are not alone," they said.

Food Gone Wild by World Central Kitchen

The World Central Kitchen was founded in 2010 by Chef José Andrés, with a purpose to use the power of food to heal and strengthen communities through times of crisis and beyond. Right now, World Central Kitchen is working across the country to safely distribute individually pack-

SEE CHEF ANDRES, PAGE 9



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Federal Judge Patricia Millett helped with the distribution.



McEneaney Associates has always had one motto in mind... not to be the biggest, but the best. This year marks our 40th year in Alexandria, and we are celebrating our investment in helping to build our town into the thriving community it is today. To learn more about our Associates and our firm, visit www.WeAreAlexandria.com

#WeAreAlexandria



Alexandria City | \$3,250,000

Set on 2.25 acres, this one-of-a-kind property is a true sanctuary. Designed in 1939 by Frank Lloyd Wright-trained architect, Charles Callander, the main house remains nearly unchanged with original features including curved wood paneling; cascading handrails; built-in cabinetry, desks and dressers; and Callander-designed furnishings. A separate 1,700-SF, two-story guest house designed by another Wright apprentice complements the design of the main house and overlooks a 20'x50' heated pool. Beautiful grounds and multiple indoor/outdoor entertaining areas.

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www.JodieBurns.com



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Lauren Bishop 202.361.5079
www.LaurenBishopHomes.com



Old Town Village | \$1,249,900

Conveniently located in the heart of Old Town, this 3-bedroom, 3.5-bath brick townhome is better than new! Gleaming hardwoods, chef's kitchen, updated baths, gas fireplace, custom built-ins, huge family room, expansive deck, new roof, and 2-car garage!

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Absolutely charming at every turn! This 3-bedroom, 2.5-bath home offers a wonderful sized living room, formal dining room, family room with fireplace, office/sitting room, and a bright kitchen. Spacious bedrooms including one on the main level. Large lot with patio.

Tracy Dunn 571.212.3658
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Mount Ida | \$799,900

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Margot Lynn 703.973.3722
www.MargotLynnRealtor.com



Old Town \$1,250,000

Rarely available garage townhome in Canal Way within walking distance to the Potomac waterfront. Beautiful quartz counters, Bosch dishwasher and new water heater. Very spacious with 3 bedrooms, 4 full baths, 3 wood-burning fireplaces on 4 levels all with hardwood flooring. Fenced rear yard.

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NEWS

Who Earned the F in Best Practices?

Distance Learning goes awry for FCPS.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE

Maintenance releases, patch management and software updates keep users' experience optimal. Staying ahead of security threats is vital. So what caused and who is responsible for events leading up to the reflex action by the superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools, the 10th largest school division in the nation located in one of the United States' wealthiest counties, to end the launch of the division's Distance Learning Plan, two days into the project because of load capacity and security issues?

That's what the twelve elected members serving on the Fairfax County Public Schools Board turned their attention toward Thursday, April 16, during their virtual Board Meeting. The first item on the Agenda read: "Distance Learning Update: Blackboard." The night before, Superintendent Scott Brabrand canceled teacher-led instruction through Blackboard scheduled for that day and Friday, April 17, due to continued login and security issues with Blackboard Learn FCPS 24-7 and Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. "Our teachers are ready and willing to do whatever is necessary to provide a robust learning experience for our students... We have identified our problems, and today we are proposing solutions," said Brabrand. Later, during the School Board Meeting, Marty Smith, Chief Operating Officer, said, "We were able to identify those students by IP address, and then work with those principals to then refer those students for any additional discipline as necessary."

FCPS twelve School Board members, Bra-



FCPS Superintendent Scott Brabrand

"Despite attempts to address identified technology issues over the weekend, this morning it became evident that Blackboard Learn 24x7 was not able to handle the system load of our virtual class meetings."

— Scott Brabrand

Latest on Distance Learning: School System Looking for 'Plan B'

Monday evening's message to Fairfax County Public Schools; parents:

"Despite attempts to address identified technology issues over the weekend, this morning it became evident that Blackboard Learn 24x7 was not able to handle the system load of our virtual class meetings. This evening, Dr. Brabrand emailed the community with his comprehensive plan on addressing the problems that have arisen with

the current distance learning format.

"To ensure students have access to continuity of learning, students will resume asynchronous assignments tomorrow (Tuesday). Students should log into Google Classroom in order to access choice boards for this week. Staff will be available to answer questions via email for students needing further guidance.

"We will provide you with an update soon regarding our next steps as we shift our dis-

tance learning plan. Please know that our teachers and staff have been working and adapting with every change to best teach our students in this new environment. As new plans are identified, the staff will continue to create assignments to engage students in meaningful learning activities.

"We know that this is frustrating, and we appreciate your patience as we adjust to the new plan."

brand and his Leadership Team composed of Frances Ivey, Deputy Superintendent; Marty Smith, Chief Operating Officer; Maribeth Luftglass, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Information Technology and Sloan Presidio, Assistant Superintendent and Instructional Services Department and Tim Tomlinson, Chief Product Officer for Blackboard, Inc., attended the meeting virtually.

