

# The Prince George's Post



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## County Executive Alsobrooks Signs Executive Order Requiring Face Coverings For Patrons in Grocery Stores

*The Executive Order Also Requires "TheBus" Transit Riders To Wear Face Coverings*

By GINA FORD, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR  
Office of the County Executive, Prince George's County

LANDOVER, Md. (April 11, 2020)—Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks announced today that she will sign an Executive Order requiring all patrons shopping in County grocery stores, pharmacies and large chain retail establishments to wear masks or face coverings to enter. The order also requires individuals who ride "TheBus", Prince George's County's bus transit system, to also wear masks or face coverings onboard.

"The safety and wellbeing of all Prince Georgians during this pandemic is my top priority," said Alsobrooks. "For the protection of employees who work in these establishments, as well as the

customers who need these essential services, it is critical that each person does their part to cover their faces and minimize their exposure to others."

**This Executive Order [took] effect Wednesday, April 15, 2020.** The order will also require that grocery stores, pharmacies and large retailers promote social distancing inside and outside of the stores while customers wait.

"These steps will be critical to help us flatten the curve and prevent the spread of COVID-19," said Prince George's County Health Officer Earnest Carter. "We know there are people with the virus who are walking around and showing no symptoms, and these actions will prevent them from spreading it to others. Consider it an act of love."

## PGCMLS Expands Virtual Programs: Lineup Now Includes Weekly Spanish Language and STEM Programs

By DONNA SCOTT-MARTIN  
PGCMLS

LARGO, Md. (April 9, 2020)—The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) is pleased to expand opportunities for the community to engage with the Library from home through virtual programs. While the Library has offered free virtual programs throughout the COVID-19 emergency, there is now more content than ever before with up to 60 programs on offer every week. Regular weekly programs for children are available in English, Spanish, and American Sign Language. Adult and teen programs include the weekly Community Conversation series with PGCMLS CEO Roberta Phillips, National Poetry Month event featuring local poet and Board of Library Trustees member Hiram Larew, and a wide range of author and book discussion events. All of the Library's virtual programs are listed at [pgcmls.info/virtual-events](http://pgcmls.info/virtual-events). Virtual events produced by the Library are broadcast on Crowdcast, with select additional streams to Facebook, YouTube, and Periscope.

The Library's virtual programs frequently feature special guests from partner organizations like Joe's Movement Emporium, the Prince George's County Police Department, the Prince George's County Human Relations Commission, the Prince George's County Office of Community Relations, the Laurel Police Department, and the City of Bowie.

Spanish language virtual programs are now available on a weekly basis. They include Biblióniños, a biweekly Spanish read-aloud program for children ages 2–5, and a bilingual English/Spanish read-aloud on Saturday at 9:30 a.m. Beginning on **Tuesday, April 21 at 4 p.m.**, the Library will offer a weekly "Café a las cuatro" series of discussions in Spanish with special guests

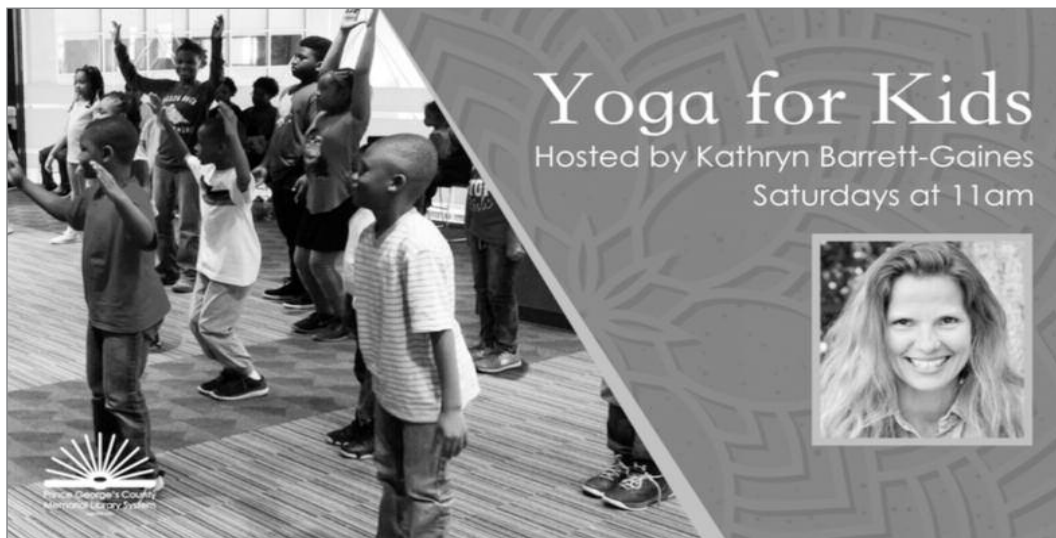


IMAGE COURTESY PGCMLS

from local government to discuss resources and current issues, ranging from Census to Small Business Resources, in Prince George's County and the DMV area. The program is hosted by Vilma Sandoval-Sall, English Language Learner Program Coordinator, PGCMLS.

The Library continues to commemorate National Poetry Month this program, Poetry of Hope: An Open Mic-Online Poetry Reading, hosted by Hiram Larew, local poet and PGCMLS Board of Library Trustees member on Wednesday, April 15, 2020 at 7 p.m. The event is an open virtual gathering for local poets and spoken word artists to share their work and connect with each other.

PGCMLS and the Old Greenbelt Theatre are partnering to present the longstanding Storytime on Screen series as a live virtual event on the **second and fourth Mondays of each month at 10:30 a.m.** ([began] April 13). The program is hosted by Heather Jackson, West Area Manager, PGCMLS.

The inaugural Authors for Truth event (Dr. Richard Bell on "Stolen"), which was previously postponed due to the COVID-19 emergency, will be offered as a live virtual event on **Tuesday, April 21 at 7 p.m.** "Stolen: Five Free Boys Kidnapped into Slavery and their Astonishing Odyssey Home" (2019) is a gripping and true story about five boys who were kidnapped and

smuggled into slavery. Made possible by the PGCMLS Foundation. Check out the eBook or audiobook at [pgcmls.overdrive.com](http://pgcmls.overdrive.com).

On **Tuesday, April 28 at 7 p.m.**, Michelle Hamiel (COO of Support Services, PGCMLS) and Kyla Hanington (Prince George's County Human Relations Commission) will lead a discussion of Verna Myers' "What if I Say the Wrong Thing?: 25 Habits for Culturally Effective People." Check out the eBook at [pgcmls.overdrive.com](http://pgcmls.overdrive.com).

PGCMLS CEO Roberta Phillips' weekly Community Conversation series (**Thursdays at 4 p.m.**) provides opportunities for the community to hear from local leaders about the resources available to them during the public health emergency. Each discussion features an open question and answer session. The guest speaker on Thursday, April 9 [was] Renée Battle-Brooks, Executive Director, Prince George's County Human Relations Commission.

New virtual events are added on a daily basis. Virtual programs from trusted external organizations, such as the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanic Garden and the Houston Children's Museum, are listed

See PGCMLS VIRTUAL Page A2

## Nathaniel Richardson, Jr. Named President and CEO of UM Capital Region Health

By JANIA MATTHEWS  
University of Maryland  
Capital Region Health

CHEVERLY, Md. (April 10, 2020)—Nathaniel "Nat" Richardson Jr. has been named the new President and Chief Executive Officer for University of Maryland Capital Region Health (UM Capital), effective May 18. After a national search, Richardson was selected to lead UM Capital in its continued efforts to transform health care in Prince George's County—a transformation that includes a focus on providing state-of-the-art clinical care with compassion and community leadership while meeting the highest standards of patient safety.

"Nat will lead the organization at a pivotal time in its history. UM Capital Region Health continues on its journey to provide compassionate, high-quality, patient and family-centered care, demonstrate its commitment to the communities it serves, transition to its new flagship hospital in Largo, and transform the Health and Wellness Campus in Laurel," says Mohan Suntha, MD, MBA, President and Chief Executive Officer, University of Maryland Medical System. "I have every confidence that Nat will deliver on his charge to expand the vision and strategy for UM Capital that will propel the organization into a bright future for its employees, patients and the community."

Richardson is a native of Houston Texas with over 34 years of healthcare experience. Most



PHOTO COURTESY  
UM CAPITAL REGION HEALTH

recently, he served as President of Decatur Morgan Hospital near Huntsville, Alabama. While in this role, Richardson was charged with bringing three competitor hospitals together to form Decatur Morgan, a large regional system within the Huntsville Hospital Health System. Since 2005 Richardson served in multiple executive roles within this Health System and his executive oversight has included all major service lines and divisions.

"I am very humbled and honored to have been selected to join University of Maryland Capital Region Health as President and CEO," says Richardson. I was drawn to the passionate commitment from executive leadership, medical staff, the Board of Directors and others who are laser focused on providing high-quality patient and family centered healthcare to residents in Prince George's County and the surrounding area. I am ready to partner with staff, community leaders, and elected officials to help the organization reach its fullest potential."

