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# CONNECTION

Reston ♦ Oak Hill Herndon ♦ Chantilly ♦ CENTRE VIEW

(From left) Nurses Inga Rollins, Elana Carr, Samantha Morris and Jordyn Allen pose outside Inova Fair Oaks Hospital before the salute to healthcare workers there by local first responders.



**'Seeing What We Mean To the Community Is Gratifying'**

NEWS, PAGE 3

**Reston Farmers Market Opens, With Social Distancing and Masks**

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**Col. 'Bob' Honored On 100th Birthday**

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OPINION, PAGE 4 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 6

BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

# Metro's Platform Improvement Project Summer Shutdown Begins May 23

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*Effective: Saturday, May 23, 2020*

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Service between **Vienna, Dunn Loring, West Falls Church & Ballston-MU**

**Orange Line Express**

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## STATION CLOSURES

**Beginning Saturday, May 23:**

- Nine Orange and Silver line stations west of Ballston-MU will be closed.

## RAIL SERVICE INFORMATION

- The Orange Line will operate between Ballston-MU and New Carrollton.
- Silver Line service will be temporarily suspended.
- Service elsewhere on the system will operate at reduced service levels during the COVID-19 public health emergency until further notice.

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# NEWS



(From left) Fairfax County police applaud the medical staff while GMU police Cpl. Brian Morrison and Lt. Patricia Millan hold encouraging signs.



Inova Fair Oaks nurses display signs thanking fire and police personnel for their support.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

## ‘Seeing What We Mean to the Community Is Gratifying’

### First responders salute healthcare heroes at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

It’s nice to be appreciated – and, last Tuesday, May 5, at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital, local first responders let healthcare workers there know exactly how much they’re valued. At the 6:30 p.m. shift change, staff members walked outside and were greeted by fire engines, police cruisers, a gigantic American flag and about 100 first responders applauding them and holding signs and banners of appreciation.

“It’s wonderful,” said Inova Fair Oaks President Susan Carroll. “We’re partners with all public-safety personnel, and we support each other through all hard times. So for them to do this for us really means a lot.”

“This is the community we serve,” added Chief Nursing Officer Deb Fulbrook. “So it’s great anytime we have the opportunity to connect with them.”

Carroll said the hospital has had COVID-19 patients there for the past six weeks and has seen a steady increase. Many have been admitted, while others were treated in the emergency room, but were well enough to go home. Although a small percentage of the inpatient COVID-19 patients died, more than 100 were admitted and more than 100 were discharged.

“Debbie and her team have done a tremendous job,” said Carroll. “Some nurses are being repurposed, helping out in the ICU [Intensive Care Unit] and elsewhere.”

And, said Fulbrook, “That’s one of the great things about healthcare workers –



Inova Fair Oaks staff – including President Susan Carroll, in light gray, in front row – watch the first responders’ salute outside the hospital.

they respond wherever the need is greatest. Overall, morale here is positive. The clinical staff is very resilient, and we promote self-care so they can take time away for a respite and for a manageable work/life balance.”

“Patient and team-member safety is our number-one goal,” said Carroll. “So we use the appropriate PPE and technology so our staff can take care of their patients. Initially, we talked via baby monitors from room to room. And we’re using donated iPads so patients can communicate with their families.”

“We’ve also increased the rounding on team members by Inova administrators,” said Fulbrook.

CARROLL explained that the senior leadership team makes sure the doctors and

nurses have everything they need. They’re also asked if they feel safe and, if not, what the administrators can do about it. Said Fulbrook: “We make sure they know we hear them and we’re here to support them.”

Toughest, said Carroll, is the fact that, in early January, just 44 people in the world had this virus. Now, she said, “We’re looking at millions. Understanding the disease’s progression has been challenging for everyone. And we don’t have a lot of historic data about it, so it’s hard to manage through it because it’s so new.”

But there are also some bright spots. “The learning is amazing because everyone is sharing their knowledge,” said Carroll. “The first COVID-19 patient at another In-

ova hospital came March 7 and stayed 25 days. Now, the average length of stay is seven days. Physicians are partnering to learn the best protocols from all over the world, to learn what works best – so it’s been a huge collaboration.”