As the 3-hour portion of the School Board Meeting wore on, individuals provided different levels of insight. Whereas Tim Tomlinson of Blackboard initially commented with a prepared statement saying: "I'm here this morning on behalf of our (Blackboard's) leadership team to apologize for the challenges experienced this week in moving Fairfax County students to fully remote in-

struction," later he added: "We had no indication, based on our years of experience running the software for thousands of customers that we would have this issue at the levels of load that was expected this week."

One hour into the meeting, Sloan Presidio said, "As a Leadership Team, we failed to properly train the staff. We failed to properly communicate the expectations, and we failed to properly monitor the implementation." Presidio comment referenced security concerns and misbehaviors exhibited by then anonymous individuals who logged into virtual live class sessions via Guest Log-In, not through the preferred, guide-lined and more secure pre-populated email address access.

Nearly two hours into the meeting, School Board member Megan McLaughlin

(Braddock) said, "I remain shocked that the 10th largest school system in the country did not know, working with its vendor, to do a load testing. There is no getting around it... I want to say that the IT failures, the lack of flow testing, the software updates that didn't occur, the fact that we're doing information to our schools to prepare for this as guidance, versus direct as mandates, do speak to a larger problem we have in the system."

A letter on the FCPS official twitter account to FCPS families dated April 17, read: "Distance learning will resume Monday morning. Blackboard continues to make the necessary upgrades to the FCPS 24-7 system to bring students back to a safer, more stable online environment." FCPS signed the letter.

Q&A: What Went Wrong and Why?

Q- School Board member Ricardy Anderson (Mason): What were the issues?

A- FCPS Leadership Team member Luftglass: The first time that we saw some slowness and some challenges had to do with logging in. We had a lot of simultaneous logins on Monday (the day before Distance Learning went live to students) and Tuesday... There were a couple of different issues (with Blackboard 24-7), one with the logging system... and then once people got logged in, it overloaded the application servers... With Blackboard Collaborate Ultra sessions, there are a couple of different ways that you can implement those sessions. You pre-populate those sessions with the specific student email addresses that you want to have in your session. That's in the guidance documents... developed in terms of creating

those sessions in a secure way so that you don't have Guest Access... Documents were created, but they were not properly shared and properly highlighted in terms of the importance, and that's our fault...Anybody could use those links (Guest Access) to get into the session...We failed.

Q-School Board member Karl Frisch (Providence): Was any request made to Blackboard to do testing to make sure, beyond simply telling them what our load would be?

A-Luftglass: No, we did not. We relied on our vendor to do that testing.

According to Tomlinson and confirmed by Luftglass, until recently, FCPS generally updated its software once a year, taking a one-week downtime after the academic school year ended and before summer school started.

Q- School Board member Sizemore Heizer (Member-at-Large): Why (wasn't) the software update... just done automatically?

A- Tomlinson: The Fairfax County Team makes decisions about when and how the software is updated... This system actually hasn't been updated in two years. We recommend that all of our clients stay on the most current versions of our software. The version of the software that Fairfax County is running is three years old. Fairfax County has made the choice not to update that software."

Q- School Board member & Vice Chair Tamara Derenak Kaufax (Lee): What are your best practices in place to make certain that your clients are getting the most up-to-date product from you?

A- Tomlinson: We release major updates twice a year. We release patch updates as

frequently as needed. The system that's currently running (FCPS') was released three years ago. It's had two levels of patch updates applied to it... There have been seven updates made publicly available to the software that have not been applied.

Every time Blackboard releases an update, it's communicated directly to the client by email and its availability published on the company's Support Portal. Today...over one hundred of our clients are actually now running on a stats version of our product that's hosted by Amazon Web Services in the cloud... That's the most modern version of our software that we've been recommending to all of our clients for a couple of years. (It) is updated automatically every month; no action required by the client... That's the best practice we deliver for software. It's a change that Fairfax County has not chosen to take advantage of over time.

50th Anniversary of Earth Day

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

On April 22nd, we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. We will all have to do so from the safety of our own homes as we continue to follow life-saving social distancing guidelines. I am really pleased to see that we are all taking this pandemic seriously and following the advice of our medical experts, many of whom are battling this virus on the front lines at great risk to their own health. But, rather than dwell too much today on the pandemic, I thought I would recognize what we can do to support Earth Day from our own homes, whether we live in an apartment, condo, or single-family home with or without a garden. While we are home we are realizing that perhaps some of the things we normally purchase are not as necessary as some of the items we could use right now. And, we are fast filling up our trash and recycling receptacles. A full recycle bin is great, especially if it means that you have been reusing items as well as recycling them rather than disposing of them as waste.

The best thing that we can do is to take personal responsibility for our own consumption and recognize the areas in our lives where we are the most wasteful and work to alter those habits that are hurting the Earth. Not only is this healthy for the planet, but it also helps to save a lot of money in the long run. With some small changes to your lifestyle, you can live a more eco-friendly life.

Consider that we throw away 16 billion disposable coffee cups and some 500 billion plastic cups every year! About one trillion single-use plastic bags are used annually across the globe. That's nearly 2 million every minute! According to the Environmental Protection Agency, in 2017, Americans generated 267.8 million tons of trash. Unfortunately, only about one-

third of that amount made it to recycling. There are many things that we can do to push that number higher. The most essential thing is to understand what can and can't be recycled, and how to prepare these materials.