## University of Maryland Capital Region Health Announces Progress on Temporary Expansion Of UM Laurel Medical Center

*System engaged in exhaustive preparation to increase bed, staff, equipment capacity—adapting to COVID-19 pandemic*

By JANIA MATTHEWS  
University of Maryland  
Medical System

CHEVERLY, Md. (April 9, 2020)—The University of Maryland Capital Region Health today announced progress on the opening of the temporary expansion of UM Laurel Medical Center and provided additional details on the future use of the facility in response to COVID-19. At the direction of Governor

Larry Hogan and in close partnership with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS) and UM Capital Region Health are currently in the process of temporarily expanding UM Laurel Medical Center in order to meet patient demand. At the current rate of progress, it is expected that the

See UM LAUREL Page A6

## Maryland Coronavirus (COVID-19) Rumor Control Page Launches

*Empowers Marylanders to Call Out False Information, Promote Facts*

By PRESS OFFICER  
Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

REISTERSTOWN, Md. (April 7, 2020)—The Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), in partnership with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), and the Maryland Department of Information Tech-

nology (DoIT), today launched the Maryland Coronavirus (COVID-19) Rumor Control Page. Marylanders are encouraged to visit the page at [Bit.ly/Md-Covid19-Rumors](http://Bit.ly/Md-Covid19-Rumors).

"As part of the State Response

to COVID-19, MEMA stood up its Joint Information Center to provide the right information to the right people at the right time so they can be empowered to make the right decisions," said Jorge E. Castillo, MEMA's spokesperson. "We have been dispelling rumors and providing factual information since then,

and we want Maryland residents to be able to participate in the process by helping us identify rumors and false information that could unnecessarily cause panic or worse, result in decision making that could lead to severe injuries or even death."

Maryland's Rumor Page allows visitors to:

- Read through several existing rumors and find the correct information in a variety of topics, including
  - The Novel Coronavirus and the disease it causes, COVID-19
  - Maryland and Federal Government Orders
  - Supplies
  - School / Education
- Subscribe to updates to be notified immediately once a new rumor has been identified and

- dispelled.
  - Ask a question.
  - See a digest of trusted sources and see their latest and most relevant social media posts in real time.
  - Share the page easily to Facebook, Twitter, email, and more.
- "If you see something, say something," continued Castillo. "You can say it by clicking on the Submit a Rumor button on the right side of the page."

### INSIDE

**The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington Provides Communities With Critical Services**

... the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington is offering an exciting array of free virtual YMCA experiences online

Community, Page A3

**SBA Clarifies Eligibility of Faith-Based Organizations To Participate in Paycheck Protection and Economic Injury Disaster Loan Programs**

"Faith-based organizations have always provided critical social services for people in need, and SBA will make clear that these organizations may access this emergency capital."

Business and Finance, Page A5

**ChildWatch: A Season for Renewal and Hope**

All over the world, resilience, strength, compassion and innovation will grow from under this tragedy. "We honor the tears, but we also bless the hope."

Commentary, Page A6

**National Donate Life Month Free Mental Health Counseling Services For First Responders**

**Prince George's County Support Groups Move to Telehealth**

**Alzheimer's Association Chapter Offers Free Virtual Education Classes**

Health and Wellness, Page A7

**Your Backyard Isn't Cancelled: Six Tips to Celebrate Earth Day Right at Home**

The environmental education program resources and activities, based on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) principles, give kids the prompts they need to have fun learning about and exploring the nature and science.

Environment, Page A9

# TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

## In & Around Morningside-Skyline by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

### Morningside election moved to July

Mayor Benn Cann emailed word that their election will be in July, the exact date to be decided. He says it will give candidates time to campaign. Also, to allow voters to send absentee ballots if they chose to not come to the Town Hall. The election was originally scheduled for May 4.

He also said they would be having their Town Work Session and Town Hall meetings via Teleconference. "People can contact the Town Hall," he said, "and provide their name and number and we will get back with them with a pin so they can listen if they so choose." Contact: 301-736-2300 or generalmailbox@morningsidemd.gov.

"All events as you can imagine have been cancelled through May 4th," the Mayor said, "This is an ever-changing situation, but I have been on calls with the President, Governor, Senators and Congressmen, along with our own County Executive to ensure I am equipped with up-to-date information and resources to offer residents. I will keep you updated as I get more information."

### Sad news

As I was submitting my column on April 10, I got an email from Stephen Armhold, former Morningside Chief of Police. He wrote, "My wife Shawn passed away April 9, 2020 at the age of 76. She died from the virus, and had dementia."

The Armholds have been residing in Florida. I'll ask Stephen to send me an obituary. Meanwhile, remember the family in your prayers.

### Can you help?

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, in collaboration with County Council Member Monique Anderson-Walker, is sponsoring a Community Food Drive on Saturdays, April 11 through May 23, 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Deliver to Our Saviour's at 4915 St. Barnabas Road in Temple Hills.

Non-perishable food, new plastic bags, hand sanitizer, and toilet paper are requested.

The donations will be for distribution to St. Stephen Baptist Church (Capital Area Food Bank) at 5757 Temple Hill Road. For more information, contact Kathy at 301-326-3263.

### Neighbors & other good people

I cruised the Town this week and didn't see a single campaign sign asking Morningsiders to vote for Sharon Fowler, Dave Williams, John Anthony or Sheila Scott. I'll cruise through again in a couple of weeks to see if any signs have sprouted.

NBC4 news anchor Jim Vance is being remembered at Archbishop Carroll High School in Washington with the dedication of the new Jim Vance Media Center, which houses an advanced program for students studying journalism and media. The ribbon was cut on March 12. Jim Vance died July 22, 2017, at the age of 75, and I miss him.

Archbishop of the Military Services USA, Timothy P. Broglio, celebrated the school-children's Mass on March 2 at St. Philip's. I did a little research on him. He is a native of Cleveland, has held many offices and served in many places around the world, and is fluent in English, Italian, Spanish and French. But of course, his homily for the children was in English.

### Dog missing

A resident of Oakcrest, named Mary, posted to Nextdoor Morningside: "My yorkie has gotten out of the house. He does not have a collar. He's brown, white, and silver. If you see him, please call 301-222-3371."

### Skyline Citizens reschedule 50th

Several weeks ago, the Skyline Citizens Association sent Save the Date cards to County officials and others, announcing that we'd be celebrating our 50th anniversary on May 16. Because of the unknown length of the current pandemic, the planning committee has decided to postpone this year's celebration until Spring of 2021.

### Morningside/Skyline Memories: 40 years ago

The Skyline Citizens Association celebrated its 10th anniversary in May with a parade up Suitland Road, square-dancing, barbershop quartet, magic show, movies, Gong Show, games, a firetruck to climb on and food, of course.

Vera Chaney was elected president of the Morningside Senior Citizens. Other officers were Harry Carnes, vice president; Alvina Beardmore, secretary; and Louise Rousseaux, treasurer.

About 200 turned out for the Dedication of Michael Polley Park in Skyline. Skyline officers cut the ribbon.

Condolences were extended to the family of a longtime beloved Morningsider, Clair Loughmiller, who died Jan. 20.

Citizens for the Branch Avenue Metro protested after the County Council refused to hear a discussion.

With the Maryland Primary coming up May 13, 1980, many were still not registered. The Skyline Newsletter asked its readers, "Are you registered to vote?"

### May they rest in peace

Robert "Bobby" Jones, 75, of Hunt-ingtown, who attended Suitland High School, died April 3. He's survived by his wife Eileen Caffrey Jones (Class of '63), son Steven, daughter Robin, and two grandchildren.

Keith Valentine, of Suitland, was riding a dirt bike on March 20 along the 3100 block of Branch Avenue when he was struck by an SUV as it was making a left turn. He was taken to the hospital where he died. A memorial service was held at Strickland Funeral Home April 2. He was 38.

### Mike Cady, of McNamara, Class of 1967

Michael George Cady, 70, of Millville, Del., who graduated from Bishop McNamara High School as a member of the Founding Class of 1967, died at home March 29. He was born in Washington, son of Clement and Betty Cady, and grew up in Forestville.

He excelled in football, golf, and basketball and was inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame in 1997. He earned a B.A. at Towson State, master's at George Washington University and doctorate from the University of Houston.

Mike was employed with the U.S. Postal Service, Anne Arundel Community College and the Milton S. Kronheim Co. before moving his family in 1986 to League City, Tex., where he worked at College of the Mainland in Texas City. They later moved to Arlington, Tex., where Mike eventually retired as Vice President for Continuing Education Services at Tarrant County College.

He missed the beach, especially walking the boardwalk in Ocean City. So, in 2016 the Cadys moved back East. He's survived by his wife Mary, daughters Allison and Megan, and two grandchildren. A celebration of life will be held later.

Mike Cady is remembered for his sense of humor and moves on the dance floor.

### Milestones

Happy birthday to Cameron Trexler, April 19; Devaughn Branham, April 20; Jill Gilmartin Booth and Tiffany Jackson, April 21; Taylor Foster, April 22; Jim Reilly, David Titus, Barbara Sparks and Margaret White, April 23; and Edna Lucas, April 24.

Happy anniversary to Jim and Pat Conlon on their 46th, April 20: John and Ruth Anthony, Jr., their 42nd on April 22; Lewis and Trisha (Pitts) Woods, their 31st on April 22; and Janet and Brian Spivey, April 23.

Keep safe!