Fulbrook gets the greatest satisfaction “seeing our patients improve and be discharged to go home.”

“And seeing what we mean to the community is so gratifying,” added Carroll. “We see ourselves as the guardians of community health, so we want to be here to provide that for them in their time of need.”

Last Tuesday, with fire engines’ sirens blaring, police cruisers’ blue lights blinking – and a huge, American flag hanging from Fairfax City Fire Station 3’s tower ladder truck – what these healthcare workers mean to the residents they serve was on full display. Units from Fire Stations 21 in Fair Oaks and 40 in Fairfax were there, too, as were Virginia State, GMU and Fairfax County police – including officers from both the Fair Oaks and Sully district stations.

MEDICAL STAFF walked around the loop in front of the hospital’s main entrance, while the first responders applauded them. And a Black Hawk helicopter did several flyovers – complete with wing dips in salute – much to the crowd’s delight.

GMU Police Capt. Mike Lighthiser organized the whole shebang. “We’ve worked with INOVA on some other projects, and I feel like our responsibility as first responders is to help those we work with, hand-in-hand, every day,” he explained. “But now, the circumstances have changed, and they’re on the frontline.”

He organized similar celebrations at four other Inova Hospitals and at the Reston Hospital Center. The best part, he said, is “seeing the medical providers feel like they’re supported.”

# The First Great Depression

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



COMMENTARY

**M**y mom and dad were married in 1928 just before the Great Depression that lasted from 1929 to 1939. They grew up less than three miles apart, and Mom's father who was a carpenter helped them build a house almost exactly halfway between the homes in which they had grown up. My dad worked for his father on the family farm in rural Page County, Virginia, growing grains and converting some of them into a liquid product (moonshine)!

The Great Depression was the greatest economic disaster the world had ever experienced to that time, and its impact was exacerbated by a drought. Mom and Dad never forgot the hardships they endured during that first decade of married life together, and those early experiences affected their entire lives. They developed skills of self-reliance and frugality that stayed with them even as economic times got easier for them later in their lives.

My dad farmed about an acre of vegetables that fed us throughout the summer and for the rest of the year as my mom canned or later when they had electricity and a freezer frozen food for future consumption. We always grew enough potatoes to fill a garner in the cellar (essentially a basement with a dirt floor) to last us all year. In the earliest years of their marriage, more than a decade before I came along as the youngest of their three sons, they had a cow for milk and raised a hog for butchering.

To supplement the meager income Dad had from farming with my grandfather, they would pick huckleberries in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains that are now part of the Shenandoah National Park. They picked wild strawberries and blackberries for home consumption of jams and jellies Mom would make. Their most profitable side-line was selling the meat of black walnuts that they had gathered from the area. Cracking a black walnut takes a

lot of force and know-how. They were extremely frugal as they had to be. Well after the Great Depression ended and I was a young person we used our wax paper and tin (aluminum) foil more than once by simply wiping it off after each use.

Dad and Mom never lost their love and appreciation for President Franklin Roosevelt whom they credited with saving the country. They responded to his fireside chats that assured them that they had "nothing to fear but fear itself." When the Great Depression finally ended and Dad went to work "in the public" meaning that he no longer worked for his father, their economic situation improved with his being in a unionized job and as the entire country improved with the New Deal.

In many of the same ways that my parents experienced the first Great Depression, future generations will have been impacted by the next Great Depression coming on the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic we are now experiencing. With hard work, strong faith, frugality, honest leadership, and perseverance they will be able to share the things they are now having to do to survive.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Missing McLean Day

To the Editor:

On the third Saturday in May, police cars park at the entrance of Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, in the early morning. It is the McLean Day, the annual family festival in McLean. Rain or shine.

Prior to this event day, colorful, big and small carnival rides are set up in the park. In addition to carnival rides, the festival hosts live music, games, food trucks, petting zoo, laser tag, a rock-climbing wall, costumed characters, exhibitors and other entertainment.