Materials that can always be placed in recycling bins include bottles (not glass though anymore), jugs, and cartons, cans, cardboard, and paper. Before these materials are placed in bins, they should be empty and clean. There is no need, nor should you, bag any recyclables; it is easier to process these items if they are placed directly into the bins. Stuff that should never be placed in curbside recycling bins includes plastic bags, cell phones, diapers, food, foam, clothing, cables/lights, wrappers, shredded paper, and glass items.

Many of these materials that cannot be recycled curbside can be recycled in other ways. Though many grocery stores are not taking plastic bags right now, there are still grocery stores with plastic bag receptacles. Cell phones and other electronics can often be donated at electronics retailers like Best Buy, and clothing can be delivered to secondhand shops or other retailers who participate in garment recycling programs. For a variety of reasons, glass placed in curbside recycling bins is processed as waste; however, until the pandemic, clean glass bottles and jars delivered to purple containers at recycling drop-off centers located around the county were being reused for roads and other county projects. Let's hope that once we do return to normalcy so do these glass recycling efforts. In the meanwhile, please save your glass bottles for that eventuality if you have space.

After celebrating 50 years of Earth Days, one would think that we would all incorporate environ-



mentally friendly actions into our daily lives such as investing in reusable and compostable items. Unfortunately, our society is largely a "throwaway culture" that is based on convenience more so than on sustainability. A lot of the disposable plastic

that we throw out makes its way to the ocean, which harms marine life and creates hardship for not just those who rely on the ocean for their food and livelihoods, but for all of us who are ingesting food from the seas and lakes, much of which includes nanoparticles of plastic. Replacing plastic water bottles with reusable bottles and thermos for coffee or tea, disposable utensils for reusable ones, metal or paper straws, paper or cloth towels for dish towels (in my household we cut up old clothes for dish towels and napkins), and replace those plastic grocery bags with reusable canvas bags, to name a few, go a long way to reducing waste and the amount of nonbiodegradable material in our landfills and oceans. Furthermore, composting your grass clippings, leaves, twigs, and food waste like coffee and tea grinds, egg and nut shells, vegetable and fruit skins and seeds, lighten your trash load and make a great natural soil that you can eventually use for your garden. Be sure not to include meats and oily or greasy items.

And, though this spring we were unable to go out together and participate in community creek clean-ups, we can all look forward to doing so next year with renewed vigor and energy knowing that there will be two years worth of accumulated trash to pick up.

This General Assembly session we passed a number of vital bills that secure Virginia's commitment to providing a healthy environment and create many clean energy jobs.

We finally succeeded in lifting the restrictions that prevented Virginia from joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a multi-state cap-and-trade program on carbon emissions. This initiative is a huge step towards reducing Virginia's carbon footprint. We passed the monumental Virginia Clean Economy Act, making Virginia the first Southern state with a 100 percent clean energy standard, and will advance wind and solar energy alternatives to help us break our reliance on fossil fuels. As I mentioned last week, my bill HB 502 was passed to increase the penalty on delinquent litter taxes. This bill will work in coordination with Delegate Lopez's HB 1154, which doubles the annual litter tax - funds that go towards litter mitigation efforts. My effort to phase-in a ban single-use polystyrene (styrofoam) products was unfortunately not successful, as my HB 1046 was incorporated into Delegate Carr's similar HB 533, which, though signed by the Governor, still requires that it be voted upon and passed again next year. We also took successful steps to reduce single-use plastics with Senator Ebbin's SB 11 which authorizes localities to adopt a nickel tax on single-use plastic bags. The locality must use the tax revenue for environmental cleanup, pollution and litter mitigation, educational programs designed to reduce waste and to provide reusable bags for SNAP and WIC recipients. A bill that greatly serves our local area along Route 1, Senator Surovell's SB 631 passed to create a penalty for abandoned shopping carts that end up polluting our waterways.

50 years of Earth Days, and though we have done much for our environment, there is still much more that we need to do. Working together, we will leave this earth a cleaner and more eco-friendly place for our wildlife and for the generations to come.

needs to provide added flexibility for state and local governments for the package already passed.

As part of the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security) Act, Congress established a \$150 billion fund to assist state and local governments combat the pandemic. Each state will receive at least \$1.25 billion plus an additional amount based on population. Virginia's total is \$3.3 billion,

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 9

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Make It Easier to Stay Home

While we are staying at home, local government should also focus on providing essential services to make it easier to stay home. This just requires a little creativity. If we can order online and pick up at stores, surely we can do the same at our local libraries for books. Our librarians can figure out a way to do this safely. Instead of restricting

parking to reduce crowding on our overused trails, create more public space by shutting down empty roads. Half the GW parkway could be closed (or even the entire road). People are working in the yards so pick up yard waste, rather than canceling service. People have time to clean out their homes so encourage it by adding extra garbage pickups. People are out walking all the time so encourage them to pick up litter. Government can

channel our stay at home time into useful but safe activities.

