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(From left) are Fairfax City Fire Chief John O'Neal and Fairfax City Fire Capts. Brian Orndoff and Shawn Dunstan. Fairfax City Fire Department is internationally accredited.

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Tuesday, March 3

1000-1100 Hours

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Elk Grove Village, Illinois

City of Fairfax Fire Department

Fairfax, Virginia

Mountain View Fire Rescue District

Longmont, Colorado

1115-1215 Hours

Orlando Fire Department

Orlando, Florida

Bellevue Fire Department

Bellevue, Washington

Burbank Fire Department

Burbank, California

1330-1430 Hours

Hartford Fire Department

Hartford, Connecticut

Tamarac Fire Rescue

Tamarac, Florida

City of Prescott Fire & Medical Department

Prescott, Arizona

1445-1600 Hours

Danville Fire Department

Danville, Virginia

Sioux City Fire Rescue

Sioux City, Iowa

Edmonton Fire Rescue Services

Edmonton, Alberta

City of Asheville Fire Department

Asheville, North Carolina

‘An Elite Echelon Of First Responders’

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PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN O'NEAL

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# CALENDAR

## Springtime's Beauty Comes to Area

Whether it's via springtime flowers and cherry trees in bloom, children's chalk art on a sidewalk or colorful decorations in a yard, the local area is bursting with the beauty of the season.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/  
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# NEWS

## ‘Our Firefighters: An Elite Echelon of First Responders’

### Fairfax City Fire Department is internationally accredited.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

When John O’Neal became Fairfax City’s fire chief, in January 2016, one of his goals was for the fire department to receive international accreditation. Fast forward four years, and that hope has now become a reality.

On March 3, in Orlando, Fla., the City of Fairfax Fire Department received Accredited Agency status with the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE). This prestigious recognition was given for meeting the criteria of the Commission on Fire Accreditation International’s (CFAI) voluntary, self-assessment and accreditation program.

“This culminates over three years of work by our command staff, program managers and personnel to document and assess our risks in the community and our response performance,” said O’Neal. “We also developed a comprehensive, five-year, strategic plan and demonstrated compliance in 10 major categories with 252 performance indicators.”

**PLEASED** with his department’s achievement – and everyone’s efforts that made it possible, he said, “We are very proud of the work that our members completed working towards this continuous-improvement model, as well as the great service we provide to the community daily.”

O’Neal first learned about the accreditation program in 2001, when he became deputy chief of the Jacksonville, N.C. Fire Department. It was a busy, active department, and it was where O’Neal became aware of CFAI – the national accrediting agency for the U.S., Canada and Department of Defense fire services.

“The fire chief wanted that department to gain accreditation, so I moved that project forward and we achieved it,” he said. O’Neal then became involved with that agency as a peer assessor and peer team leader and, later, an agency mentor. In that position, he’s traveled across the United States, evaluating fire departments according to Commission standards.

In 2011, he became chief of the fire department in Addison, Texas, in Dallas County. Two years later, thanks to O’Neal’s efforts, his fire department became just the fifth in Texas to earn international accreditation. So it was only natural that, once he came to Fairfax City, he wanted the fire department here to reach the same pinnacle.

Currently, 270 fire departments in the U.S., Canada and U.S. Department of Defense installations across



(From left) are Chief Ralph Ensign, CFAI peer team leader (Ret. chief, Glenview, Ill.); Capt Brian Orndoff, Fairfax City Fire Dept. EMS officer; Fairfax Mayor David Meyer; Chief Steve Dongworth, CFAI chair, (Calgary, Canada); City Fire Chief John O’Neal; Capt Shawn Dunstan, Fairfax City Fire Dept. accreditation manager; and City Manager Rob Stalzer.

the world are accredited. This figure represents just 11 percent of the American population and 17 percent of the Canadian population being protected by an accredited fire department. And, added O’Neal, “Fairfax City is also joining 87 fire departments across the U.S. that hold both the ISO [Insurance Services Office] Class 1 Rating and Accredited Agency status.” Fairfax Mayor David Meyer is also pleased with this accomplishment.