When my kids were little, they used to perform on the stage for this day as a little ballerina with their dance class. Ever since we moved to McLean in 2002, we've enjoyed this festival every year. I still cherish the picture taken of my older daughter, Jeeho, on her first McLean Day when she wore a red dress with shiny, red shoes and picked the red plane out of the colorful airplane rides. Many more pictures have captured moments such as kids riding on a donkey, screaming on the Viking ride, holding our dog, laughing with friends and so on.

McLean Day has more than a centennial history. On July 31, 1915, the first McLean Day was

held on the Franklin Sherman Elementary School grounds and an adjacent lot, where my two kids once played as well.

McLean Day became an annual event after the success of the first event.

However, 1918 and 1919 missed it because of World War I and the flu epidemic. It moved to Lewinsville Park in 1989. In May 2020, however, there's no McLean Day: It's cancelled due to COVID-19. Lewinsville Park is still closed. It's a bright day in May. Blooming roses, chirping birds, and busy bees console me reminding me that life goes on and that McLean Day will return next year.

**Yunjung S Ha**  
McLean

## Don't Let Public Input Fall Victim to COVID-19

To the Editor:

At an electronic public hearing on April 14, 2020, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors discussed the Uncodified Ordinance to Establish Methods to Assure Continuity in Fairfax County Government and Conduct of Board

of Supervisors Meetings during the Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency and other items.

The Virginia General Assembly has expressly provided that public bodies may meet electronically, provide three requirements are met:

(a) "the Governor has declared a state of emergency...";

(b) "the catastrophic nature of the declared emergency makes it impracticable or unsafe to assemble a quorum in a single location"; and

(c) "the purpose of the meeting is to address the emergency." [VA. CODE ANN. §2.2-3708.2(A)(3)(2019)] Assuring "Continuity in Fairfax Government" appears to include public hearings related to zoning, planning, and land development applications.

Land-use applications were on the agenda on April 14. In fact, the board approved three land-use rezonings. Only one citizen was able to make a public comment.

Virginia Attorney General Mark R. Herring recently issued an opinion on electronic hearings. Herring stated, "Code §2.2-3708.2(A)(3) does not permit all meetings of a public body to be conducted electronically—only those where 'the purpose of the meeting is to address the emergency.'" He also stated that public bodies

are permitted to "meet electronically to make decisions that must be made immediately and where failure to do so could result in irrevocable public harm."

Electronic hearings severely limit public input. Rather than addressing supervisors eye to eye, citizens are reduced to passive input, hoping supervisors heed their testimony. Citizens can't dialog with staff or supervisors, make site visits, verify or rebut information, and actively contribute. What about citizens without access to or expertise with technology?

Do land-use decisions "address the emergency?" Would their delay result in "irrevocable public harm?" We need an equitable process for citizens and businesses. Prudence dictates delaying such decisions until citizens can actively engage with the board.

The country is experiencing a health crisis not seen in 100 years.

People are rethinking their priorities. Why not postpone land-use decisions until citizens can research county plans and ordinances, gather with neighbors, analyze proposals, prepare testimony, and "be in the room" when important land-use decisions are made?

Do you agree? Let your supervisor know.

**Linda Brown**  
Vienna



# NEWS

## Centreville Apartment Fire Displaces 28

Some 28 residents of an apartment building in Centreville's Newgate community were displaced Saturday after a two-alarm fire there. Fairfax County fire officials estimate the damage at approximately \$370,100.

Fire and Rescue units were dispatched May 9, around 5:36 p.m., for a reported garden-apartment fire in the 14400 block of Newton Patent Court. First-arriving firefighters saw heavy smoke visible from the four-story building and discovered fire on a third-floor deck, extending to the roof.

A second alarm was struck, bringing additional units from Fairfax County, as well as firefighters from Loudoun County and the Washington Metropolitan Airports Authority. Although the flames were wind-driven, crews used both interior and exterior hose lines to quickly bring the blaze under control.

Meanwhile, firefighters searched every apartment to make sure all residents were safely out of the building. No one was injured. Three people were home in the apartment where the fire began. One of them smelled smoke, looked around and saw fire from her balcony window. She alerted the remaining occupants and they all evacuated before the firefighters arrived.