Kay Bushman
Mount Vernon

More Flexibility for State, Local Governments

As Congress considers additional coronavirus relief programs, it

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A Connection Newspaper



This Week in Coronavirus in Fairfax County

Covid-19 Cases Locally

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Tuesday, April 21

Fairfax County Cases: 2,077
Virginia Cases: 9,630

Looking for a New Pet? Adopt Virtually

For those looking to add a new friend to the family, the county Animal Shelter has made the adoption process nearly contact free. New pets available for adoption will be added to the shelter's available pet page daily between 10-10:30 a.m. each day. Those interested will then fill out a survey and wait for staff to contact them via phone or email to talk through the adoption process. Once finalized, the shelter schedules a contactless pick up of your newest family addition. Details on virtual adoptions are available <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/animalshelter/adopt/steps>

See Something New Without Leaving the House

The Park Authority has created a new Virtual Exploration Center with resources to help residents stay healthy, connected and engaged while parks are closed. With links to on-demand fitness classes, a virtual history tool and nature bingo, the site provides a plethora of options to suit the needs of any family looking for ways to stay active and involved. The page will be updated regularly with new highlights. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/virtual>

Parenting Support by Phone or Watch a Video

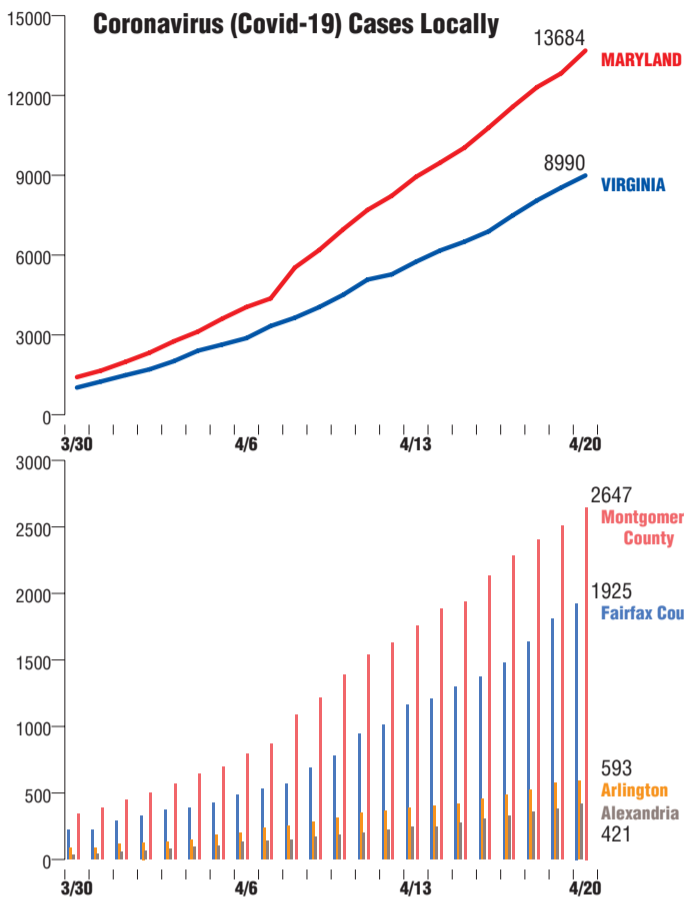
The Department of Family Services (DFS) has a variety of free supports available for families including parenting videos, articles and online classes. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/family-services/children-youth/assistance-from-a-distance> There is also a new Parent Support call line that has been established to help parents and caregivers of children with parenting advice, support and tips (703-324-7720, TTY 711, or email buildingstrongerfamilies@fairfaxcounty.gov). Learn more about Parenting Assistance from a Distance from DFS.

Stay Informed

❖ Health Department Call Center at 703-267-3511 with Coronavirus questions; open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays and 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends.

❖ Text FFXCOVID to 888777 to www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Local Coronavirus Cases



Sources:
Virginia Department of Health <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>
Maryland: Maryland Department of Health <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>
Alexandria Source: City of Alexandria

GRAPHICS BY LAURENCE FOONG / COMPILED BY KEN MOORE

receive updates from Fairfax County about COVID-19.

❖ Email questions or concerns to ffxcovid@fairfaxcounty.gov. This email account will be staffed Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. through 6 p.m.

Monday, April 20

Fairfax County Cases: 1,925
Virginia Cases: 8,990

Sunday, April 19

Fairfax County Cases: 1,809
Virginia Cases: 8,537

Ten Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department personnel have tested positive for COVID-19; eight are currently positive, two have fully recovered and one is currently in quarantine.

All personnel are closely monitored by a nurse at Fairfax County's Occupational Health Center. Fairfax County Fire and Rescue will notify the public if there is any concern of exposure.

Saturday, April 18

Fairfax County Cases: 1,633
Virginia Cases: 8,053

WHERE ARE THE TESTS? Sens. Mark Warner and Tim Kaine joined 44 other Senators in calling on the Coronavirus Task Force and the

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to conduct a national inventory of the coronavirus (COVID-19) diagnostic testing supply, publicly release data on testing results, and provide a detailed plan and timeline for addressing future shortages and gaps in the testing supply chain.

EQUITABLE DATA: Following reports across the United States of stark racial disparities in COVID-19 cases and fatalities, Sens. Warner and Kaine joined Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) to introduce the Equitable Data Collection and Disclosure on COVID-19 Act. The bill would require the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to collect and report racial and other demographic data on COVID-19 testing, treatment, and fatality rates, and provide a summary of the final statistics and a report to Congress within 60 days after the end of the public health emergency.