## Around the County

### Ledo Pizza Launches 'Pizzas For the Frontline' To Feed Medical Professionals and First Responders

*Maryland-based pizza brand to donate meals to heroes on the frontlines*

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (April 8, 2020)—In response to these unprecedented times, Ledo Pizza has launched its "Pizzas for the Frontline" initiative to donate meals to medical and first responder facilities.

Now through May 31, anyone interested in making a donation to local heroes on the frontlines can do so through pizzasforthe frontline.com. 100% of all donations to Pizzas for the Frontline will go directly towards sending Pizza Parties—pizzas, calzones and salads—to medical and first responder facilities.

Ledo Pizza will donate Pizza Parties to new facilities each week. To nominate a local medical or first responder facility, visit pizzasforthe frontline.com.

"We want to do what we can to support the brave men and women that are working on the frontlines during this pandemic," said Ledo Pizza President Jamie Beall. "With help from Ledo Pizza fans and partners like Ironmark and Advanced Radiology, we have the ability to say, 'thank you' by giving back to these heroes."

In an abundance of caution, Ledo Pizza is currently offering contactless carryout. To place an online order, visit order.ledopizza.com.

*Founded in 1955 in the suburbs of Maryland (Adelphi) and now headquartered in Annapolis, Ledo Pizza is a regional pizza franchise that is dedicated to offering a fresh, affordable menu served in a family-friendly atmosphere. Frequently awarded "Best Pizza" recognition in communities across the U.S., Ledo Pizza currently has more than 100 locally owned locations in 7 states with multiple new restaurants in the pipeline. Ledo Pizza believes strongly in community involvement and the brand is a proud partner of the Virginia Cavaliers and the Baltimore Ravens. Ledo Pizza is also the Official Pizza of the Maryland Terrapins. Visit ledopizza.com and follow the brand on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.*

—By Brooke Sundermier, for Ledo Pizza

### Event Cancelled:

#### 'An Evening Under the Tuscan Sky' Gala

PASADENA, Md. (April 8, 2020)—As many in the community will agree, the need to adapt to the everchanging public health crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic is essential. It is for that reason, Hospice of the Chesapeake has come to recognize over the last several weeks it is necessary to cancel its annual gala, "An Evening Under the Tuscan Sky," which had been postponed until Saturday, July 18, 2020.

This is a decision that was not taken lightly. The organization's leadership believes that, given current guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and the State of Maryland, cancelling this event is in the best interest of our larger community. The nonprofit is incredibly grateful for the patience and continuing support of the many sponsors, ticket holders, vendors, venue and Gala Committee members who have committed time and energy in the planning of this event and apologizes for any inconvenience due to the cancellation. Look for a 2021 Gala Save the Date in the coming months.

—Elizabeth Marcussen, Hospice of the Chesapeake

### Produce Distribution Service Across the DMV

The YMCA is offering produce distribution across the DMV. Produce is available for anyone, free of charge, regardless of their affiliation with the YMCA. Produce will be distributed while supplies last.

Locations and times for produce pickup in/near Prince George's County are below:

CAQT Apartments:  
8733 Carroll Ave #4, Silver Spring, MD  
Produce: Wednesdays 4 p.m.–6 p.m., Thursdays 9 a.m.–12 p.m.  
YMCA Silver Spring  
Produce: Wednesdays 4 p.m.–6 p.m., Thursdays 9 a.m.–12 p.m.  
Trinity Lutheran Church:  
6600 Laurel Bowie Rd, Bowie, MD 20715  
Produce: Mondays 4 p.m.–6 p.m., Tuesdays 9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Follow the @ymcadcfood Instagram and Facebook accounts for cooking tips and recipes that match the produce distributed. If you are experiencing hunger and do not know where to find additional resources outside of these locations, please contact health@ymcadc.org so that we can assist you in finding those resources. Thank you to our partners at Keany Produce and Child Care Resources for your contributions!

—Susan Bounds, for YMCA of Metropolitan Washington

### PGCMLS Virtual from A1

on the website. Check pgcmls.info/virtual-events for the latest lineup. Select past programs are available for viewing on demand at facebook.com/pgcmls and youtube.com/pgcmls.

#### Weekly Virtual Children's Events

Live Virtual Read-Aloud | Monday-Saturday at 10 a.m.  
Bibliofiños (Spanish Read-Alouds) | Tuesday and Friday at 11 a.m.  
Goodnight with Dolly | Thursday at 7 p.m.  
STEM at Home | Friday at noon  
Bilingual (English/Spanish) Live Virtual Read-Aloud | Saturday at 9:30 a.m.  
Storytelling with ASL | Saturday at 10:30 a.m. (Co-presented with Old Greenbelt Theatre)  
Yoga for Kids | Saturday at 11 a.m.

#### Weekly Virtual Adult & Teen Events

Digital Demo | Tuesday and Thursday at 3 p.m.  
Café a las cuatro | Tuesdays at 4 p.m. (beginning April 21)  
#PGCMLSBookChat on Twitter | Thursday at 12 p.m.  
Community Conversation with Roberta Phillips | Thursday at 4 p.m.  
Crafternoon | Friday at 3 p.m.

#### Featured On-Demand Content

Past PGCMLS Virtual Programs  
ArtistWorks (Music Lessons)  
CreativeBug (Arts & Crafts Activities)  
Kanopy Kids (Streaming Movies/Shows)  
Qello (Concerts)  
Storyline Online (Storytime)

## Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

### BSU'S WINNING WOMEN

Toyan Espeut ('93) is a prominent leader in the technology industry. She has led high performing sales teams for start-ups and publicly traded software companies locally, in Silicon Valley and Seattle. Toyan also serves on the Technology Business Management (TBM) Council where she promotes women and diversity in tech along with educating students on STEM career paths.

Her tip for success. "Know your value and how to apply that value in solving a problem. When you do, you can literally create your own opportunities!" Information from Office of Alumni Engagement, alumni@bowiestate.edu.

Danita Lynn Brooks ('95) started her career as a high school and college English composition teacher. She learned American Sign Language and founded English & Sign Language Masters, LLC, (ESLM), which provides interpreting services, diversity workshops, and editing services. In 2019, she published a book, *The Other Side of Unforgiveness*, and strives to connect people culturally, linguistically, and emotionally so we can all live full lives...together. #LiveLoveForgive. Information from Office of Alumni Engagement, alumni@bowiestate.edu.

### UM/W SILHOUETTES 3RD YEAR ANNIVERSARY VIRTUAL CELEBRATION

Happy Anniversary to Upper Marlboro/Waldorf (MD) Silhouettes Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. The Silhouettes serve as an auxiliary to the Upper Marlboro/Waldorf (MD) Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. We promote social, civic, and economic development within the Upper Marlboro/Waldorf communities to make a positive and lasting impact. As wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters we lay the foundation of love and devotion that strengthens the connection between family and community. The Silhouettes celebrated their 3rd year Anniversary Thursday, April 2, 2020. Silhouettes are Jacqueline Wilcher, Jacqueline Pryor, Andrea Parson, Deneen Spruill, Tonya Barbour, Dora Lucas, Lorraine Bell, Velda McGhee, Levonia Parker, Pretita Perkins, Rosalie David, Sylvia Sampleton, Kellie Waters, Grace Luke Watson, Tanya Holloway, Angela Cameron, Tamisha Semedo, Shemeca Thomas, Janet Tull, Tonya Tyler and Audrey Johnson.

### INCLUSION FACULTY ADVANCES

#### ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

A Bowie State University visual art professor, leading an effort to uncover lost stories of historic African American communities, was named an Inclusion Visiting Faculty Fellow with University of Maryland Baltimore County's Drescher Center for the Humanities.

Professor Gina Lewis will spend the fall 2020 semester fellowship working on a Bowie State research project to collect oral histories from descendants of African Americans who lived and worked along the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park, including the Georgetown neighborhood of Washington, DC. An interdisciplinary team of student and faculty researchers, led by Lewis and BSU history professor Dr. David Reed, is documenting the history and culture of largely forgotten communities and individuals in photos, videos, and other creative expression. The Bowie State research, funded by the National Park Service, is already underway. The Visiting Faculty Fellowship will enable Lewis to compile a comprehensive report of the team's findings.

Lewis, who is also chairperson of the Department of Fine and Performing Arts, is using the fellowship to explore her interest in social justice art that inspires action.

"My interests lie in the creation of artwork that is grounded in interdisciplinary perspectives of world issues and solutions," Lewis said. "With this project, I am particularly interested in the power of communicating the experiences of people by giving them agency in telling their own story and how that could be influential in how others perceive the story being told. The arts and humanities provide the means for confronting, contemplating and communicating the nature of our similarities and the beauty of our differences." Media Contact: Damita Chambers, dchambers@bowiestate.edu.

### APRIL WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Wedding Anniversary to Ron and Beth Davis, Lloyd and Shirley Brown, Trevor and Denise Bourne, Norman and Jean Noel, Clarence and Dorothy Glasgow Reid, Eddie and Ruth Wilson, George and Karen Taylor, Anston and Angela Williams, Cosmos and Stephnie Samuel who are celebrating Wedding Anniversaries in April.