Fire investigators determined that the blaze was accidental, starting on the third-floor balcony after someone improperly discarded fireplace ashes there. Of the total building occupants displaced, 14 accepted assistance from the Red Cross.

— BONNIE HOBBS



This fire at a Centreville apartment building was caused by fireplace ashes improperly discarded on a balcony.



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**-Werner Heisenberg**

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**NEWS**

**Volunteering  
for Better  
Community**

**Toora Arsala, 30, has spent the past 20 years working with community festivals and political candidates to improve his community.**

BY JESSICA FENG  
THE CONNECTION



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Toora Arsala stands ready to help people register to vote at a Democratic booth. He has regularly helped candidates campaign in his community.**

For 30-year-old Chantilly-native Toora Arsala, volunteering has become a way of life. He first started volunteering in high school as part of the Best Buddies organization. From there Arsala started volunteering in various other organizations and does what he can to help his community.

Due to his commitment to helping others, Arsala will receive the Volunteer Fairfax Benchmark Award for volunteering over 1000 hours last year. He has volunteered with high traffic festivals in the community such as Celebrate Fairfax.

"My 20 some years that I've been volunteering for high traffic festivals. There have been times where I've been working in festivals from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. My friends say 'You're kind of crazy for working all those hours.' Not at all, I'm always hydrated and am free to help as much as I can."

Trinity Yasnick, program manager at Celebrate Fairfax, mentions the positions Arsala has filled during his fifteen-year tenure as a volunteer.

"Toora has been volunteering with us for fifteen years at Celebrate Fairfax and is usually at the customer service or information booth answering questions, helping volunteers check-in, handing out snacks at our gates or helping direct our guests."

EXPERIENCE is not all that makes a volunteer, but Arsala's extensive history makes him invaluable. Yasnick describes how his helpful nature makes him a great volunteer and teammate.

"It's been great that he's been around for so long because I know I can put Toora in some of these roles where he can answer any of the questions for any of the attendees that are coming. He's always willing to help out and to get more information about how he can be more involved. He's just a great volunteer and we love having him."

Aside from community festivals, Arsala also works with local legislative representatives by calling and registering voters on behalf of the Democratic party.

A candidate for the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, James Walkinshaw, cited Toora as one of Fairfax County's most dedicated volunteers.

"Toora brings enthusiasm and energy to everything he does. Whether it's phone banking for hours on political campaigns like those of Congressman Gerry Connolly or helping organize the Afghan festival, Toora's volunteerism makes a difference in our community."

Not everything has been smooth sailing in Arsala's volunteering career. Last year he suffered a knee and spine injury, but he didn't let it stop him from supporting a candidate.

"I managed to come in the campaign office to make phone calls for the candidate I was passionate about and that's one thing that the candidate really enjoyed and he took a picture of me sitting on the couch, making phone calls on my laptop. Volunteering is my passion and dedication, so despite my medical issues, I still came out to help out the community."

Although health issues have caused rough patches, Arsala is determined to continue inspiring his community to volunteer and lead others to pursue their passions.

"One of my messages to folks is to never give up, just keep on going. If you have a passion for something, go for it. I've learned a lot helping out in the community and my goal is to keep volunteering for the next 20 to 30 some years. I want to leave a legacy, so folks can get more inspired to help the community."

GRATEFUL for the opportunity to help others, Arsala acknowledges his family and doctors for his success.

"I wanted to thank my parents for being there for me every step of the way and the doctors at Reston Hospital Center who helped cure my collapsed lung. If it weren't for them, I wouldn't be here today."

**Help Stuff the Bus for Hungry Families**

Stuff the Bus is again helping Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM) feed individuals and families in need in the local community. But it's only possible with food donations from area residents. This Saturday, May 16, and Tuesday, May 19, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., people may bring nonperishable items to Fastran buses parked outside the Sully District Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly, and the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 Saint Germain Drive in Centreville.