“I commend the women and men of our Fire Department for this significant achievement,” he said. “After many months of self-study, visits by outside review panels, and business-process and operational improvements, our Fire Department achieved this coveted award.”

“This puts our firefighters and rescue crews in an elite echelon of first responders,”

continued Meyer. “Our citizens have always received superior services from our Fire Department. This accreditation affirms this and ensures that we will continue to have the superior services that have become a signature part of our City.”

**HE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED** the hard work, dedication and tireless efforts of O’Neal, Fairfax Fire Captains Shawn Dunstan and Brian Orndoff, and the leadership of Local 2702 of the International Association of Firefighters. “They worked as a team to create a superior application for the Commission on Fire Accreditation International,” said Meyer.

“The organization was impressed with the Department’s acquisition of the new firefighting apparatus, enhanced safety operations for our personnel and a new Fire Station 33 under construction,” he added. “With this professional recognition, we affirm that we will continue ‘best-in-class’ services to protect the safety of our citizens and the residential and business properties in our City.”

**“Our citizens have always received superior services from our Fire Department.”**

— Fairfax Mayor David Meyer

### WEEK IN FAIRFAX

## Grab-and-Go Food at Providence Elementary

FCPS has now set up a grab-and-go, food-distribution site outside Providence Elementary. Breakfast will be served from 8-10:30 a.m., and lunch from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. All FCPS students and other Fairfax County children 18 years and under receive one meal at no cost and may have additional free meals upon request. Adults may purchase breakfast and lunch for \$2. For more information, visit: <https://www.fcps.edu/news-features-and-events/news/coronavirus-update/coronavirus-update-food-resources-those-need-and>.

In addition, Bus Route 4, serving the Daniels Run Elementary, Providence Elementary, Lanier Middle School and Fairfax High areas, will deliver meals at these intersections:

Arrival Time	Depart Time	Stop Location
7:45 a.m.	7:55 a.m.	Autumn Woods Way & Tall Shadows Lane

**School Serving:** Fairfax HS, Lanier MS, Green Briar East ES

8:15 a.m.	8:25 a.m.	Layton Hall Drive & Layton Hall Apts.
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**School Serving:** Fairfax HS, Lanier MS, Daniels Run ES

8:35 a.m.	8:45 a.m.	Old Pickett Road & Foxcroft Apts.
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**School Serving:** Fairfax HS, Lanier MS, Daniels Run ES

8:55 a.m.	9:05 a.m.	3339 Willow Crescent Way
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**School Serving:** Fairfax HS, Lanier MS, Providence ES

9:15 a.m.	9:25 a.m.	Chain Bridge Rd. & Vineyard Lane (2nd sidewalk)
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**School Serving:** Fairfax HS, Lanier MS, Providence ES

## Limited Access to City Hall

Because of the coronavirus, Fairfax City Hall access and staff availability will be limited, Monday-Friday, from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. daily, with no more than two visitors per each departmental counter for 30-minute intervals. All visitors are required to have pre-arranged, meeting appointments with the departments they’re visiting. Special exemptions are for the Commissioner of Revenue’s Office, Treasurer’s Office, General District Court and Elections Office.

## Building and Program Closures

The following facilities are closed, and all their events and programs cancelled, until further notice: Green Acres Center, including the Young at Heart Senior Center, Sherwood Community Center, Old Town Hall, Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, Historic Blenheim and its Civil War Interpretive Center, City of Fairfax park field permits and picnic-pavilion rentals, plus City programs, events and private rentals.

The following are closed at all City of Fairfax parks and facilities: playground equipment, dog park, pickleball court, tennis court, basketball courts, skate park and athletic fields for group play. All trails will remain open at this time.

Access to the police headquarters lobby is also restricted. Use the phone at the headquarters door for walk-ins and emergencies. Records requests may be made online via [PDRecords@fairfaxva.gov](mailto:PDRecords@fairfaxva.gov). The Police Department operates 24 hours/day, with officers still here to help and serve the public.