While Virginia has received \$3.3 billion to support its COVID-19 response, Sens. Warner and Kaine are pushing for the next emergency coronavirus relief package to provide assurances that funding

SEE CORONAVIRUS, PAGE 7



Rex Reiley
RE/MAX Allegiance
703-768-7730
rex.reiley@rmxtalk.com



Alex/Riverside Estates \$619,000
3026 Battersea Lane

Riverside Estates, the Biggest Bang for your Buck!! This large Virginia model offers 5BRs, 3 updated baths, a gorgeous upgraded kitchen w/granite counters, cherry cabinets & 12" ceramic tile flooring. Beautiful hardwood floors on the main level plus upgraded, energy efficient DBL pane windows throughout. The electric panel had major upgrades in 2008, & the deck was rebuilt in 2016, it looks out at the beautifully landscaped backyard complete w/a new privacy fence & underground sprinkler system. Don't miss the 2 car garage as well - Check out the competition, then come talk with us. We're always ready to reach out with a helping hand.



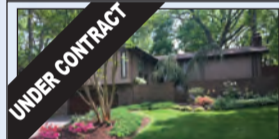
Alex/Riverside Estates \$579,900
8501 Wagon Wheel Road

Beautifully updated 4BR, 3BA Split w/carport - 2500+ square ft. on a large landscaped .3 acre lot w/fenced-in back yard. Freshly painted interior, newly refinished hardwood floors throughout the main level. Large family room w/wood burning FPL & 4th BR on lower level w/a refinished bath, & two large utility rooms. Perfect for workshop/storage. You can't find a better value or neighborhood for this price! 5 minutes to Fort Belvoir, (S) 15 minutes to Old Town Alex. (N) along the beautiful GW Parkway.



Fairfax City/Lyndhurst \$169,900
3790 Lyndhurst Drive, #202

Attractively priced one bedroom condo with balcony in popular Lyndhurst community. Great opportunity to put sweat equity into this home: good bones, needs paint, carpet replacement and new HVAC so being sold "As Is." Laundry and storage unit in building. Balcony overlooks green space, providing privacy. Community pool and picnic area. Condo fee includes gas, water, sewer. Great location, close to George Mason University, downtown Fairfax, restaurants, shopping, and much more!



Alex/ Woodleigh Woods \$698,500
3709 Maryland Street

Welcome to this stunning 4BR, 3BA, 2 car garage, contemporary-complete w/a gorgeous court yard out front & a large deck & hot tub which overlooks a beautifully landscaped back yard. Numerous updates to include: kitchen w/granite counters & SS appliances, recently replaced DBL pane, energy efficient windows, freshly painted interior, & all 3 baths. The kitchen, dining & living rooms all face out back & have a wall of picture windows looking out at the deck, hot tub & fenced back yard. The lower level offers a 4th BR, 3rd full bath & family room that opens out to the court yard. As you walk thru this home you marvel at the open contemporary design that makes you feel like you are one w/your environment. Walkable 1/4 mile to Mt. Vernon bike/walking trail along the Potomac. Five minutes to Ft. Belvoir (S), 15 minutes to Old Town (N), 25 minutes to National Airport (N), all along the scenic GW Pkwy, each season gives you beautiful views.



Manassas/Classic Springs \$651,000
12835 Classic Springs Drive

Is this huge 2 level Rambler all for me? 4BRs, 3.5BAs, 2 car garage, front & side porches & covered porch in the rear. Almost 4500 SF under roof, including about 3100 finished. Main level has Brazilian hwdws plus carpeting in the BRs. 10' ceilings w/crown molding, 6 panel doors, DBL pane windows & extra wide hallways & doors. Stunning kitchen w/dark cherry cabinets, SS appliances & dark granite counters. The bedrooms are spacious-the master bedrm has a huge walk-in closet & a magnificent master bath. The lower level has a 4th BR & 3rd full BA, large family rm & approximately 1400 SF for storage/workshops & walks out to an incredible bkyd backing to woods. You have to see this home to believe it. It's stunning!!!



Alex/Mt. Zephyr \$491,000
8541 Mt. Zephyr Dr.

Great price for this lovely two level solid all-brick home with garage on 1/3 acre in Mt. Vernon community. 3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths. Renovated eat-in kitchen, spacious and open, with sliding glass doors to private backyard. Charming front living room with ample windows, and wood burning fireplace with white, colonial style mantel. Spacious lower level has finished family room w/ 2nd fireplace and a bonus workroom. Conveniently located near Ft. Belvoir (10 mins), GW Parkway and Potomac River, Old Town Alexandria, Pentagon, and D.C



Alex/Mt.Zephyr \$515,000
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This Week in Coronavirus in Fairfax County

FROM PAGE 5

can be used to prevent potentially devastating budget cuts and that localities of all sizes will receive dedicated funding.

Friday, April 17

Fairfax County Cases: 1,476
Virginia Cases: 7,491

Numerous shopping scams, mortgage relief scams and personal loan scams have targeted seniors and others needing assistance during the coronavirus crisis. If you believe you have been the victim of a scam, call the Fairfax County Police Non-Emergency Line at 703-691-2131, TTY 711. Also contact the AARP Fraud Watch Network at 1-877-908-3360 or www.aarp.org/scams.

