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Potomac

ALMANAC

SENIOR LIVING

PAGE 7

Shaded views at Swains Lock in Potomac. Planned tree removal for this week has been delayed to allow more communication with advocates.

Waiting Before Cutting Trees At Swains Lock

NEWS PAGE 2

93 Covid Cases in Potomac as of 4/21

NEWS PAGE 3

Distance Learning And Feeding Students

NEWS, PAGE 5

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DAY USE AREA

5 OVERNIGHT CAMPSITES

Swains Lock Area

The National Park Service

The C&O Canal Association

8 Weather Street

For listing to maintain privacy

Campgrounds are limited in

enhancing the park for the

visitors enjoyment.

C&O Canal NHP

Hiker/Biker

Campsite

PHOTO BY MARY KIMM

REAL ESTATE SALES, PAGE 4

KENNY LOURIE, PAGE 7



## News

### Hadeed is Your Source for Deep Cleaning & Disinfecting All Your Rugs, Carpets & Floors

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View of the part of the campground at Swains Lock in Potomac.



Potomac River view from the Swains Lock campground in Potomac.

Tree at Swains Lock campground, tagged for removal?

## Tree Removal at Swains Lock on Hold

### National Park Service planned to remove “hazardous” trees and vegetation in Swains Lock area April 21-May 15.

National Park Service is warning visitors to stay alert for work zones during tree removal for the next several weeks. But because of alert members of West Montgomery Citizens Association, the tree removal has been delayed, allowing time for discussion and communication.

National Park Service-certified arborists selected specific trees to be removed because they could

pose a danger to people or structures. Other vegetation will be removed to protect historic structures and culverts. Where trees are removed, new trees will be planted in the same locations, promoting a sustainable forest.

“Routine maintenance of our trees helps us keep our visitors safe while promoting a healthy ecosystem,” Superintendent Tina Capetta said in a press release.

C&O Canal National Historical Park manages 6.5 million trees with a comprehensive plan designed to protect people while preserving the towpath, structures, and a sustainable ecosystem.

This work is planned even while communities adjacent to the C&O Canal are under “stay at home” orders to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Preventing loss of, or damage to, property is an allowed activity for under Gov. Larry Hogan’s order. Many park facilities remain closed to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Up-to-date closures and other advisories are available on the park website at [www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/conditions.htm](http://www.nps.gov/choh/planyourvisit/conditions.htm).

## THE CONNECTION

Newspapers & Online

### Special Connections Calendar 2020

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursdays unless noted.

#### APRIL

4/15/2020.....A+ Camps & Schools Focus

4/22/2020.....Senior Living

4/22/2020.....Mother’s Day Celebrations,  
Dining & Gifts I

4/29/2020.....Connection Families  
Spring Outlook 2020

#### MAY

5/6/2020.....Mother’s Day Celebrations,  
Dining & Gifts II

5/6/2020.....Wellbeing

5/13/2020.....HomeLifeStyle

5/20/2020.....A+ Camps & Schools

5/27/2020.....Senior Living

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## This Week in Coronavirus in Potomac

Week of April 21

BY KEN MOORE  
THE ALMANAC

### Tuesday, April 21

Potomac 20854 Cases: 93  
Montgomery County  
Cases: 2,768  
Maryland Cases: 14,193  
Montgomery County Deaths: 99  
confirmed, 17 suspected  
Maryland Deaths: 584

**T**he Montgomery County Council is scheduled to hold public hearings Tuesday, April 21 on the following Special Appropriation and Expedited Bills (after the Almanac's presstime):

Special appropriation to add \$5 million to the county's Public Health Emergency Grant Program to provide additional funding for local businesses that operate a restaurant or a retail storefront establishment.

Expedited Bill 18-20, Landlord-Tenant Relations - Rent Stabilization During Emergencies, would prohibit the increase of rent during and after certain declared states of emergency.

The Council will consider two separate supplemental appropriations to purchase or manufacture personal protective equipment and face coverings: A \$100,000 grant would support the creation of the new Local Production Fund, which would provide small and medium-sized manufacturers/producers with the working capital grants necessary to make and provide COVID-related items. A second appropriation for \$250,000 for the county government to purchase and distribute washable, reusable face coverings and potentially other PPE to the general public, and to supplement the County's ongoing efforts to provide PPE to nonprofit service providers (including MCPS meal providers and families), medically vulnerable residents and those in senior living or nursing facilities, child care providers, residents in affordable housing communities, senior residents, and transit riders.