Especially needed are: Canned tuna and other meats, canned fruit and vegetable (but no green beans, corn or peas), canned ravioli, rice (small bags or boxes), boxed mashed potatoes, 100-percent fruit juice, pancake mix and syrup, flour, sugar, vegetable oil, deodorant, toilet paper and diapers, sizes 5 and 6. Those unable to donate in person, but wanting to contribute, should visit: <https://www.volunteerfairfax.org/home/covid-19/donate-funds-to-a-nonprofit-organization/>.

# BULLETIN

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.

## EMBRY RUCKER SHELTER ACCEPTING MEAL DONATIONS

The Embry Rucker Shelter in Reston is a 70-bed residential shelter that provides healthy, safe, emergency housing for individuals and families. The shelter is currently accepting donated and purchased hot meals for shelter residents. The program is similar to what has been done for hypothermia or sponsored dinners at the shelter prior to the pandemic. The shelter is taking extra preventative measures for the safety of our guests; meals are for approximately 60 people per meal, and can be paired with other donors. This is an opportunity to help the shelter and/or support local restaurants by purchasing meal items from them and providing a much needed boost to local businesses. For more information and to get on the meal schedule, email Adrian. Chadwell@cornerstonesva.org or Volunteer@cornerstonesva.org.

## TOWN ELECTION ON MAY 19

The Town of Clifton election is rescheduled for Tuesday, May 19 with polling locations opening at 6 a.m. and closing at 7 p.m. However, the Virginia Department of Elections encourages voters to protect their health during the COVID-19 outbreak. Voting by mail is strongly encouraged and a ballot can be requested today. Voters may choose reason "2A My disability or illness" for absentee voting. Tuesday, May 12 at 5 p.m. is the deadline to request an absentee ballot. Visit the Fairfax County Office of Elections website ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections)) for more information about absentee voting.

## HERNDON HIGH PTSA NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

The Herndon High School PTSA Board is getting ready for the 2020-2021 school year and is looking for volunteers to fill positions. They are looking for two Vice Presidents, a Treasurer, and a Recording Secretary. They also have an opening for Co-Chair of Hospitality and need a new Newsletter Chairperson. If you are interested in any of these positions, email [herndonptsa@gmail.com](mailto:herndonptsa@gmail.com).

## FREE PARKING AT WIEHLE-RESTON STATION

Parking at the Wiehle-Reston-East Metrorail Station will be free for the duration of WMATA's work connecting the six new Metrorail Silver Line stations to the existing transit network. The parking fees will be reinstated at each station as rail service resumes on each line.

## RESTON COMMUNITY CENTER CANCELS SUMMER CAMP

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Reston Community Center will be canceling its summer camp schedule and issuing full refunds to registered patrons. However, RCC is organizing a new slate of camps to begin in July if state and local governments permit the reopening of RCC facilities. The new camp schedule will operate under the enhanced social distancing and public health guidelines issued by Fairfax County and the Commonwealth of Virginia for these kinds of experiences. Families who have already registered and paid for camps online using myRCC will receive an automatic refund. The new camp schedule will be released in June. Patrons will be encouraged to register online. In-person registration will be offered, but that process will be managed in a fashion to preserve social distancing. The date of registration opening for Reston patrons will be determined by the government reopening calendar. Because of social distancing guidelines, there will be a maximum of nine campers in each camp. All camps will take place at RCC Hunters Woods and RCC Lake Anne; there will be no Road Rulz or Camp Goodtimes on the Road camps this summer. For details, visit [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com).

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## What's Today?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

After six weeks or so of isolating at home and working hardly at all, I believe it's time to invoke Violet Crawley (a.k.a. Maggie Smith), "the Dowager Countess of Grantham" and wonder aloud: "What's a weekend?" Every day feels like some other day or no day at all because the days in and of themselves are meaningless/indistinguishable. I mean, you can't go anywhere, you can't do anything; thankfully you can use your phone and access your computer, but at the end of the same-old-day, you're basically nowhere man, with apologies to "The Beatles."