## Don’t Flush these Items

Hygiene and disinfection are extremely important, but Fairfax City Wastewater Services requests residents to not flush certain items down the toilet. Disinfectant and baby wipes, paper towels, face tissue, cotton balls, and Q-tips do not break down after they’re flushed. They can cause sewer backups in your plumbing systems, requiring costly repairs, as well as clogging public sewer lines that serve everyone in the community. Instead, please dispose of these products with your household trash.

## Police Warn: Beware of these Scams

Scams come in many forms, so Fairfax City police are urging

SEE WEEK, PAGE 5



# OPINION

# Keep Calm and Social Distance!

## Ways you can help in COVID-19 time.

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK  
(D-MT VERNON)

“Leave nothing for tomorrow which can be done today,” said Abraham Lincoln. Well, today, our community needs your help.

It is a strange and ever evolving new reality we find ourselves in as a result of the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). Three weeks ago, we never imagined we would find ourselves with schools, parks, libraries and businesses closed; being asked to stay home; empty groceries store shelves or financial instability. However, we are all in this together and we will work to get through this together. Adversity drives us to find new ways to do things and that is just what



the County is doing. As our Board Chairman Jeff McKay said last week, “I don’t believe there’s any better place in this country or this world to make it through trying times than in Fairfax County.” We have the resources and we are prepared. For updates on all the County is doing and resources available, visit: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/> and sign up for text alerts by texting FFXCOVID to 888777.

There is also much you can do in this time of great uncertainty and need. Look out for your neighbors, offer to pick up groceries for the elderly or facetime those you might normally visit. In our broader community, many are facing financial or food insecurity. As our human services and non-profit providers are seeing increased demand, they are also receiving less donations. Blood banks are running low and many organizations still need volunteers – with safety and social distancing precautions. We have put together a comprehensive list of those offering services in our

community, both for those in need and those looking to help on our website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/>. We will continue to update this information as we receive updates.

Businesses are also facing hardship and uncertainty, especially our small, local businesses. Please consider continuing to support those you can through ordering take out and delivery, purchasing gift cards or making donations to their employees.

We have a very strong, engaged and caring community. It has been amazing to see so many great examples of charity and assistance. It is also encouraging to see so many wonderful new healthy habits – families jogging and riding bikes daily, spending family time playing board games and using social media to connect with each other. These new habits, enhanced interactions and pathways will make each of us and our community stronger when this crisis is over.

Our destiny is in our own hands.

P.S. Don’t forget to complete the 2020 U.S. Census: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/census/>!

## VIEWPOINTS

## Life in a Time of Health Emergency

The Connection asked two questions of people met in area parks this week: “How is the health emergency impacting you?” and “What positive have you noticed during these changed times?”

—SUSAN LAUME



**Walter Nockett, portfolio manager, Alexandria**

“Working from home, which we had not done before. {Our} business is based on face to face interaction, but transition has been seamless. Like being able to separate from work and have more time for walks with the dog.”



**Karin Drinkhall, new mother, Springfield**

“I was already isolating and on leave, having a newborn with having to build up her immune system. So I’m a little paranoid, like a lot of people. Not really seeing any positives.”



**Chuck Dereck, Retired Environmental Engineer, Fairfax Station, and wife Joan**

“We had a number of planned trips cancelled, and can’t go to the gym every day. Can’t go to brew pubs. Can’t go back to finish dental work.”

Joan added, “Yard looks amazing with gardening hours every day; our relationship with the little girl next door who comes over to read, and bake, and play cards while her mom works at home; and time for watching movies every night.”



**Michael Crossin, systems engineer, Dumfries**

“Now on mandatory work from home, but otherwise not much has changed. More family time and neighborhood coming together to help each other, and the school system providing meals for those who need them.”



**Heather Filipunas, surgical dental assistant, Lorton**

“Surgical procedures are on hold except for emergencies. Hours at work are cut back which leads to stress and the worry of how you’re going to pay your bills; it brings financial burdens to families. I have more family time at home. The most likely one to bring it [the virus] home would be me, so it’s keeping me [taking precautions] from catching it and giving it to my family.”



**Danny Reighard, graphics designer, Alexandria**

“Working from home now, but other than that not much effect. More time to go for walks outdoors and exercise.”