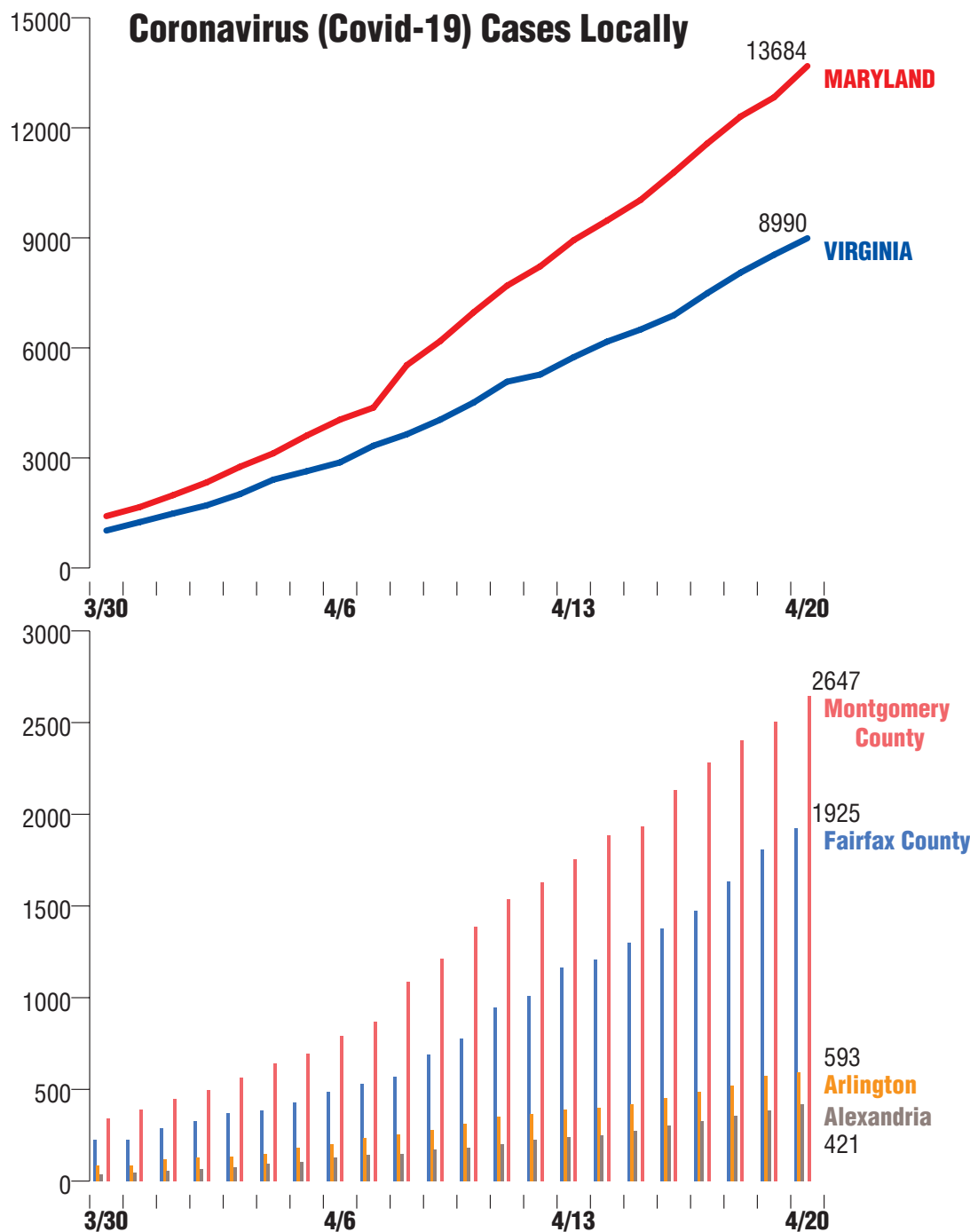
See [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council).