# COMMUNITY

## The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

### Don't Let This Health Crisis Overwhelm Your Kids

While the coronavirus crisis has increased stress levels for all of us, younger children and teens are often more strongly impacted by such a national health disaster.

Kids have not only heard or seen news reports of what is happening but many have also been directly affected by the closing of their schools and colleges.

Such changes produce stress and anxiety for young people. Will there be graduation ceremonies? Will school sports or social events return? I miss my friends. I've never done online classes before. What if I get sick or my parents do?

The reduced socialization that was part of each school day is another stress-producing factor for many children. And yes, even very young children get scared as they hear bits and pieces of the news or see their parents' anxiety or the differences in the way the family is living.

There are various changes that parents might observe that show how today's problems are affecting your children. In younger children it might be excessive crying or irritation, the return of behaviors previously outgrown, or exhibiting high levels of worry or sadness.

In older children the stress can express itself as changes in eating and sleeping habits, or increased levels of irritability and "acting out" behaviors in teens. School performance may suffer, what were favorite activities may be avoided, and there might be reports of headaches or body pain for no clear reason.

As a parent you want to try and help your child, regardless of age, understand what is going on. An age appropriate discussion of COVID-19 is a starting point, one with answers the kids can understand. Try to be reassuring, making your child know that his or her safety is your primary concern.

Try to limit your kids' exposure to news or social media stories about what is happening. When needed, share solid information from reliable sources rather than having the kids pick up misleading "facts," rumors and advice from the Internet.

The more you can maintain normal, regular family routines, the more comforting it can be for your children. And the better example you can set by staying reliably informed and by setting an example, as much as possible, of a normal, healthy life, the easier it will be for your children to cope with the stress they may be experiencing. Most importantly, don't skip on reassuring hugs and love for your children.

Counseling Corner is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to [ACAcorner@counseling.org](mailto:ACAcorner@counseling.org) or visit the ACA website at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org).

## The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington Provides Communities With Critical Services During COVID-19 Pandemic

*From distributing free produce, providing daycare for essential workers to hosting critically needed blood drives and free online nutrition and exercise programs, the Y steps up for communities across the DMV*

By SOPHIE SCHEPS  
for YMCA of Metro Washington

WASHINGTON (April 8, 2020)—While the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington temporarily closed its facility doors on March 16, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it did not close its community support. Instead, the Y is providing vital services to help support communities across the Washington metropolitan area. These include:

- Distributing free produce across each community the YMCA serves. To learn more, please click here;
- Providing emergency childcare support for the children of essential workers (first responders, medical professionals, etc.) at Y locations in Maryland;
- Holding blood drives in partnership with the Red Cross at Y facilities, to address the shortage of blood supplies in local hospitals;
- Providing free meals to children at YMCA branches and program centers. Details will soon be available here;
- Communicating directly with youth and their families to provide help needed through YMCA Youth and Family Services;
- Continuing to provide telehealth mental health therapy through the Y's Youth and Family Services program for existing clients; and

- Coordinating virtual volunteer support for the community, including making masks for Y workers.

"Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Y's buildings may be temporarily closed, however, the Y will continue to be a force of good during this time of great uncertainty. We will provide critically needed services such as childcare for emergency frontline responders and community grocery distribution. The Y will also host blood drives and conduct welfare checks for seniors," explained Angie L. Reese-Hawkins, YMCA of Metropolitan Washington, president and CEO. "Members of the Y help support these critical services. The Y is here to serve and strengthen the community."

To support the mental, physical and spiritual well-being of the community, while observing social distancing requirements and other safety protocols, the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington is offering an exciting array of free virtual YMCA experiences online at [www.ymcadc.org/virtualymca](http://www.ymcadc.org/virtualymca). This site contains access to live workouts that are updated daily and recorded video content that is updated weekly to support:

- Physical activity for all in the Virtual Wellness Center. Enjoy yoga classes, the challenge of boot camp, barre, or participation in another workout experience.

- Nutrition education and cooking instruction is available at Virtual Kitchen. Viewers can learn how to blanch and freeze broccoli, how to make chicken stock, and much more.

- Youth development activities are available in the Virtual Playground, with activities for early learning and school age children.
- Learn better hand-eye techniques and racquet skills in the Virtual Tennis Center.
- Enhance swimming skills, water safety and more in the Virtual Aquatics Center.
- Strength, community and support for seniors can be found in the Virtual Fit & Well Seniors Center.

The YMCA of Metropolitan Washington is a non-profit charity organization that has been serving the communities and families of Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia in the areas of youth development, healthy living and social responsibility, for nearly 168 years. Through opportunities in wellness, aquatics, youth sports, summer camps, childcare and more, the Y engages more than 250,000 individuals and families. Visit [www.ymcadc.org](http://www.ymcadc.org). Members are asked to stay with the Y during this critical time to maintain charitable services for every community. #StayWithUs

## Rabid Cat Alert in Prince George's County

*One person scratched by the stray cat is being treated; Health Department seeks public's help identifying other people who may have been exposed*

By GEORGE LETTIS  
Prince George's County Health Department

LARGO, Md. (April 11, 2020)—The Prince George's County Health Department is alerting community members about a recent rabies exposure in Riverdale Park, MD. On or around April 3, 2020, a stray cat scratched an individual near the 5800 block of 67th Ave in Riverdale Park. The stray cat is described as an orange tabby, domestic short hair. The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) confirmed that the cat tested positive for rabies on April 8. The individual exposed to the rabid cat has begun rabies post-exposure prophylaxis. As a precaution, additional stray cats found in the area will also be taken in for testing.

Due to the risk of rabies exposure, the Health Department seeks the public's help in identifying any persons who may have had contact with the confirmed rabid cat or additional stray cats in that area. If you know of any persons or animals that may have had contact with the above cat between March 22 and April 3, please contact the Health Department immediately at 301-583-3750.

"Rabies is often a life-threatening disease; however, it is highly preventable by beginning post-exposure treatment immediately following exposure. Treatment is determined by the type of animal contact and patient assessment," said Dr. Ernest Carter, Prince George's County Health Officer. "Rabies is transmitted through the saliva of an infected animal and is easily transmissible through a bite of an infected animal. The best method to eliminate the risk of rabies exposure is to avoid contact with unfamiliar animals. We encourage community members to report any unusual or erratic animal behavior they notice and to avoid handling and feeding any unknown animals in their community."

When a person is bitten or exposed to the saliva of a rabid animal, the disease is prevented by administering four doses of rabies vaccine over a 14-day period, and a dose of rabies immunoglobulin given at the beginning of treatment. Each year, approximately 900 Marylanders receive preventive treatment after exposure to a rabid or potentially rabid animal.

## An American Stranded in Europe by The Pandemic: A Personal Story

By CHARLOTTE PARKER DULANY  
Capital News Service

AMSTERDAM (April 3, 2020)—I walked hand in hand with my boyfriend along the Looiersgracht Canal to the soft tune of a piano, which had floated sleepily out of a nearby third floor window for only us to hear, and as we gazed around Amsterdam, only our memory brought forth the people and colorful life that usually flourish here—replaced now by locked doors and vacant streets.

Two weeks earlier, I wouldn't have thought I would be here.

Knocks on the door, buzzing cell phones and the ringing of our longstanding landline telephone all erupted at once in my family's fifth floor apartment in the East Village of Manhattan, urgently compelling us to turn on the news. President Donald Trump was announcing his travel ban on Europe in an attempt to halt the persistent spread of the coronavirus.

On that night of March 11, Trump declared in a brief Oval Office address that all travel between the United States and Europe would be suspended for 30 days and would go into effect in 48 hours.

I stood statically before the television as headlines in capital letters appeared, my yellow carry-on bag gripped tightly in my right hand in preparation to leave for John F. Kennedy International Airport to catch my flight to Amsterdam in three hours.

Against her view that fate brought this moment, my mother drove me to the airport with her eyes glued to the city streets over the wheel as we drove up 1st Avenue, ignoring each ding of the many incoming notifications from her cellphone. In the Queens-Midtown Tunnel she asked me, "God forbid, what if something happened and I couldn't get to you?"

"Or, what if something happened to us?" she continued, speaking of our family. "Would you be okay with not being able to come back to us?"

The virus had spread in a whirlwind across various countries and into the United States over recent weeks with many disruptions; days earlier, the school I attend, the University of Maryland, announced its closure until April 10. It later extended the closure for the remainder of the spring semester.

Trump had placed a ban on all travel with Europe for the next 30 days, the woman at the desk for Norwegian Airlines at JFK reminded me. "If you go, there's no guarantee when you will be able to return," she said with a concerned look.

Out of 246 seats, only 112 passengers had checked in for my 1:05 a.m. flight. Most were Dutch citizens returning home. The Norwegian agent said kindly, "It's your choice."

I was torn about what to do as I sat with my mother in the airport parking lot watching our car's digital clock rise in numbers. Cutting through silence she surprised me when she said, "If it were me, I would go."

My trip had been planned for two months—to stay for 10 days in Amsterdam and Bussum, a small town nearby the capital city, with my boyfriend. I was at a gridlock, wondering when I would next be able to go if I didn't go then. With 20 minutes left to get to my gate, I decided to take the leap.