If it weren't for the trash pick-up on Thursdays and the recyclable pick-up on Fridays, and of course, no mail delivery on Sundays, there really is very little to separate one day from the next (the four-week schedule relating to my thyroid cancer treatment notwithstanding). Actually, if it weren't for the thyroid treatment beginning May 11th and the very specific requirements/activities for the following 23 days, ending June 2nd when I return to the hospital for a post-script scan, I would be totally betwixt and between; so much so that I might not know the difference between "Downton Abbey" and "Belgravia." But I still do, thank God, even though they were both written by Julian Fellowes. I haven't completely fallen through the cracks.

Although sometimes I do fear that if I indeed have a crack in my psychological armor, it likely would occur in the middle/late beginning of a pandemic when a possible lack of sanity might be exposed.

And since I'm not really allowed out of the house and retail stores and service providers are mostly unavailable, this would be a heck of a time to need any kind of help from outside one's house. You're not supposed to go anywhere and neither is anybody else so you're sort of left to fend for yourself. Now, generally speaking, I don't mind fending for myself or others for that matter, but at present, in the midst of pandemic pressures, we're all supposed to mind our own business (and/or others if we stay six feet apart) and watch our "ps" and "qs" as we're doing it.

And as well consider what other letters to 'watch.' The problem with living through a pandemic, aside from listening to all the opinions on "a" to "z" is believing any kind of reliable timeline. No one, despite their credentials and learned experience, can say with any accuracy or certainty when this pandemic will end, when the virus will stop spreading and/or whether and when a second viral wave will hit in the fall, when a safe and effective vaccine will be ready and when we can return to whatever the new normal will be. And though there's no shortage of hopes and prayers on the subject, unfortunately neither are there any simple solutions or definitive end to this mess. Somehow, we have to persevere in the present to get to the future by presuming nothing except more of the same. I guess it's an updated version of a definite-maybe or a "confirmed I doubt it" as BJ Honeycutt frustratingly said on a M\*A\*S\*H episode 25-plus years ago.

However, life went on for BJ and the rest of M\*A\*S\*H characters as they all got to leave South Korea and return to The United States (except for Klinger who ironically enough chose to stay and marry a South Korean woman). And just as it seemed that the suffering they all experienced during the police action in South/North Korea would never end, it did. And so too will this pandemic end. Probably not by magic as President Trump has suggested, but likely through the collective efforts of the medical and scientific communities as well as our own mitigation and social distancing behaviors. As my Auntie Irene used to say decades ago, and as so many others say all the time now: "This too shall pass."

But not knowing exactly when 'it shall pass' is sort of the problem. As my late mother would say: "It's enough already." I imagine we'll have a better idea of whether it's 'enough already' when we see the effects of the 45-plus states which are "opening." If the virus reasserts itself, and thousands more are diseased and ultimately die, then we'll know exactly what day it is: a day of reckoning.

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

# Reston Farmers Market Opens, With Social Distancing and Masks

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**R**eston Farmers Market operated by the Fairfax County Park Authority opened for its 23rd consecutive season Saturday, May 9, in its usual place and usual hours but in unusual times. COVID-19 gripped the County. The temperature registered 35 degrees and winds upwards of 25 miles per hour blew as the opening bell rang. Yet, the memory most seared into Market Manager John Lovaas's mind, he said afterward, was the facemasks. Everyone wore them—shoppers, vendors, volunteers and the media.

Pamela Smith, Community Horticulture Supervisor at Fairfax County Park Authority, was on hand to assist. "In this time of COVID-19, we weren't sure the Farmers Markets would happen or how," she said. Collaborative preparations had been underway for weeks on end though to comply with Virginia Governor Ralph Northam's social distancing orders and safety guidelines designed to protect everyone.

The first of three markets to open in May, the Lake Anne Shopping Center parking lot, where the vendors set up their stalls, looked quite different. Market Managers John and Fran Lovaas spread out the modest 10 by 10-foot tents to facilitate social distancing. They and volunteers allowed a limited number of shoppers into the market from two entrances where taped Xs on the pavement kept individuals 6-feet apart. No more than two family members could enter the market with one customer per stall. Pink fluorescent tape arrows indicated one-way shopper traffic and then to marked exits. Volunteers encouraged everyone to wear face coverings.