### Monday, April 20

Potomac 20854 Cases: 91  
Montgomery County  
Cases: 2,647  
Maryland Cases: 13,684  
Montgomery County Deaths: 89  
confirmed, 17 additional suspected

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

Maryland Deaths: 516

Maryland acquired 500,000 COVID-19 test kits from South Korea.

"From the beginning of this coronavirus pandemic, one of the biggest problems in America has been the lack of availability of testing. It remains the most serious obstacle to safely reopening our states," said Gov. Larry Hogan, on Monday, April 20. "Here in Maryland, we have been doing everything in our power to acquire more tests from the federal government.

Unfortunately, we have also had to compete with every state in America in our attempts to procure tests from every domestic producer in the U.S. and from sources around the globe."

Maryland has completed more than 71,000 tests so far. Last week, Hogan secured 40,000 additional tests and invested \$2.5 million to help the University of Maryland, Baltimore lab use cutting-edge robotics to build their capacity in order to handle up to 20,000 tests per day.

On Saturday, the Governor and

First Lady Yumi Hogan welcomed a Korean Air passenger plane carrying COVID-19 test kits from the South Korean company LabGenomics.

### Sunday, April 19

Potomac 20854 Cases: 88  
Montgomery County  
Cases: 2,507  
Maryland Cases: 12,830  
Montgomery County Deaths: 80  
confirmed, 16 additional suspected

The Commissioner of Correction is authorized to reduce the popu-

lation of inmates in correctional facilities by releasing eligible inmates to mandatory supervision or home detention or accelerated parole if it will not compromise the health, welfare, or safety of the inmate, victims, or the public. Hogan's order was signed on Sunday, April 19.

### Saturday, April 18

Potomac 20854 Cases: 88  
Montgomery County  
Cases: 2,404  
Maryland Cases: 12,308

Governor Larry Hogan's executive order requiring face coverings to prevent the spread of COVID-19 goes into effect. Maryland residents statewide must wear face coverings at all foodservice establishments; on public transportation, including ride-sharing and taxi services; at all retail establishments, including grocery stores, pharmacies, convenience stores, home improvement stores, at farmers markets and at laundromats.

"The Governor's order recognizes that while everyone should be staying home as much as possible, when going out in public to buy groceries or make other essential trips, we should all be wearing face coverings to protect others and protect ourselves," said Montgomery County Health Officer Dr. Travis Gayles.

Also, retail establishments should post signs at all entrances alerting customers to the need to wear face masks; to try to mark six-foot spacing where lines may form, sanitize or give customers the ability to sanitize handles of carts or baskets and provide staff and customers with clean restrooms stocked with soap or sanitizer, and allow staff to wash their hands at least once every 30 minutes.

The CDC has issued detailed guidance and instructions regarding homemade cloth face coverings which can be found at [coronavirus.maryland.gov](https://coronavirus.maryland.gov).

### Friday, April 17

Potomac 20854 Cases: 84  
Montgomery County  
Cases: 2,280  
Maryland Cases: 11,572

State Superintendent of Schools Karen Salmon and Governor Hogan extended school closures to May 15.

"While we are sad and frustrated that our students and staff won't

SEE CORONAVIRUS, PAGE 6

POTOMAC ALMANAC ♦ APRIL 22-28 2020 ♦ 3



# Potomac

## REAL ESTATE

### February, 2020 Sales,

IN FEBRUARY, 2020, 43 POTOMAC HOMES SOLD  
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PHOTOS BY DEB STEVENS/THE ALMANAC