The rest moved swiftly and I was soon on the plane, wiping down my seat and tray table with disinfectant wipes. In seat 8D, I could see only four fellow passengers and they were all engaged in similar cleaning practices. Looking around, I swayed between exhilaration and worry as I thought about how many would've opted to stay home.

Only when the plane was rolling down the runway was a correction issued that American citizens were able to return after undergoing proper screenings.

See STRANDED Page A4

### CITY OF HYATTSVILLE NOTICE OF A PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The City Council of the City of Hyattsville, Maryland proposes to increase real property taxes.

1. For the tax year beginning July 1, 2020, the estimated real property assessable base will increase by 1.52%, from \$2,149,317,196 to \$2,181,979,574.
2. If the City of Hyattsville maintains the current tax rate of \$0.63 per \$100 of assessment, real property tax revenues will increase by 1.52% resulting in \$205,773 of new real property tax revenues.
3. In order to fully offset the effect of increasing assessments, the real property tax rate should be reduced to \$0.6206, the constant yield tax rate.
4. The City is considering not reducing its real property tax rate enough to fully offset increasing assessments. The City proposes to adopt a real property tax rate of \$0.63 per \$100 of assessment. This tax rate is 1.52% higher than the constant yield tax rate and will generate \$205,773 in additional property tax revenues.

A public hearing on the proposed real property tax rate increase will be held at 7:30 p.m., on May 4, 2020. The meeting will be held remotely via video teleconference. To join the video conference: <https://zoom.us/j/843087355>. To join with audio only: +1 301 715 8592 US, Meeting ID: 843 087 355

The hearing is open to the public, and public testimony is encouraged. Participants who join the video/audio conference will be enabled to speak by the meeting chair. Speakers will be allowed to address the Council for two (2) minutes. Public Comment may also be made using the e-comment feature at [hyattsville.org/meetings](http://hyattsville.org/meetings) or emailing [cityclerk@hyattsville.org](mailto:cityclerk@hyattsville.org). All electronic comments must be submitted by 6 PM on May 4, 2020. Comments received will be read by City staff during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Persons with questions regarding this hearing may call 301-985-5009 for further information.



PHOTO CREDIT CHARLOTTE PARKER DULANY/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

AMSTERDAM—As the coronavirus pandemic unfolded on both sides of the Atlantic last month, a Norwegian Airlines flight from New York to Amsterdam carried far fewer than the usual number of passengers.

# COMMUNITY

## Comcast Makes More Than Two Dozen More Entertainment Networks and Subscription Video Services Available for Free

*AFRO, Aspire TV, Brown Sugar, Cinelatino, Kanal D Drama, Kocowa, RCN Novelas, REVOLT, TV One and ViendoMovies Are Among Additional Choices Xfinity Customers Can Access At No Extra Cost*

By SANDRA ARNETTE  
Comcast

PHILADELPHIA (April 7, 2020)—Comcast today announced it is making on demand programming from more than two dozen more entertainment networks and subscription video services available for its Xfinity X1 and Flex customers to enjoy for free in the coming weeks.

“All year round, we provide our customers with a wide variety of diverse and in-language programming and we’re happy to work with our partners to make a selection available for free,” said Rebecca Heap, Senior Vice President, Video & Entertainment, Comcast Cable.

Xfinity customers with X1 and Flex can simply say “Free” into their Xfinity Voice remote to explore the range of on demand programming currently available at no additional cost, including:

- African American Networks and Subscription Video Services: AFRO, Aspire TV, Black News Channel, Brown Sugar, Impact Network, kweliTV, REVOLT, The Africa Channel and TV One.
- Latino Networks and Subscription Video Services: CBeebies, Cinelatino, Cine Sony, Cinema Dinamita MX, Kanal D Drama, Kids Central en español, Pantaya, RCN Novelas, Universo, ViendoMovies and Vme Kids.
- International Networks and Subscription Video Services: Filipino On Demand, GMA Pinoy, Hi-YAH!, KOCOWA (all programs subtitled in English) and TV5MONDE.

Comcast currently offers its customers access to 160 independent networks, 100 of which are targeted to diverse audiences. Additionally, its customers have access to 20,000 hours of diverse on demand and on-line programming accessible across Xfinity

video platforms, including in specially curated destinations for Black Film and TV, Latino, Asian American Film and TV and International.

The above programming partners join a broad range of other premium networks and subscription video services making on demand programming available free for Xfinity TV and Internet customers. Beyond free entertainment, Comcast has undertaken a comprehensive COVID-19 response inclusive of opening Xfinity WiFi hotspots located in business and outdoor locations across the country to anyone who needs them for free (including non-Xfinity Internet subscribers), pausing data plans, creating a COVID-19 news destination and a K-12 education destination on X1 and Flex, and making its Internet Essentials program free for new families for the first 60 days of enrollment.

## B&O Railroad Museum Announces Commercial Railroad’s Founding Fathers Virtual Exhibit and New Educational Resources

By DANA GOLDSTEIN  
B&O Railroad Museum

BALTIMORE, Md. (April 9, 2020)—The B&O Railroad Museum announces new virtual experiences and resources you can enjoy from home! Specifically, The B&O Lives On: How the Founders Shaped Our Lives Today is a new virtual exhibit which launched Saturday, April 11, 2020 at BOLivesOn.org; B&O Train Talk, daily social media posts about the B&O’s extensive collection, and Junior Junction Story Times for families and educators.

The B&O Lives On: How the Founders Shaped Our Lives Today virtual exhibit centers around the 1891 Francis Blackwell Mayer painting, Founders of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Mayer was commissioned to depict the original group of Baltimore businessmen, as well as many of the other major leaders and innovators from the first half-century of the B&O’s history. While a handful of the wealthiest men in America meeting for drinks over 200 years ago may not seem relevant today, this very gathering of entrepreneurs and venture capitalists from Baltimore, decided to invest in a recent British technological innovation and build America’s first commercial railroad. Not only did the investment deliver prosperity to Baltimore and Maryland, it transformed public transportation, commerce and communications. The original Founders of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad painting, donated by CSX in 2019, will be on display at the B&O Railroad Museum after reopening to the public.



PHOTO COURTESY B&O RAILROAD MUSEUM

**B&O Railroad Museum Education Director, Rebecca Funk, hosts Virtual Story Time.**

To learn more and to take a tour today, visit BOLivesOn.org from the B&O Railroad Museum Collection, and see the many sites in town influenced by the B&O Railroad!

### Learning Opportunities

As part of the B&O’s dedication to offer valuable learning opportunities within the community, the education team recently launched Junior Junction Story Time and Activities, an online resource to serve children, caregivers, and teachers impacted by school closures. Every Tuesday and Thursday at 11 a.m., while schools and day-care centers are closed, a new railroad-themed virtual story time with a corresponding activity is posted, all activities are downloadable for printing at home. Stories include Rosie Revere Engineer, The Garbage Barge,

Easter Engines, and more. Activities for middle school age students are offered beginning with the B&O Lives On exhibit and available on the Junior Junction and exhibit pages. The story time videos and activities are available for free at BORail-Education.org.

As part of the international Museum from Home initiative, B&O Railroad Museum is sharing collection and archive images plus restoration videos daily on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter with #BOTrainTalk and #MuseumFromHome. Whether you’re a railroad fan, history buff, or searching for new ways to engage the family, please join our virtual audience. Take a personality quiz and find out which locomotive from our collection best matches your personality <http://ow.ly/8kym50z2rgi>

“I am exceedingly proud of our staff for the creativity they have shown and strong desire to push programming out via social media channels for the purpose of easing stress for people quarantined around the world” said Kris Hoellen, Executive Director of the B&O Railroad Museum. “We know culture continues to be important to quality of life even during a pandemic. Our social media engagement has increased by 48% and if we brighten even one person’s day, we will be doing our part.”

## Maryland Secretary of State, Attorney General Warn of Possible Charity Scams Related to COVID-19

By MICHAEL SCHLEIN  
Maryland Governor’s Press Office

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (April 9, 2020)—The Federal Trade Commission has reported that scammers are taking advantage of fears surrounding the coronavirus, including through the sale of counterfeit products and the solicitation of money and personal information. When charities request donations in response to the coronavirus, Marylanders may feel duty-bound to donate in an effort to help their neighbors. Maryland’s Secretary of State John C. Wobensmith and Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh are cautioning Marylanders to be vigilant and to donate wisely.

“During uncertain times, con artists prey on your generosity and create scams, frauds or deceptive acts to line their own pockets,”

warns Secretary Wobensmith. “Be sure you know who you are giving to, and remember it is always best to give directly to well-established, reputable charitable organizations.”

The Office of the Secretary of State registers and regulates charitable organizations that solicit charitable contributions in Maryland. Together with the Attorney General’s Office, the Secretary of State’s Office works to ensure that charitable contributions go to qualified charitable organizations and are used for their intended purpose.

“Fraudsters will take advantage of nearly any opportunity to steal other people’s money,” said Attorney General Frosh. “Consumers can avoid being cheated by understanding how thieves are trying to steal their personal information and money. It is always wise to research the charity first

before donating, and avoid any charity or fundraiser that is reluctant to give information on how donations are used.”

For more tips on how to give wisely, Marylanders can visit the Maryland Attorney General’s Office, Consumer Protection Division publication Consumer’s Edge Charitable Giving Tips.