U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner (D-VA) and 37 other Senators urged Senate and House leaders to ensure that those who have lost their employer-based benefits – and those who are uninsured or underinsured – have access to health insurance.

The Senators urged Congress to strengthen Medicaid, re-open the Affordable Care Act so uninsured individuals can immediately en-

roll, and provide premium reimbursement to newly unemployed Americans in accordance with the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA).

Gov. Ralph Northam's Executive Order Fifty-Seven increases the use of nurse practitioners, out-of-state doctors, medical students and telehealth in the state's COVID-19 response. Up to 30,000 additional workers could be needed in Virginia hospitals, long-term care facilities, and public health departments, should a surge occur.

U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner (D-Va) was appointed to a White House task force focused on eventual efforts to reopen the economy in the aftermath of the coronavirus outbreak. Warner was one of 13 Senate Democrats invited to participate, along with all Republican Senators except for Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT).

Northam reported that Virginia's collaborative efforts to release low-level offenders from local and regional jails in response to the COVID-19 pandemic are working to safely reduce the number of in-

carcerated people.

Northam recommended the following on March 19: Allow sentence modifications to reduce populations in jails; divert offenders from being admitted into jails prior to trial, including the use of summonses by law enforcement in lieu of arrest, and use of local pretrial programs; consider ways to decrease the number of low-risk offenders being held without bail in jails; use alternative solutions to incarceration such as home electronic monitoring.

Since late February, the number of new commitments to local and regional jails has decreased from approximately 10,000 during a two-week period to just over 4,000. On April 7, the jail population in the Commonwealth was 24,000, which is a 17 percent decrease from March 1. Virginia has also seen a 67 percent decline in the number of new commitments for misdemeanors.

Northam also proposed a budget amendment allowing the Director of the Department of Corrections to release individuals with less than a year left to serve in their sentences for the duration of the

SEE CORONAVIRUS, PAGE 8

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VIRGINIA INFORMATION: www.virginia.gov/coronavirus-updates/

Another **Mount Vernon Gazette** Community Partnership

NEWS

This Week in Coronavirus in Fairfax County

FROM PAGE 7
state of emergency.

Thursday, April 16

Fairfax County Cases: 1,375
Virginia Cases: 6,889

An additional \$70 million in Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding through the federal CARES Act will help provide child care for essential personnel.

Across Virginia, approximately 2,672 child care centers—nearly 45 percent—have closed, including nearly 40 percent of centers that serve children through the Child Care Subsidy Program. Childcare Aware of Virginia has an interactive childcare map illustrating child care programs across the state that are still operating.

A comprehensive guide to COVID-19 child care resources in Virginia, including information about how apply for the CCDBG grants, is available at www.dss.virginia.gov/cc/covid-19.html

Parents who serve in essential industries and are in need of child care services should visit Child Care Aware at VACHildcare.org or call 1-866-KIDS-TLC for an up-to-date list of child care options in their area.

U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner (D-Va) urged the Federal Communications Commission to take immediate action to ensure that individuals all across the country have access to

broadband, as more Americans are forced to rely on the internet for telework, telehealth, and online learning amid the novel coronavirus outbreak. According to the FCC's latest figures, more than 20 million Americans continue to lack access to meaningful broadband service, with at least 770,000 Virginians currently unserved.

Wednesday, April 15

Fairfax County Cases: 1,298
Virginia Cases: 6,500

Fairfax County has a Myth and Rumor Control page on its COVID-19 website to address and debunk some of the erroneous reports and ideas being shared online. See <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/rumor-control> If you can't find the answer to a question, message ffxcovid@fairfaxcounty.gov or on social media @fairfaxcounty or @fairfaxhealth. You can call 703-267-3511 (9 a.m. to 7 p.m. weekdays and 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends).

Tuesday, April 14

Fairfax County Cases: 1,207
Virginia Cases: 6,171

Board of Supervisors unveiled a \$2.5 million fund to support small business recovery through microloans and counseling. The Fairfax County Small Business COVID-19