**8** 12509 Exchange Court South  
— \$885,000



**7** 10505 Streamview Court — \$898,000



**4** 10002 Gable Manor Court — \$1,050,000



**3** 8613 Chateau Drive  
— \$1,050,000



**2** 10600 Stable Lane — \$1,080,000



**1** 31 Sandalfoot Court — \$1,350,000



Address.....	BR	FB	HB	Postal City	Sold Price.....	Type.....	Lot AC	Postal Code.....	Subdivision.....	Date Sold
<b>1</b> 31 SANDALFOOT CT.....	4	4	1	POTOMAC	\$1,350,000	Detached	0.27	20854	AVENEL.....	02/24/20
<b>2</b> 10600 STABLE LN.....	4	3	1	POTOMAC	\$1,080,000	Detached	0.37	20854	RIVER FALLS.....	02/20/20
<b>3</b> 8613 CHATEAU DR.....	4	3	2	POTOMAC	\$1,050,000	Detached	0.66	20854	MCAULEY PARK.....	02/06/20
<b>4</b> 10002 GABLE MANOR CT ..	4	3	1	POTOMAC	\$1,050,000	Detached	0.19	20854	POTOMAC VILLAGE..	02/24/20
<b>5</b> 9521 KENTSDALE DR.....	4	3	1	POTOMAC	\$950,000	Detached	0.47	20854	MCAULEY PARK.....	02/07/20
<b>6</b> 12514 ANSIN CIRCLE DR...	4	4	1	POTOMAC	\$908,000	Townhouse	0.03	20854	PARK POTOMAC.....	02/14/20
<b>7</b> 10505 STREAMVIEW CT ...	5	3		POTOMAC	\$898,000	Detached	0.29	20854	EAST GATE OF POTOMAC	02/24/20
<b>8</b> 12509 EXCHANGE CT S .....	6	4	1	POTOMAC	\$885,000	Detached	0.33	20854	COPENHAVER.....	02/20/20

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# School Buildings Closed, But Student Learning Continues

By PEGGY MCEWAN  
POTOMAC ALMANAC

The Maryland State Board of Education voted April 14 to waive the requirement that schools hold 180 days of instruction. The new minimum is 175 days, with five of the 10 emergency closure days taken March 16-27 also waived, according to the Montgomery County website.

With the shifting and substituting of days, MCPS announced last weekend that the last day of school for the 2019-2020 school year will be June 15.

How are teachers and students spending the remaining instructional days? Mainly, it seems to be determined by grade level.

Connelly School of the Holy Child enrolls girls in grades six through 12. The first message on the school's website reads: "Connelly School of the Holy Child is not closed. While our classrooms may look a bit different these days, we are actively engaged in e-learning during this time."

"We know that student engagement is the greatest challenge when moving out of a face to face classroom to a virtual classroom," said LeAnne Kannapell, Associate Head of School at Holy Child. "Frequent formative assessments and timely teacher feedback helps teachers plan and adjust lessons. Through technology applications available through teams and other applications students can respond quickly and in motivating ways."

Students at Holy Child meet for live lessons twice a week for each class. Fridays are for community days when students meet with



Nela Sahady – Freshman, Class of 2024, Connelly School of the Holy Child.

their advisors, work on projects collaboratively, and more.

Bullis School, with students in kindergarten through grade 12, started remote learning Wednesday, March 18 and will "continue until further notice."

"Maintaining normalcy was even more important for students in Lower School. For students in kindergarten through fifth grade, the homeroom is the center of the day..." according to the Bullis website, so teachers "...maintained the routine of morning check-ins where students saw classmates, introduced pets and siblings, and began the day with a structured reimagined morning meeting."

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY** Public Schools, with over 160,000 students in preschool through grade 12, has the largest job transitioning to remote learning of area schools.

This week MCPS is beginning its fifth week of online learning and is also providing a meal service pro-

gram.

The MCPS plan for the last grading period, which began April 20, divided by grade level:

At the elementary level, students will: Participate in math lessons three days a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday)

Participate in literacy lessons two days a week (Tuesday and Thursday), which includes daily independent reading time for Grades PreK-1 (20 min) and Grades 2-5 (30-40 min)

Participate in art, music and physical education (P.E.) lessons at a time that works best for each family (pre-recorded lessons are available to families every other Monday)

Middle and high school students will:

Receive new content and assignments in all their core courses and electives each week

Have opportunities to connect with and receive support from teachers during office hours, according to the local school sched-



Jaden Faunteroy – Junior, Class of 2021, Connelly School of the Holy Child.

ule

Receive feedback from teachers on assignments

More from the MCPS website:

"In general, secondary students can expect to receive one to two meaningful assignments each week in each course and can expect to be working for up to four hours each day.