Some vendors, like 78 Acres bagged purchases for shoppers, who then paid either with cash or credit card, although cards were preferred. Other vendors, like Spring Valley Farm and Orchard, delivered to shoppers their pre-ordered, prepaid seasonal market baskets, available online.

After the first County Farmers Market of the year closed on its Opening Day, Lovaas reported patron count numbered in the 800s. "Not up to traffic on a more normal early May opening, but for a COVID opener, we were quite pleased," he said.

## Comments on the Reston Farmers Market Group Facebook page

Laurie Tyler Todd: "Beautiful! All in masks. Volunteers are limiting the number of customers and guiding us on a one-way route with spacing marked at each booth. Much produce is pre-bagged. Couldn't be better!"

Lesley Tyson: "Thank you, everyone, for your care and respect for each other that made it work!"

Michael Kasprzyk: "Well done and just a little closer to normalcy. Safe and well done. They won't stay if we don't visit and shop with them."

Tori Gibbs: "It was wonderful to be back and shop in a safe, cheerful space."

Janet Cushing: "I will definitely be there again next week!"

Del. Kenneth R. Plum (D-36): "Excellent job, John, Fran and volunteers. Well run. Very secure. I picked up items I had pre-order(ed) and paid for in advance in fewer than 10 minutes!"



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

**Opening Day for the 2020 Reston Farmers Market (From left) Brian Pittack, Lake Anne Volunteer, Fran Lovaas, Reston Farmers Market Co-Market Master, Linda Fuller, Lake Anne Florist (retired), John Dudzinsky, Herndon Market Manager and John Lovaas, Reston Farmers Market Co-market Manager.**



**Masked shoppers and vendors maintain social distance on Opening Day of the 2020 Reston Farmers Market.**



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

**With wife Julia by his side, Herndon resident Air Force Col. Robert A. Shawn (Retired) who turned 100 years old, smiles as more than 120 vehicles join the birthday caravan parade organized by his fellow Post members at Veterans of Foreign Wars Loudoun County Post #1177.**

## Col. 'Bob' Honored on 100th Birthday

**Drive-by birthday parade for Herndon centenarian, retired fighter pilot Col. Robert A. Shawn.**

**R**etired Air Force Col. Robert A. Shawn of Herndon turned 100 years old recently. A member of Veterans of Foreign Wars Loudoun County Post #1177, Shawn's comrades at the Post could not let one of their fellow defenders of freedom go without recognition on his momentous day, COVID-19 or not. "He's the heart of our Post," said Philip Rusciollelli Past Commander of VFW Post 1177.

Post members are veterans who served in one or more of the United States military actions - World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam Conflict, Desert Shield/Desert Storm, actions in Bosnia and other distant places, and most recently, during the current Global War on Terror. They organized the drive-by caravan parade to honor the colonel. "We love Colonel Bob," said Richard Bruns Post Senior Vice Commander, adding, "He is one of the few World War II survivors."

Shortly before 5:30 the evening of May 6, Retired Col. Shawn, the fighter pilot who flew a reported 328 missions during his 30-year career spanning World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam Conflict sat at the end of his driveway with wife, Julia Shawn, beside him. For more than a half-hour, a reported 120 vehicles decorated with homemade banners and signs, American flags and birthday wishes, slowly drove



**It's a birthday caravan parade 120 units strong for Air Force Colonel Robert A. Shawn (Retired) of Herndon who turned 100 years old.**

by his Herndon home. Police cruisers from the Herndon and Fairfax County Police Departments and others joined.

The words, "Happy birthday, Colonel" and "Thank you for your service," echoed as the vehicles circled the cul de sac in front of where the colonel sat with his wife, Julia standing beside him. The years may have slowed the colonel down a bit, but as each American flag passed by him, Col. Robert A. Shawn United States Air Force (Retired) saluted. Social distancing guidelines kept the colonel from verbally expressing his thanks to all, but Julia extended her appreciation to everyone for coming out. Ray Delpesche, current Post Commander of VFW Post 1177, said, "Col. Bob is a wonderful example to follow with patriotism and love of country."

— MERCIA HOBSON