**Terri Everett, registered nurse anesthesiologist, Alexandria**

“Educating people about social awareness and how serious this is. We think about bad things but people mean the most and we want to keep them safe.”

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax  
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## News

### Fatal Single-Vehicle Crash in Fair Lakes

Detectives from Crash Reconstruction Unit are investigating a fatal single-vehicle crash that occurred Sunday night in Fair Lakes. Officers responded around 10:39 p.m. to Monument Drive near the intersection with Fair Ridge Drive for a crash involving a 2016 Mercedes GTS.

A preliminary investigation determined the Mercedes was traveling westbound on Monument Drive when it exited the roadway striking two steel pillars and a tree. The driver, Jon Robert Morgan, 30, of Woodbridge was pronounced dead on-scene. Morgan was the sole occupant. Detectives believe speed was a factor. Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543.

Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone – 1-866-411-TIPS(866-411-8477), by text – Type “FCCS” plus tip to 847411, and by web – Click HERE. Download Mobile tip411 App “Fairfax Co Crime Solvers”. Anonymous tipsters are eligible for cash rewards of \$100 to \$1,000 dollars if their information leads to an arrest.

### WEEK IN FAIRFAX

FROM PAGE 3

people to protect themselves by doubting, denying and verifying.

- ❖ Doubt unsolicited emails, calls and sales visits to your home or business. Legitimate organizations and government agencies don't intimidate, ask for personal information or accept cash, gifts cards or cryptocurrency. Remember, Caller ID can be faked.
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Worship Gathering – Sunday 8:45 & 11 AM  
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**Legals**

**City of Fairfax  
Urgent Election Notice**

The registration deadline to vote in the May 5, 2020 General Election is April 13. Applications must be postmarked by this date or received in-person by 5 p.m. You may also apply online by 11:59 p.m. at [www.vote.virginia.gov](http://www.vote.virginia.gov). Office hours: M-F 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. 10455 Armstrong Street, Suite 300 Fairfax, VA 703/385-7890.

**Announcements**

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**Announcements**

**Legals**

**ABC LICENSE**

CTZ Properties, LLC trading as Exxon Mart, 8715 Lee Hwy, Fairfax, VA 22031. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Christopher Young; Managing Member, Eshan Hafeez; Managing Member, Thien Luong; Managing Member. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at [www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or 800-552-3200.

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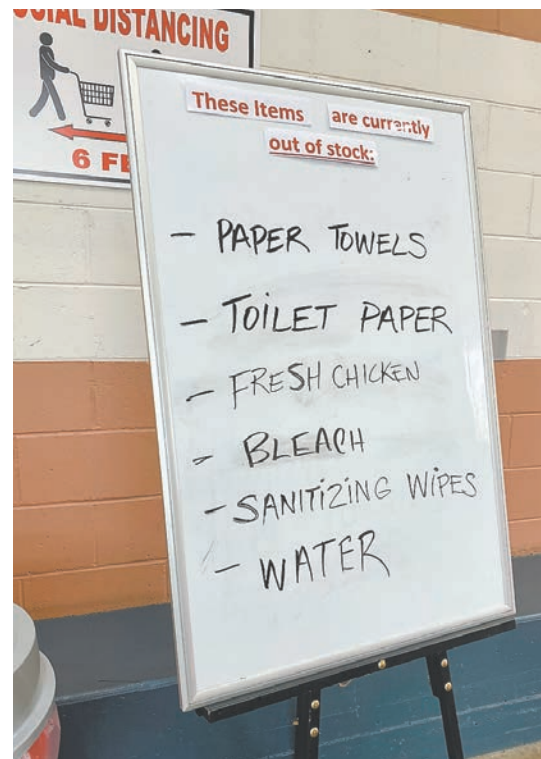
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**NEWS**



**Police Officer R. Morton stationed at Costco as a crowd control precaution.**



**Customers greeted by distancing guidance; list of out of stock items at area Newington Costco store.**

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

# Costco Makes Changes To Protect Customers

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

**A**rea Costco stores, as providers of essential goods and exempt from the restrictions of no more than 10 people permitted, are feeling a different impact than many area businesses.... a deluge of customers. Many businesses such as gyms, restaurants, bars, movie theaters, and mall stores are shutting down, either proactively or curtailing operations by health department recommendation, and are struggling. Others like groceries, drug stores, warehouse suppliers, and on-line providers and delivery companies have seen a significant uptake in customers and orders as residents stock up on essentials or order on-line to comply with self isolation guidance.