Please note that the total time students are engaged in learning activities will be determined by course level and the full range of assignments that students receive in all their subjects.

"Students can submit their assignments via Google Classroom, myMCPS classroom or email. Although teachers will introduce new content and assignments for students to complete, it is important to remember that the work students complete and the feedback teachers provide during this time is not meant to replace the day-to-day instruction that students

would have received at school.

"Our goal is to maintain key aspects of the classroom experience: engaging with content, collaborating with peers, receiving support from staff, and moving forward in the learning process through assignments and feedback. The learning experiences are meant to maintain a continuity of learning; facilitate and track progress; and encourage students to challenge themselves and grow in their knowledge. The scheduled office hours are an important time to connect with teachers, engage in additional learning, and receive support as needed."

Every school is trying to combine online learning, support to students, and an attempt at normalcy with a focus on academics.

As Jamie Dickie, Bullis School Executive Director of Technology said, "It's not going to be normal, but we want to add a dash of normal to a crazy situation."

## Silver Diner at Rio and Real Food for Kids Increase Weekday Meal Giveaway

Silver Diner at Rio in Gaithersburg joined forces with Real Food for Kids and the program Chefs Feeding Families, a program designed to meet the needs of some of the many school children in the area who are without meals due to school closures. The program kicked off on April 1 and handed out more than 250 meals in the first days to some of those in line. As the program progressed, the lines of those in need grew longer. Real Food for Kids has worked with the community in obtaining additional donations. At Rio, the Peterson Family Foundation and the Pedas Family Foundation stepped up with donations as did others.

"It was rewarding to hand out the meals to the children and their families but also dishearten-

ing to have to turn people away," said Silver Diner's Executive Chef and co-founder Ype Von Hengst. "Thanks to some angel contributors, we are now able to provide at least 500 meals every weekday through June." Silver Diner has a history of giving back to the community, particularly through area schools, and has provided more than 6,000 meals at its Rio location for those in need. "While we're offering the meals only at our Rio location, our entire company is behind the effort."

Real Food for Kids and chef David Guas of Bayou Bakery in Arlington, Va. initiated the Chefs Feeding Families project on March 17. While local school districts are working around the clock to continue to offer meals, not all families are able to access available

distribution sites and some school districts only provide meals on specific weekdays.

Silver Diner at Rio continues to serve a single-serve, healthy meal every weekday from 2 to 4 p.m. (while supplies last) at 236 Boardwalk Place, Gaithersburg, Md. 20878. Those seeking the meals can pull up to the curb and pick up as many meals as needed for their family. Representatives from Silver Diner and Real Food for Kids will be on hand at the pop-up tent at that address. They are all practicing social distancing and all meals are prepared under strict CDC guidelines.

"Although Silver Diner is also struggling to survive, it gives us a great feeling to be able to give back to the community and have an uplifting cause to give to," Von



Cars drive up on Boardwalk Place in Rio in Gaithersburg to receive free meals from Silver Diner and Real Food for Kids.

Hengst said. Silver Diner had to lay off 1,600 employees last week and is providing free meals to laid off workers for two weeks and paid

benefits through the end of April.

Anyone wishing to donate to Chefs Feeding Families, visit [www.realfoodforkids.org](http://www.realfoodforkids.org)



# This Week in Coronavirus in Potomac

FROM PAGE 3

be able to be together in schools to learn and work together in person for another month, we believe that this was the right decision for the health and safety of our students and community,” said Montgomery County Superintendent of Schools Jack R. Smith.

Hogan promises to unveil the state’s roadmap to recovery next week. “We are beginning to see some hopeful and encouraging signs which have allowed us to begin laying the groundwork to reopen, to rebuild, and to recover as soon as it is safe to do so,” said Governor Hogan. The recovery plan requires expanding testing capacity, increasing hospital surge capacity, increasing supply of PPE (personal protective equipment), and developing a robust contact tracing operation.

The Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) promises to provide unemployment insurance benefit recipients with an additional \$600 per week payment on top of their current regular benefits. On April 24, the Maryland Department of Labor is scheduled to launch a one-stop shop comprehensive online application for independent contractors, self-employed Marylanders, and all other types of claims, including federal employees, multi-state wage claims, and members of the military. This will ensure that every Maryland applicant, whether they are a W2 employee or not, will have the option of filing online, which will decrease call wait times, and it will also help more Marylanders get their checks.