SEE CORONAVIRUS, PAGE 10

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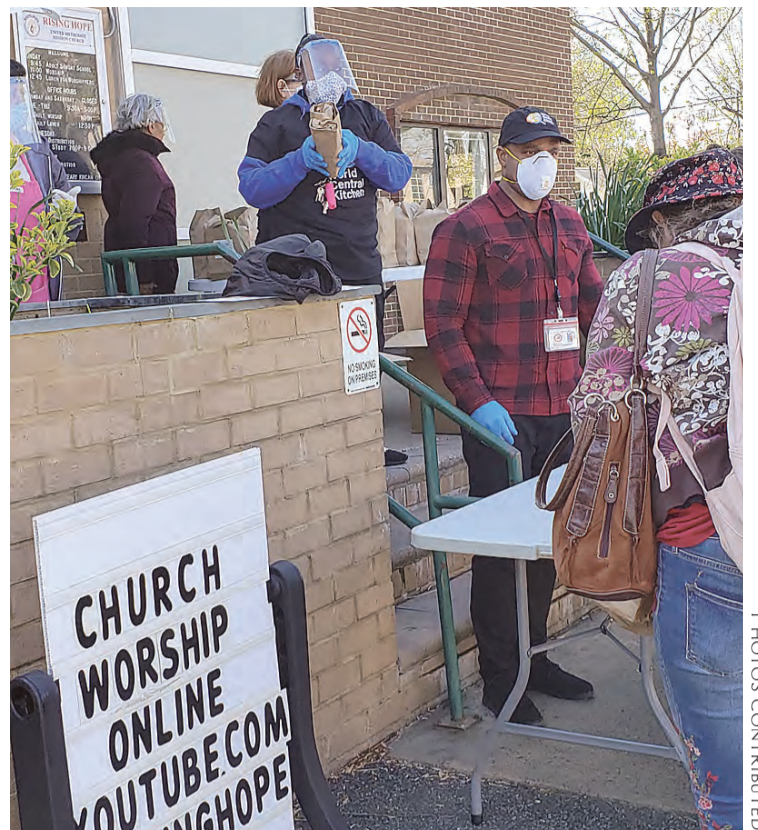
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There were 300 meals distributed in the first half hour.



The World Central Kitchen stepped up recently to use Chef Andres culinary skills to provide a feast that was enjoyed by hundreds.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Chef Andres' World Central Kitchen Feeding Hundreds in Mount Vernon

FROM PAGE 1

aged, fresh meals in communities that need support – for children and families to pick up and take home, as well as delivery to seniors who cannot venture outside. WCK is now active in dozens of cities, including Mount Vernon, providing more than 160,000 fresh meals every day.

“Making sure we bring relief one community at a time,” said Andrés, on his web-based video.

Rising Hope has long served some of the corridor’s poorest residents by operating a soup kitchen six days a week and a food pantry on Wednesdays and Thursdays, as well as hosting a 25-bed hypothermia shelter from October to March. The church serves about 300 families a week from the food pantry. It’s just one of several locations needing assistance now. “We’re seeing many parts of Fairfax

County have been hit hard,” said Carroll.

On the main page of their website, Rising Hope United Methodist Church describes the dire conditions during the pandemic for the needy. “Financial and food donations have dropped and additional expenses to improve safety for our constituents and volunteers have been added. We are having to find new sources of food for our soup kitchen and pantry at a much greater cost. Before long, we may not be able to feed the most vulnerable among us.”

Even with these conditions, the efforts of Chef Andrés and the World Central Kitchen were so successful, they’ve expanded by adding another day, so the feast will be Wednesdays and Thursdays for the next few weeks. Beyond that, it’s anyone’s guess.

“Things will improve,” said Kin-



cannon, but added that “things will be different from here on out. It’s pretty frightening.”

For the upcoming summer months, Rising Hope traditionally relied on the Letter Carrier’s Food Drive to fill their pantries, but that drive has been postponed this year already. They usually get 10-12 tons of food each year from that drive. “I don’t know what we’re going to do,” he said, looking ahead.

In addition, the food banks and grocery stores they usually rely on have cut back too.

To make contributions, call the church at 703-360-1976.

Ramona Carroll, Community Interfaith Coordinator for Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, made the connection that brought the World Central Kitchen to Rising Hope.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 4

\$1.5 billion of which is for local governments.

Unfortunately, the fund provides little actual relief for state budgets but instead all but compels them to devise new spending that can be attributed to COVID-19, by limiting spending to emergency expenses or newly-adopted programs.

Federal guidance has confirmed that the legislation prohibits states from using the aid to pay for expenses already budgeted prior to the emergency, doing nothing to replace the losses in tax and fee revenue that have disappeared and cannot be recovered.

Equally the case is the effect on local government: Without additional flexibility and support, municipalities face pressure to im-

pose large increases in property taxes and business taxes at precisely the time those businesses will be struggling to rebuild and rehire their employees.

Congress should address this unintended outcome quickly by providing states and local governments the flexibility to use money from the Coronavirus Relief Fund to 1) offset lost tax and fee revenue that would otherwise have paid for ordinary operating expenses after March 1, or 2) provide one-time tax relief to individuals and businesses to revive the local economy.

Christian N. Braunlich
Alexandria
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Institute for Public Policy

BULLETIN BOARD

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

GOVERNOR EXTENDS BUSINESS RESTRICTIONS

Gov. Ralph Northam has announced the extension of Executive Order 53, which bans crowds or more than 10 people; closes recreation, entertainment and personal care businesses; and limits restaurants to offering takeout and delivery services only, until May 8. The order was extended to allow physical distancing, and other measures shown to be slowing the spread of COVID-19, to continue. Extending the order also allows state officials to evaluate the situation and plan for how to ease restrictions so businesses may eventually operate without endangering public health. Executive Order 55 (requiring Virginians to stay at home unless they must leave for essential services) remains in effect until June 10.

MARRIAGE LICENSES GO VIRTUAL

Beginning April 15, a new “Virtual Marriage License” appointment program will be the exclusive way to get a marriage license from the Fairfax Circuit Court Clerk’s Office during the COVID-19 pandemic. Using the Clerk of Circuit Court’s existing “preApp” technology, a couple can prepare their marriage license application in their home and schedule a time to appear by Webex to take their oath before a deputy clerk of court. An e-signature tool has been added. Applicants must have a computer, smartphone or tablet with a microphone and camera, along with internet access. Plus they need an email address/account for both the preApp and the Webex appointment. Contact Gerarda Culipher, Chief Deputy Clerk, at 703-246-4111.