Early opening hour Costco customers this week found it difficult to enter store parking lots with long lines for store entry. Later afternoon hours saw less store traffic, with available parking, but wait times to enter the stores. Stores requested and received assistance from Fairfax County Police who were on site for crowd control if needed. Officer R Morton who indicated there had been no trouble at the Newington store where he was stationed, said police would remain on site as a precaution, "...til things settle down."

Costco's were out of stock of many sought after items and employees struggled to keep shelves restocked this week. The store instituted several measures to help keep customers safe. Patrons are asked to wait in line, distanced by the length of large shopping carts, to assure the numbers inside the store at one time remain low. Every cart handle was wiped down before the customer entered. Crews inside were actively wiping and disinfecting shelves. Check out lanes have been reduced and spaced by every other register. Payment terminals no longer require touch entries or signatures (except notably at the pharmacy



**Costco eat-in dining areas removed; replaced by super clean open floor space.**

counter), and tables near the food counter have been removed, with eat-in dining no longer an option.

Many area stores, such as Walmart and Target, are reducing open hours to allow more time for re-shelving; some are providing weekly designated hours for at risk group shoppers. Potential customers will find more information on individual store websites.

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)



# BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

## COVID-19 CLOSURES

- Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam this week announced a number of COVID-related actions that impact Fairfax County and the entire Commonwealth, including:
- ❖ All schools (public and private) to remain closed at least through the end of the academic year. Fairfax County Public Schools is still considering some form of continuity of learning for its students. The School Board will meet in an emergency session on March 23 to discuss further.
  - ❖ Restaurants may only provide curbside, takeout or delivery service.
  - ❖ Recreation and entertainment facilities like gyms, bowling alleys and theaters must close.
  - ❖ Personal care services like spas, massage parlors and barber shops must close.
  - ❖ Essential businesses such as grocery stores, pharmacies and banks may remain open while maintaining social distancing guidelines; grocery stores must increase sanitizing procedures.
  - ❖ Non-essential brick and mortar establishments can stay open if they can maintain the 10-person limit, otherwise, non-essential businesses must close.
  - ❖ Gatherings of more than 10 people are still banned across Virginia.

## FAIRFAX COUNTY SCHOOLS CLOSED

- Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis:
- ❖ All FCPS school buildings are now closed through the end of the year.
  - ❖ All FCPS administrative offices are closed until further notice.
  - ❖ Only essential personnel as defined by FCPS will be asked to report to work until further notice. All other employees will work remotely.
- Food distributions** will continue in the local area through the closures. Breakfast will be available from 8 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and lunch will be available from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday-Friday at the following locations:
- ❖ Annandale Terrace ES, 7604 Herald St., Annandale;
  - ❖ Braddock ES, 7825 Heritage Dr., Annandale;
  - ❖ Burke School, 9645 Burke Lake Rd., Burke;
  - ❖ Crestwood ES, 6010 Hanover Ave., Springfield;
  - ❖ Garfield ES, 7101 Old Keene Mill Rd., Springfield;
  - ❖ Providence ES, 3616 Jermantown Rd., Fairfax;
- All students enrolled in FCPS and other County children 18 years and under receive one meal at no-cost; and, may have additional meals at no-cost upon request. Adults may purchase breakfast and lunch meals at a cost of \$2.00.