The Office of the Secretary of State maintains a public registry of charitable organizations authorized to solicit in Maryland. For more information and to search the registry, please visit the Secretary of State’s charities database.

If you think that you have been a victim of a deceptive or illegal charitable solicitation, contact the Charities and Legal Services Division of the Secretary of State’s Office: 410-974-5521 or 1-800-825-4510.

## Stranded from A3

Upon my arrival in Amsterdam, I met the same surprise at my decision to travel after the ban; a TSA agent at the Schiphol Airport ran my bag through a second security scanner as suspicion accompanied my seemingly reckless decision.

The regulations for COVID-19 came on my fourth day here, as I sat with friends before the television to listen to in on remarks from Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte. I waited through gasps, groans and some cheers before it was translated to me that all cafes, shops and schools in the Netherlands would be closed through April 6.

The Netherlands had earlier been reproached throughout the European Union for not yet holding crisis talks to address new health measures. School doors were already closed in most Western European countries the week of March 8.

The Dutch Ministry expressed concern about how “public life will come to a standstill.”

Students globally have been making do with the adjusted circumstances through online learning programs connected to services like Zoom, through which they are able to watch and hear lessons and connect with professors. Everyone I know here who is still enrolled in an education program is participating in these virtual classrooms to further their studies until the schools reopen.

In a recent directive, the Dutch government decided schools and businesses will stay closed until April 28, and all national exams for the academic year were cancelled.

“There is a very real chance that we will have to extend the measures past April 28,” Rutte said at a press conference to address the crisis. “We don’t want people to travel all over the country, and after April 28 we certainly won’t be back the way we were.” On March 17, six days from my expected return to New York, I was alerted that my flight with Norwegian Airlines was cancelled.

With instructions not to contact the airline unless flying before April 15 was absolutely necessary, there were no answers as to when I would be able to reschedule. All flights to New York with Norwegian through April have been eliminated and read as “sold out” on the carrier’s website.

Many airlines have halted operation of long haul flights, and the window to return home has been gradually shrinking. From over 50 countries, more than 26,000 U.S. citizens have been returned home with a repatriation task force dedicated to bringing all Americans back, according to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

“We do not know how long the commercial flights in your countries may continue to operate,” Pompeo said. “We can’t guarantee the U.S. government’s ability to arrange charter flights indefinitely where commercial options no longer exist.”

Now, two weeks overdue in my time here, it is unclear when I will return home.

So I’ve chosen to stay and return to normalcy here—I will live in Amsterdam until the spread of COVID-19 has slowed and the U.S. border reopens. I am in a good place—safe and healthy—and will abide by national regulations as my peers do in this new environment.

When I venture around, I don’t see many people outside, and the ones I have come into contact with are in groups of no more than three people, with a distance of five feet between them. Social distancing has been strongly encouraged and from what I have seen is widely respected by Dutch citizens.

There is a limit of people allowed inside certain shops at once; outside the Albert Heijn, a popular grocery chain, there is often an organized line of patient people waiting to purchase groceries.

It is a rare occurrence to see people wearing masks, latex gloves or goggles, but the reactionary panic that has been circling the globe exists here, too, though it is subtle. One day, a cashier at the grocery store didn’t like that I paid for a bottle of orange juice with coins and carefully sorted them with one gloved finger.

With announcements made regularly by the Dutch government every three days, the Netherlands seems to have been well prepared to manage a seemingly unmanageable crisis.

As of April 2, the Netherlands has reported 1,339 virus-induced deaths. Approximately 14,697 people have tested positive for COVID-19.

The U.S. State Department announced its most severe warning in a time of progressively increasing restrictions on March 19 when it issued a Level 4 travel advisory, urging Americans to not travel internationally and for citizens abroad to return home immediately.

When people hear I am in the Netherlands they are in disbelief, usually with a trace of pity at my current situation, stranded in limbo. They tell me it is “wrenching to hear about (my) plight” and hope I can get home soon. But I am settled and happy, and curious to learn what lies ahead for my unexpected life abroad.

(Charlotte Parker Dulany is a reporter in the Washington bureau of Capital News Service.)

## The Prince George’s Post

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# BUSINESS AND FINANCE

## Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

### Retiring from Work; When Should I Claim Social Security?

By RUSSELL GLOOR, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor, Association of Mature American Citizens

Dear Rusty:

I turned 63 August 12, 2019. I will be retiring June 30, 2020 from my current job. I will have made approximately \$35,000 by then and am receiving severance pay of \$19,000 on June 30. Will the pay I receive through June 30 affect what I can draw from Social Security? Also, how much of a difference would it be if I wait until August 12, 2020 to officially start drawing Social Security? Is there any other information I should be aware of before I start drawing Social Security? **Signed: Anxious to Retire**

**Dear Anxious:** First, let me assure you that the money you earned this year before your benefits start aren't counted as part of Social Security's "earnings test" which could affect your payment after your benefits start. When you claim, your Social Security benefit amount will depend upon two things — your "primary insurance amount" (or "PIA") which is determined from your highest earning 35 years (adjusted for inflation) over your lifetime, and the age at which you claim your SS benefit. By claiming at age 64 in August, your benefit will be cut by about 15.6% from what it would be if you wait to claim at your full retirement age (66 plus 4 months). Your earnings for 2020 won't be applied to your SS record until after you file your 2020 taxes in 2021, so won't affect your benefits (if appropriate) until after that. If your 2020 earnings are more than any of those in the 35 years used to initially compute your benefit, your benefit will increase at that time. The day of the month you were born isn't significant, only the month. So, if you apply to start benefits in August of 2020, your benefit cut will be as stated above because you're claiming exactly 2 years and 4 months early. But if you wait longer you'll gain another 5/9ths of 1% (.556%) for each additional month you delay up until your full retirement age (FRA).

Although you plan to retire from work, be aware that if you decide to return you'll be subject to Social Security's earnings limit once you are collecting benefits before your FRA, and that will be the case until you reach your full retirement age. If you go back to work after you start your SS and earn more than \$1,520 in any remaining month of 2020, you'll not be entitled to benefits for that month. Starting in 2021, you'll be subject to an annual earnings limit of at least \$18,240 (that's the 2020 limit—limits for future years aren't yet known but will be higher). Exceeding the annual limit will cause SS to withhold half of anything you earn over the limit. The limit is more, and the penalty is less in the year you reach your FRA and goes away once you have reached your full retirement age.

Finally, to be sure you're aware, you can actually defer claiming SS until age 70 if you wish. After you reach your full retirement age you'll earn delayed retirement credits (DRCs) of 8% per year of delay, which are added to your benefit when you finally claim it. That would give you a benefit which is 29% more at age 70 than it would be at your full retirement age.

*The 2.1 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] www.amac.us is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country. And the AMAC Foundation (www.AmacFoundation.org) is the Association's non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting and educating America's Seniors. Together, we act and speak on the Association members' behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today. Live long and make a difference by joining us today at www.amac.us/join-amac.*

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.*

## Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

### Why Are our Medicare Premiums Different?

By RUSSELL GLOOR, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor, Association of Mature American Citizens

Dear Rusty:

What is the Medicare monthly payment based on? I pay \$139.60, my husband pays \$144.60, a friend pays \$136.60. I receive \$388 per month in Social Security, my husband receives \$1200, and my friend receives \$1000 per month. There seems to be no rhyme or reason for the amount we pay. **Signed: Curious to Know**

**Dear Curious:** It may not seem so, but there is actually "rhyme or reason" to the amount of everyone's Medicare premium. I'll try to explain.

Each year Medicare determines a standard premium amount for Part B—coverage for doctors and other outpatient services. For 2020, the standard premium is \$144.60; last year it was \$135.50. Higher earners may even pay more, as a supplemental amount is added to the base Part B premium if someone's income exceeds certain high clip levels set by Medicare. In short, those with high income pay a higher

(than standard) Medicare premium. The rest of us pay the base \$144.60 amount, unless the "hold harmless" provision is in play.

The "hold harmless" provision is a law passed by Congress to prevent Social Security benefit payments from decreasing as a result of an increase in the Medicare premium (most Medicare premiums are deducted from Social Security benefit payments). The disparity in premiums you refer to results from the hold harmless provision, which also permits all or part of a Social Security cost of living adjustment (COLA) to be applied to your Medicare premium increase, instead of going to you. Here's what can happen:

If the Medicare premium goes up in any year, some (or all) of your annual Social Security COLA increase can be used to pay for your monthly Medicare premium increase. But, if the COLA increase to your SS benefit isn't big enough to cover the entire Medicare premium increase, your net SS benefit

## SBA Clarifies Eligibility of Faith-Based Organizations To Participate in Paycheck Protection and Economic Injury Disaster Loan Programs

By JACK SPIRAKES, MPA, U.S. Small Business Administration

WASHINGTON (April 4, 2020)—SBA Administrator Jovita Carranza today announced that SBA issued guidance clarifying that all faith-based organizations impacted by Coronavirus (COVID-19) are eligible to participate in the Paycheck Protection Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program, without restrictions based on their religious identity or activities, to the extent they meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the CARES Act that was passed by Congress, signed into law by President Trump, and implemented by the Paycheck Protection Act Interim Final Rule.