Maryland’s contribution of \$4 million dollars to Maryland Food Bank and the Capital Area Food Bank will be matched by local jurisdictions to support food banks across the state. The Maryland Department of Human Services is also working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to dramatically accelerate the implementation of the state’s online Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) pilot initiative, which will enable families to purchase meals online for free delivery.

**SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE.** The governor announced that \$8 million dollars of Maryland’s COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Fund, a part of Maryland’s \$175 million relief package, has already been provided to 410 small businesses across the state, helping more

than 9,000 Marylanders keep their jobs. The Maryland Department of Commerce has received more than 9,100 applications for the state’s \$50 million COVID-19 relief loan fund and more than 20,200 applications for its \$75 million COVID-19 relief grant fund.

**GRANTS FOR CRITICAL MANUFACTURING.** The state created a \$5 million fund to incentivize Maryland businesses to manufacture personal protective equipment (PPE) and other supplies to meet the current needs of the healthcare industry.

## Thursday, April 16

Potomac Cases: 81  
Potomac Deaths:  
56 confirmed, 14 probable  
Montgomery County Cases: 2,133  
Maryland Cases: 10,784

Effective at 7 a.m., passengers on Montgomery County Ride On buses will be required to wear face coverings to board the bus. The county’s Department of Transportation had already encouraged riders to wear face coverings, but that is now mandatory. Hogan’s order on this measure became effective at 7 a.m. on Saturday, April 18, but the county made the face covering requirement effective April 16.

A face covering can be a homemade cloth mask, a scarf, bandana or other means of snugly covering over the mouth and nose. The steps are being taken to help riders performing essential travel protect each other and bus operators during the COVID-19 health crisis. All Ride On bus operators were provided with County-issued face coverings earlier this week. The CDC has issued detailed guidance and instructions regarding homemade cloth face coverings which can be found at [coronavirus.maryland.gov](https://coronavirus.maryland.gov).

## Wednesday, April 15

Potomac Cases: 73  
Montgomery County Cases: 1,933  
Montgomery County Deaths:  
44 confirmed, 14 probable  
Maryland Cases: 10,032

Montgomery County began accepting applications for \$25 million available for emergency grants to small businesses. The Public Health Emergency Grant (PHEG) program is designed to help for-profit and nonprofit

businesses with 100 employees or fewer during the current public health crisis.

The County will host webinars to answer questions and provide updates on the PHEG program starting at 9 a.m. Mondays through Saturdays, starting April 16.

Applications must be filled online. See <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/biz-resources/pheg/>.

Hampden Lane Liquor & Wine store in Bethesda reopened more than two weeks after a store employee was sent home Wednesday, March 25 and tested positive for COVID-19. A specialized team was brought in over multiple days to disinfect every bottle, item and surface in the store. Additional store employees were sent home for two weeks with administrative pay to self-isolate and monitor for symptoms.

Liquor stores are listed as essential services as a part of the COVID-19 health emergency. Alcohol and Beverage Services generates more than \$35 million annually for the county.

Statewide strike teams have responded to outbreaks in 16 nursing homes and assisted living facilities and 15 group homes for medically fragile children. In partnership with FEMA and HHS, Maryland has augmented these strike teams with three federal Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMAT) made up of physicians, paramedics, and safety officers.

The “gradual rollout of the state’s recovery phase,” Governor Larry Hogan said, is dependent on the building blocks of expanding testing capacity, increasing hospital surge capacity, ramping up supply of PPE and building a robust contact tracing operation.

“Right now while our numbers are still climbing and we are still heading up that curve, not down, it is absolutely critical for Marylanders to stay home, to continue avoiding crowds and gatherings, and to aggressively practice social distancing.”

But, according to Hogan:

❖ Maryland is on track with an aggressive plan to perform up to 10,000 tests per day.

In the past week, the state received one million additional face shields and 1,000 ICU beds. In the next week, the state is ex-

pecting deliveries of 4.5 million additional N95 masks, 290 oxygen concentrators, and 252 ICU ventilators.