## CORONAVIRUS INFO CENTER

- Fairfax County activated a Joint Information Center in response to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) on March 13.
- ❖ **Fairfax County Health Department COVID-19 webpage** – [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus)
  - ❖ **Emergency Information Blog** (you can subscribe by email or follow by RSS) – [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog)
  - ❖ **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Call Center** – The community may call 703-267-3511 with questions. The call center is open from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekends.
  - ❖ Residents may also text FFXCOVID to 888777 to receive updates from Fairfax County about COVID-19.
  - ❖ **Twitter** – @fairfaxcounty and @fairfaxhealth
  - ❖ **Facebook** – [www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty](http://www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty) and [www.facebook.com/fairfaxcountyhealth](http://www.facebook.com/fairfaxcountyhealth)

## SALVATION ARMY GIVES AWAY FOOD BOXES

The Salvation Army remains open and is serving the needs of the community throughout the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. The Salvation Army plans to give away free food boxes to help working families in Fairfax County affected by COVID-19. Food will be distributed by appointment only at The Salvation Army Fairfax Corps located in Fairfax. To speak with a Salvation Army representative, contact Ken Forsythe at 202-497-3811.

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# Risking a Reward



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

In my 11-plus years as a lung cancer “diagnossee,” I’ve done a pretty good job of facing the facts and acting/planning accordingly. I’ve accepted my reality and somehow managed to live so long beyond the original “13 month to two year” prognosis I was given by my oncologist that he has introduced me to some of his students as his “third miracle.” Unfortunately, this characterization is not the end of the story.

In retrospect, dealing with/being treated for one type of cancer (non small cell lung cancer) seemed easy enough. Soon, I’ll be getting treated for two types of cancer: papillary thyroid cancer stage 2, in addition to my pre-existing stage 4 lung cancer. And since the treatments are not identical and cannot occur simultaneously, I’ll be receiving treatment for my thyroid cancer first and deferring treatment for my lung cancer until at least mid April. That’s when I have my next scheduled appointment with my oncologist when no doubt we’ll discuss strategy and all treating me forward.

In the interim, to address the thyroid cancer, I will be spending a night at the Washington Hospital Center. This will occur after I receive a dose of radioisotopes, a type of nuclear medicine designed to target and kill any remaining thyroid cancer in my body wherever it might be located. What happens after my “overnight” and subsequent follow-up appointment with my endocrinologist has yet to be discussed. What little I know is that I’ll need a pre- and post-procedure CT scans and that upon release from the hospital, I’ll need to be quarantined for a few days (away from children and pets primarily).

Hoping my body responds as anticipated, I’ll presume there will be some kind of maintenance-type of treatment for my thyroid cancer which will likely be combined with the restart of my lung cancer treatment. But I don’t really know. But what I really do know is that doctors, generally speaking, don’t want to consider scenarios about what might happen if such and such or so and so happens, or not. Though I’m sure there’s a reasonable expectation of something or other happening, my experience has been that doctors divulging what might happen (treatment/procedure etc.) next, since there are so many variables/results yet to be considered, is unlikely. Though I will still ask my fair share of questions about my future, ultimately, all I can do is wait and see.

Ordinarily, as in how I’ve managed since my diagnosis, being uncertain about the next medical step has been no problem. I realize that answer would likely be somewhere between a house of cards and definite maybe anyway, always depending. Now add to the mix of uncertainty, the coronavirus that has “pandemicked” the country. As a result of its spread, will I be prevented/rescheduled because the hospitals are overwhelmed? After all, I am the poster child for possible victims: male, over 60, weakened immune system with a severe underlying medical condition. I’m the exact person they don’t want to see at the hospital. Yet, if I don’t go/receive approval to go, I doubt I’ll get any better at home without treatment. In my case, I don’t believe leaving well enough alone is going to work very well.

Still, my choices feel almost counterintuitive. I have to risk my life (leave my home) in order to possibly save my life (cancer treatment) away from home. I can’t do one without the other. To receive treatment, I’ll have to expose myself, potentially, to the exact complication that my lung cancer diagnosis makes me most susceptible to: breathing issues. However, if I don’t/can’t, I’ll be worse off than if I hadn’t. Nor do I feel as if I can wait until the virus is more under control. Control which seems unlikely in the near term. And in every term (short, medium or long), the cancer is not going to wait. I sure hope I won’t have to either.

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



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