"Following the passage of the emergency economic relief assistance, the Administration and Congress acted to

ensure that small businesses and non-profits alike have access to critical funds to keep their workers paid and employed," said Carranza. "Faith-based organizations have always provided critical social services for people in need, and SBA will make clear that these organizations may access this emergency capital."

The Paycheck Protection Program is designed to keep small business workers employed and provide small businesses with capital through the nation's banks and other lending institutions, with support from the SBA. The Paycheck Protection Program's maximum loan amount is \$10 million with a fixed 1% interest rate and maturity of two years. SBA will forgive the portion of loan proceeds used for payroll costs and other designated operating expenses for up to eight weeks pro-

vided at least 75% of loan proceeds are used for payroll costs.

The Economic Injury Disaster Loan program provides qualifying small businesses and non-profits with working capital up to \$2 million with low interest rates and terms extending up to 30 years.

"While every American is being affected by COVID-19, the impact of this pandemic is particularly hurting our schools and places of worship, and disproportionately impacting the under-represented communities, the sick, the elderly and the lower income," added Carranza. "It's vitally important that organizations focused on delivering critical social services and meeting community needs remain viable, particularly during this economically challenging time."

## PERSONAL FINANCE

### Protecting Your Financial Health in These Uncertain Times

(StatePoint) With expected delays in bill payments, unprecedented layoffs, hiring freezes and related hardships, many Americans are facing new financial challenges.

"COVID-19 has impacted all industries and individuals from all walks of life," says Rod Griffin, senior director of Consumer Education and Advocacy for Experian. "With all of these rapid changes, you might not be thinking about how your credit report may be impacted yet, but you likely will soon."

As you adapt to life in this unprecedented time, the experts at Experian are sharing strategies and resources for protecting your financial health and credit history.

- **Check your credit report.** While checking your credit report regularly is always a good idea, this is especially true now. You can get a free copy of your report from Experian every 30 days with a free account. In addition, you can get a free credit report from each of the three national credit reporting agencies annually by visiting [annualcreditreport.com](http://annualcreditreport.com).

- **Maintain your score.** Making credit payments on time and in-full and keeping your utilization rate (balance-to-limit ratio) as low as possible are the best ways to maintain your credit score. At a maximum, you should try to keep your credit card balances below 30 percent in total and for each individual card. For many reasons, maintaining these habits might not be possible right now. However, paying your minimum monthly payments and anything additional you can afford will go a long way.

- **Talk to your lenders.** Keep in mind, lenders don't want you to fall behind on your payments any more than you do. If you're facing trouble making monthly payments, contact your lender or creditor. They may have options for helping you cope with COVID-19-related financial hardships. For example, lenders can place your accounts in forbearance or deferment for a period of time.

- **Use credit as a financial tool.** While debt is a problem, credit can be a financial tool that can help improve your overall financial health in the long run. As always, avoid



PHOTO CREDIT: © FIZKES / ISTOCK VIA GETTY IMAGES PLUS

making rash decisions when it comes to credit and your financial health.

- **Check out resources.** Use new educational resources that can help you protect your financial health in these uncertain times. For example, Experian is hosting a series of #CreditChat conversations surrounding COVID-19 on Wednesdays at 3 p.m. ET on Twitter. The program covers important personal finance topics. The next several #CreditChats will be dedicated to items like methods and strategies for bill repayment, paying down debt, emergency financial assistance and preparing for retirement during COVID-19.

You can also visit Experian's blog post, "COVID-19 and Your Credit Report," for updated information pertaining to how COVID-19 may impact your creditworthiness. Additionally, the "Ask Experian" blog shares immediate and evolving resources on its COVID-19 Updates page. To obtain a free Experian credit report and other free services, enroll at [Experian.com](http://Experian.com).

While staying safe and healthy should be everyone's number one priority, it is also important to protect your financial health at the same time. Be sure to leverage all the resources available to you that can help you emerge from this crisis in good financial standing.

results in many people, especially those with a smaller SS benefit amount, paying a different (smaller than base) Medicare premium amount.

Here's an example: If your husband's SS benefit is \$1200/month, he got a \$19.20 COLA increase for 2020 (1.6%). The Medicare premium for 2020 went up by \$9.10, which was taken from his COLA increase. The remaining \$10.10 of his COLA increase was added to his SS benefit amount.

If your benefit is \$388 your COLA increase was \$6.20 (1.6%). That \$6.20 COLA wasn't enough to cover the \$9.10 Medicare premium increase, but it was applied to your previous Medicare premium amount to bring you to a Medicare premium of \$139.60. Your net SS payment stayed the same because your current SS benefit cannot be used to pay for the rest of the premium increase. But \$5 of any COLA increase you get next year will go toward bringing you up to the base Medicare premium amount. While this may not fit your idea of "rhyme or reason" it is, nevertheless, based upon a well-intentioned "hold harmless" rule which protects your Social Security benefit from decreasing.

*The 2.1 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] www.amac.us is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country. And the AMAC Foundation (www.AmacFoundation.org) is the Association's non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting and educating America's Seniors. Together, we act and speak on the Association members' behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today. Live long and make a difference by joining us today at www.amac.us/join-amac.*

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# COMMENTARY

## Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita,  
Children's Defense Fund



### ChildWatch:

## A Season for Renewal and Hope

The Passover and Easter holidays are traditionally times of joyous sacred celebration, with family and community rituals centered on the promises of exodus, deliverance, new hope, and rebirth. These promises are desperately needed right now. The beloved Nobel Peace Prize laureate South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu said about Easter: "In the middle of our faith is the death and resurrection. Nothing could have been more hopeless than Good Friday—but then Easter happened, and forever we have to become prisoners of hope." The American World Jewish Service says this in a supplement to their Global Justice Haggadah for Passover, "Hope Amidst the Tears":

"In the telling of the Passover story, we recount the oppression that our ancestors experienced when we were slaves in Egypt. We dip a growing vegetable—karpas—into saltwater, to taste their tears of grief mingled with our hopes for life, health and renewal for a more just world.

"This year, the tears are ours. "They are the tears of the sick and their loved ones who worry or mourn. They are the tears of those who have lost their jobs, are uninsured, live in isolation, or must go to work each day to provide essential services to others. They're the tears of courageous health care workers who save lives and risk their own.

"We must acknowledge this pain and suffering and allow ourselves the space to grieve. Yet, as the karpas ritual beckons, we must also look toward the future with a sense of hope and possibility. Passover arrives on the precipice of spring, when new growth is just around the corner. All over the world, resilience, strength, compassion and innovation will grow from under this tragedy.

"We honor the tears, but we also bless the hope."

In this holy season of Passover and Easter like no other, we are shaken out of comfortable routines and customary celebrations—physically separated from loved ones and communities of faith, hearts heavy with the suffering of those near and far, struggling in the present and anxious about the future. For children and families who have long endured poverty, lack of health care, domestic violence, hunger, homelessness, unemployment, incarceration, and marginalization, the weight of this pandemic is especially heavy.

For all of us, but especially for those who are suffering most, this year may we live into the meaning and messages of both Passover and Easter. God's intention is for people to move out of oppression and injustice into the promise of freedom and justice. Death-dealing empire does not have the last word.

This is not a time of easy or glib faith, but rather a time to lean on our faith in all of its complexity and questions. In this season, we look back to the formative experiences in our histories as people of faith—histories of God's people enduring suffering and struggle, oppression and injustice, fear and doubt. In these celebrations, we may experience new meaning for this present moment. And in this time, may we look ahead with faith and hope to ways that we can reach out especially to children and families who are struggling, and help make sure that we will not return to the old "normal" but instead will usher in God's future of peace, love, freedom, and justice these holy occasions celebrate and anticipate.

In this season of renewal I offer prayers for new hope and strength.

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God, guide our faith that by it we might make our children and nation whole again.

God, help us to believe with every ounce of our being that we, with Your help, can save our children and make them well.

God, renew our spirits—Your spirit within us—and make us worthy carriers of Your message of love and hope and life in all we say and do this day and forever more.

\*\*\*

We thank You God for Your grace of life.  
We thank You for Your breath of life.  
We thank You for Your hope in life.  
We thank You for Your challenges in life.  
We thank You for Your companionship in life through family and friends and fellow sojourners in the faith.

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God, thank You so much for giving us a new beginning each day and each minute.

Help us to grow in grace and faith and hope and shine Your light everywhere we go today.

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### Passover

Dear God,  
Let us never forget what it means to be free.  
Let us never forget what it requires to be free.  
Let us fight for freedom for ourselves and others  
So that all God's children may be free.

\*\*\*

### Easter

Let us never forget that You love us so much that You gave Your only son so that we might learn that we are loved and forgiven.  
Thank You, God, for Your ungraspable love so freely given.

—April 9, 2020

## Maryland Delegation Members Press President Trump To Waive FEMA Cost-Sharing Requirements To Help States Handle COVID-19 Outbreak

WASHINGTON (April 10, 2020)—Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05), along with Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen and Congressmen Dutch Ruppersberger, John P. Sarbanes, Anthony G. Brown, Jamie B. Raskin, and David Trone sent a letter to President Donald Trump urging him to swiftly approve a National Governors Association request from Governors Hogan of Maryland and Cuomo of New York to waive all cost-sharing requirements for assistance under the COVID-19 Emergency Declaration and Major Disaster Declarations. Team Maryland has actively supported Maryland's requests for robust federal support of the state and local response to COVID-19.