❖ The state’s efforts to increase hospital surge capacity by 6,000 beds is weeks ahead of schedule. With the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the state is converting the Hagerstown Correctional Facility and the former Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park to serve COVID-19 patients.

❖ Sixty additional surge response tents are being set up in Germantown, Frederick, Jessup, Hagerstown, Annapolis, Baltimore and Randalstown, as well as one at Adventist’s Fort Washington Hospital, located in Prince George’s County.

❖ A robust contact tracing operation will enable the state to investigate every positive case and ensure that those patients are remaining in isolation for the duration of their illness.

Michael Miller, 60, died April 15, and is the first county employee to die from covid-19. Miller was a member of the MC-DOT Transit Services Division based in the Silver Spring/Bethesda Depot and helped manage the Ride On bus fleet, according to county release.

“He leaves behind a wife and two adult children. In his honor, I have asked that all County flags be lowered to half staff,” said county executive Marc Elrich.

## Tuesday, April 14

Potomac, 20854 Cases: 70  
Montgomery County Cases: 1,883  
Maryland Cases: 9,472

Hogan enacted an emergency order to put restrictions on the dispensing of drugs that may be necessary to treat COVID-19, including hydroxychloroquine. Because of an Interest has increased in possibly preventing or treating COVID-19 with drugs commonly prescribed to treat malaria, lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, HIV, bacterial infections and other medical conditions, a surge in demand has led to the increased prescribing and dispensing. This has resulted in an inadequate supply for their intended use to treat patients with chronic and acute conditions and for hospitalized patients with Covid-19 with facility-specific protocols while research studies are ongoing.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# Help the Alzheimer’s Association

Dear Editor,

As a volunteer advocate for the Alzheimer’s Association, I witness first-hand the critical support we provide to families in Potomac and Montgomery County living with dementia. With over 110,000 people diagnosed in Maryland, the need for continued support is vital. During this pandemic, the particularly vulnerable are

made even more susceptible; and caregivers have become even more stressed. Their difficult situations are further compounded by overwhelming isolation.

As COVID-19 wreaks havoc on our families, our local businesses, our government and our medical facilities, its impact also extends to nonprofits like the Alzheimer’s Association, who continue providing families with critical support

during this time – while not able to take in organization-sustaining dollars.

We cannot abandon our support of families in Maryland, especially now. That is why it is imperative non-profits like ours, be included in government relief efforts. The Association is an essential lifeline to those who rely on our support and services.

During FY19, nearly 300,000

calls were made to the Alzheimer’s Association’s 24/7 helpline. This vital assistance is needed now more than ever. As Senator Van Hollen’s Ambassador the Alzheimer’s Association I urge him, Senator Cardin and Congressman Raskin to support the Health Charities Rapid Response to COVID-19 by expanding access to credit for nonprofits. Specifically we are asking Congress to establish an exclu-

sive fund to support nonprofit employers with 500 to 10,000 employees, including loan forgiveness.

More must be done to ensure that large nonprofits continue serving the families of Maryland. Thank you for your continued support.

**Sue Wronsky**  
Potomac, MD



# SENIOR LIVING



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Virtual classes and gatherings are keeping seniors engaged during this period of social isolation.

## Staying Active in Social Isolation

**A variety of local offerings allows for days filled with activity.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**C**ora Foley, an active 68-year-old of Burke, Virginia, has been able to maintain her social life while coronavirus stay-at-home orders are in effect. She's using her predilection for innovation to help other seniors do the same. Foley co-founded the Senior Center Without Walls of Burke, West Springfield and Great Falls, which offers social programming to seniors in those communities. She created a corresponding website to include online social offerings.

"When the coronavirus 'stay home' lockdowns were imposed, 'I expanded the website to include other classes that are usually offered on-site, like line dancing and Zumba,'" said Foley. "From April 1st through the 17th, the website has recorded 451 visitors and 1,789 views, so it has been a daily help to many residents, particularly seniors."

The new normal of not leaving home except for emergencies can leave many, including seniors and others who are most susceptible to contracting coronavirus, with a social void in their lives.

Seniors can join classes and activities ranging from yoga and fitness classes to concerts and lunch with friends.