This Week in Coronavirus

FROM PAGE 8

Recovery Fund will provide eligible businesses up to \$20,000 at 0% interest that can be used for critical operating expenses to offset some of the impacts of the shutdown.

"Small businesses make up 94% of our base and account for almost one third of jobs in our community," said Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay.

Applications will be accepted starting April 28.

Contact the Department of Economic Initiatives at Economicinitiatives@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The Virginia Department of Health's COVID-19 dashboard <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/> now shows the total number of cases, fatalities and hospitalizations by state health district.

The dashboard also includes two "outbreaks," which represent any single facility with two or more confirmed cases. Data on the dashboard lag slightly behind the case and fatality counts.

Every household in Fairfax County, the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church, and the towns of Herndon and Vienna, should receive a COVID-19 toolkit in the mail. The health alert includes actions that must be taken by each resident in order to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the community: including instructions on what to do if you are sick, actions to take if you are a close contact of someone who is sick, and details on how to identify and talk to close contacts who are at risk for illness if you get sick.

COVID Cases continue to affect residents and staff in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities in the Fairfax Health District. With the risk of infections spreading in congregate settings and the vulnerability of aging residents, preventing and responding to COVID-19 in long-term care is a priority for the Health Department.

"This is an unprecedented public health crisis and we have mobilized staff from across the Health Department to support facilities county-wide, both those that have cases, and as importantly, improving infection prevention in those that have not had cases," said Fairfax Health Director Dr. Gloria Addo-Ayensu.

The county's health department is giving guidance to facilities including restricting visitors, monitoring residents and staff for illness, providing education about preventive behaviors such as social distancing and handwashing, canceling group activities, providing therapy in resident rooms and enhancing environmental disinfection.

Staff are advised to wear facemasks and strongly recommended to not work at more than one facility.

Public health nurses visit facilities to observe their infection prevention and work with leadership to identify materials or training needs.

Data Sources:
<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>

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Wholesale Change

By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Since I'm not doing the food and pharmacy out-of-the-house shopping anymore, as I have for the last 40 years (as I may have mentioned in last week's column: "Money For What?") I am no longer in control of what we buy and how much we spend. The pandemic and my upcoming thyroid cancer treatment have combined to empower my wife, Dina, to set fairly strict guidelines. Primarily that I am to stay put in the house ALL THE TIME and that during my isolation, she will fill the purchasing vacuum. The effect being that all my years of experience reducing our grocery expenses has led to this: we're paying re, re, retail for nearly all of our purchases. Not impoverished because of it but not very happy about it either.

I derived a certain pleasure in wandering around the stores, advertising circular and coupon book in hand, looking for sale items, checking the 50% off/discontinued merchandise rack, occasionally looking at the day-old bakery cabinet, using miscellaneous paper and digital coupons, buying in bulk/quantity, getting rain checks when products were sold out, as well as being open to any other in-store incentives I might find. The process, as tedious as it may sound, was not nearly so for me, especially considering that over the course of a year, according to the stores' own online tally, I saved the Lourie family business upwards of \$1,000. Now it seems as if we're paying it all back since product availability — due to pandemic pressures, has often laid waste to the stores' shelves. And also laid waste to stores' interest in offering products on sale. And why should they? Consumers are buying anything they can get their hands on, price be damned.

Moreover, the stores themselves, at least the ones where I have been a regular buyer, are providing fewer digital coupons on their sites than ever before and the advertising circulars, typically 10 to 14 pages, have now been reduced by one half or so. In addition, there are also fewer coupon inserts in the Sunday newspaper editions. The net effect of this is that the supermarket/pharmacy budget has been blown to smithereens. And the outlook for the future (immediate future anyway) is more of the same, or rather less, if you catch my drift.

Now further combine the fact that yours truly, a strategic shopper of some repute is not doing the in-store shopping anymore, and perhaps you can do the metaphorical math. Can you say through the roof? Let me be clear; this situation has nothing to do with control. It has to do with cash flow. I feel as if we're being taken advantage of, like we're sitting ducks almost, and there's not a thing I can do about any of it other than to take solace in the fact that our stimulus checks will most definitely have somewhere to go, even if I don't.

Still, I realize there are many others who are not complaining about what they're paying for groceries because they're too busy trying to make withdrawals from their local food bank. I would imagine their challenge is identical to mine, only much worse: hoping to find necessary items in limited supply without the proper money and means to do so. Means, unfortunately which are not leading to satisfactory ends. Ends which will either bust their budgets, overwhelm public-type assistance or swell credit card balances; thereby increasing future minimum payments and exacerbating pressures to even make monthly payments. A vicious circle and cycle if there ever was one, or two.

But I don't have one or two so I am very lucky. Now I do have two types of cancer but that wasn't the point of this column. The point was more narrow than that. It was simply to make a little fun at a predicament not of my own choosing but one that is impacting my life and totally out of my control. I wouldn't say that it's food for thought but it is something to chew on.

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

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