"Isolation and loneliness has been one of our ongoing concerns for older adults prior to coronavirus and we remain committed to help older adults establish and maintain meaningful social connections during this time and beyond," said Rachel Coates, Director of the Agency on Aging Arlington Aging and Disability Services Division.

Arlington County is also working collaboratively to keep the social lives of area senior intact, says Coates. "In partnership with Arlington Adult Day Program, Developmental Disability Services and other County programs [including] Parks 55+ programs and libraries, we are making phone calls, mailing activity kits...and hosting music and socialization skills classes virtually," she said.

Such initiatives offer options and an outlet from consuming the often-conflicting news of coronavirus happenings in solitude.

"Every one-in-7 individuals living in Fairfax County right now is 65 and over," said Evan Braff of the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services in Fairfax County co-founded the Senior Center Without Walls of Burke, West Springfield and Great Falls. "We recognize that this is a scary time for all of us especially for older adults. 'Since we've been in this situation, we've gotten creative and innovative.'"

Part of that innovation is creating virtual versions of the activities that seniors enjoyed in brick-and-mortar settings. "It is truly a collaborative effort to develop the virtual senior center," said Amanda Rogers of the Fairfax County Neighborhood & Community Services. "Everything is being developed in coordination with other county agencies as well, such as Family Services, Libraries, Housing, and the Health Department."

In addition to routine services such as delivering meals and providing transportation to medical appointments, local seniors have options for virtual opportunities for social and recreational activities.

For example, the Caregiver Program in Montgomery County now has two online sources of information for seniors. "Rather than disconnect at home during the COVID-19 uncertainty, it is important that we...develop new social connections...and nurture personal health and wellness," said Lylie Fisher, Caregiver Support Program, Area Agency on Aging, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services.

That effort, says Fisher, includes the County's Engage@HOME, YouTube channel as well as an e-newsletter and blog where seniors can find services including community support groups, telephone and online activities as well Covid-19 updates.

For seniors who need technical assistance, Fairfax County has technicians who are only a phone call away to assist with needs ranging from downloading a video conferencing app to understanding the basics of the Internet. "Technology can be scary for older adults, but we've actually been teaching older adults how to use Skype and Zoom for a while" said Braff.

Those lessons have led to success stories that have given seniors the skills necessary to weather the current storm of uncertainty. "What's really exciting to see was a 98 year old woman posting on Twitter," said Braff. "It's great that you have someone who's 98 and who's able to post on Twitter."

## POTOMAC ALMANAC

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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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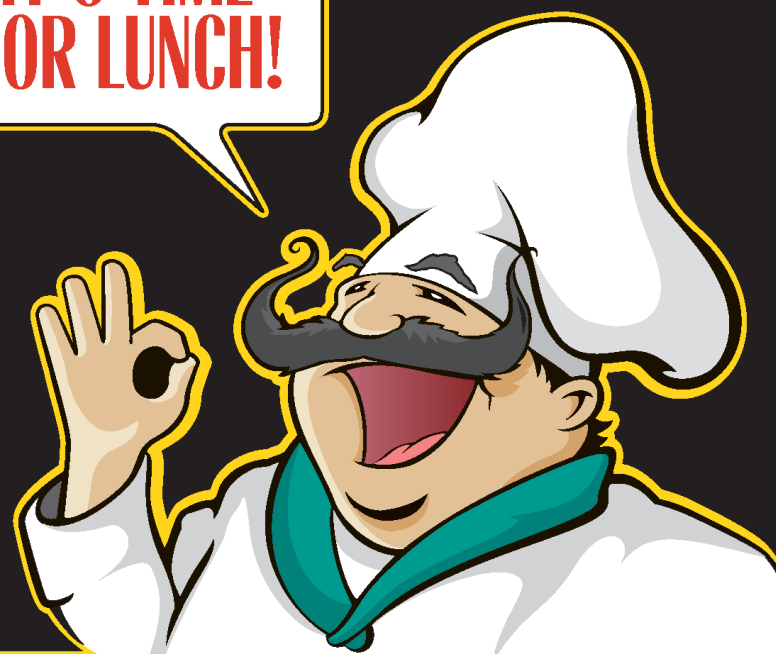
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