"Increasing the federal cost-share will allow state and local governments to focus solely on re-

sponding, containing, and mitigating the outbreak of COVID-19," the lawmakers wrote. "States should not be forced to worry about rising costs and budgetary limits that could hamper their efforts to best save lives, protect vulnerable populations, and safeguard the health of our communities as they see fit during this pandemic."

The federal government has taken steps to raise the federal cost-share in previous circumstances, such as after devastating hurricanes and flooding. This request comes as Maryland emergency agencies continue to work to obtain critical medical supplies—including ventilators, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and testing supplies—that remain unfulfilled from FEMA.

### UM Laurel from A1

COVID-19 related expansion of UM Laurel Medical Center will open and start treating patients during the last week of April.

Under the leadership of CEO Mohan Suntha, the University of Maryland Medical System has been engaged in exhaustive preparation to increase bed, staff, and equipment capacity to adapt to the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic. The ultimate goal of this project is to expand capacity by adding 135 additional beds at UM Laurel Medical Center in preparation for the high probability of volume surge due to COVID-19.

"We are proud to be the principal team activating this monumental surge response at UM Laurel Medical Center," says Joseph Wright, MD, MPH, President and CEO (interim), UM Capital Region Health. The dogged commitment and execution by the project management team is a testament to the inherent professionalism on display across the system as we respond to this unprecedented crisis"

This temporarily expanded UM Laurel Medical Center will treat patients suspected of being infected with COVID-19 and those who have already tested positive. Importantly, the expanded UM Laurel

Medical Center is not a community testing clinic and cannot be accessed by general referrals from Primary Care Physicians. Unless directly admitted through the emergency department, walkups will not be permitted. Patients will be transported to UM Laurel Medical Center through either emergency department or hospital inter-facility referrals.

UM Laurel Medical Center will be staffed by nearly 400 highly vetted contractual medical professionals / health care workers and will not reduce staff at UM Capital Region Health or other local UMMS facilities. The center and the all staff will be managed and overseen by UMMS and UM Capital Region Health leadership. The updated visitor policy for all UMMS health care facilities will be in effect.

On March 16, 2020, Governor Larry Hogan issued an Executive Order directing the Maryland Department of Health to work with health care facilities and providers to temporarily reopen closed facilities across the state and to take other measures necessary to immediately increase statewide hospital capacity. UMMS officially requested an Emergency Certificate of Need to establish a temporary remote location of UM Capital Region Health with 135 beds, which

was quickly approved by the state.

Within UMMS, there has been an increase in patients with COVID-19 symptoms and the system has been actively planning for this increase and is refining detailed surge plans for each facility—including staff planning and implementing innovative models of care such as telehealth capabilities.

COVID-19 presents immediate hazards to the health of patients statewide, particularly in Prince George's County which currently has the highest number of confirmed cases in the state. Ensuring the safety of patients, frontline medical staff, and team members remains and will remain a top priority of the University of Maryland Medical System and all its leadership.

"We are beyond appreciative for the dedication and resilience of our employees during this COVID-19 pandemic," says Min Godwin, Chief Operating Officer (interim), UM Capital Region Health. "It is their sacrifices and putting the needs of our community and our patients first that is getting us through this pandemic."

UMMS will continue to plan for an increase in volumes while working as a system to ensure all patients receive the care and attention needed.

## Anthony Brown

Maryland Congressional District 4



## Congressman Anthony Brown: "We must confront systemic racial disparities head on, and do so right now"

WASHINGTON (April 9, 2020)—Congressman Anthony G. Brown (MD-04), released the following statement in reaction to new demographic data from Maryland showing COVID-19's disproportionate impact on communities of color:

"Black Americans are bearing the full brunt of the coronavirus in Maryland, facing higher rates of infections and mortality. We cannot hide from this grim reality. We must confront these systemic racial disparities head on, and do so right now."

"Black Americans are more

likely to be uninsured and more likely to have a frontline job during this crisis. Black Americans have a higher risk of asthma, heart disease, diabetes and hypertension. And Black Americans face implicit racial bias in our health care system—from diagnosis to treatment and medical outcomes. We've seen decades-old disparities inflamed by the coronavirus crisis. Lack of access to health care, affordable housing and financial stability have left low income, Black and Brown families vulnerable to this deadly disease."

"The virus is not a great leveler. The consequences are not borne equally by all. We know communities of color are more likely to catch this disease, because of their exposure and inaction to address these deep health inequities. Marginalized and vulnerable populations need more testing and doctors in these communities need more resources. We need to act now to ensure these disparities don't become worse during this public health crisis, and work to close these gaps moving forward."

## Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



### To Be Equal:

## The World of Black-Owned Businesses and Entrepreneurs Has Lost Its Greatest Champion With the Passing of Black Enterprise Founder Earl G. Graves, Sr.

"I feel that a large part of my role as publisher of Black Enterprise is to be a catalyst for Black economic development in this country. When I can act as an instrument to make it happen for legitimate and reasonable people, I do it. I try to be helpful and put people together, whether it's finding a candidate for a trustee position at Howard University or reaching out to the CEO of Motown Records to save a company that was at the forefront of black economic development in the early days."

—Earl G. Graves, Sr.

As the nation's preeminent civil rights organization dedicated to the economic empowerment of Black people, the National Urban League shares a mission with Black Enterprise magazine and its late founder and publisher, Earl G. Graves, Sr.

Founded in 1970, Black Enterprise has helped to launch and nurture the careers of two generations of African American professionals and innovators. Earl Graves was not just a chronicler of Black businesses and entrepreneurs, but a leader, and a role model for excellence in his own right.

Graves' partnership with and support of the National Urban League was extensive and influential.

Graves' devotion to his three sons, Earl Jr., John and Michael, was a large part of the inspiration for the National Urban League's Male Responsibility Campaign. The initiative, launched in 1985 by then-president John Jacob, was designed to educate young men about the importance of a father in a child's life.

The following year, Jacob and Graves teamed up to persuade a national hotel chain, the frequent host of Black-themed conventions and meetings, to expand its advertising into Black-owned media.

Born in 1935 to West Indies immigrants, Graves was seized by the entrepreneurial spirit early in his life, selling Christmas cards door-to-door in his Brooklyn neighborhood at the tender age of 6. His father's struggle to move beyond blue-collar employment, despite a high school diploma, was a motivating force as he pursued a college education. He graduated in 1957 from Morgan State University, whose business school now bears his name.

Graves served two years as an officer in the Army, then worked in various jobs before joining the presidential campaign of Lyndon Johnson in 1964. The next year he was appointed to the staff of U.S. Senator Robert F. Kennedy, for whom he worked until the

senator's assassination in 1968. He started Black Enterprise with a \$250,000 loan, and turned a profit in a remarkable 10 months.

"Black Enterprise was just a modest magazine when I founded it," he said. "Just me, a few brave advertisers like Pepsi, ExxonMobil and General Motors; and a small but spirited staff. And one other person who did just about everything there is to do to put out a magazine—my wife, Barbara."

Over the years, Graves served on the boards of some of the nation's most influential corporations, including American Airlines, Daimler Chrysler, and Federated Department Stores. His endorsement of Barack Obama in the pages of the magazine was considered pivotal in Obama's victory.

Graves demonstrated an almost perfect combination of intelligence, ambition, tenacity and passion in his career and in his personal life. His influence can be seen everywhere from the humblest small businesses to the c-suites of the nation's most influential corporations. The Urban League Movement extends its deepest sympathy to his children and grandchildren and all who loved him.

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## April Is National Donate Life Month

By JECOLIAH ELLIS  
Washington Regional Transplant Community

April is National Donate Life Month, a time to encourage people to register as organ, eye and tissue donors and to celebrate those who have saved lives through the gift of donation.

Across the United States, there are more than 112,000 patients on the national transplant waiting list who need a kidney, heart, lungs, pancreas, liver,



PHOTO COURTESY WRTC

Malkia White

or intestine. Thousands more need tissues such as corneas to restore sight, skin to heal burns, heart valves to repair defects, bones to correct injuries and tendons/ligaments to restore movement.

Currently, there are more than 2,200 patients in the D.C. metropolitan area waiting for a lifesaving transplant. Patients like Malkia White who was diagnosed with kidney disease when she was a young girl. She successfully managed her disease most of her life, until a few years ago, when her kidney function went into rapid decline. Malkia, who is now on the waiting list for a new kidney, relies on dialysis treatment three nights a week to keep her alive.

Washington Regional Transplant Community (WRTC) is the local non-profit organ procurement organization responsible for facilitating the donation process. Last year, WRTC recovered and allocated 485 lifesaving organs from 145 generous donors, saving the lives of 417 individuals. In addition, WRTC also recovered tissues from 462 benevolent donors, whose precious gifts could enhance the lives of nearly 35,000 people.



Despite the ongoing spread of COVID-19, WRTC staff continue to recover and allocate organs and tissues for transplant candidates. WRTC is working with hospital partners and transplant centers to ensure as many patients receive lifesaving transplants as possible during this unprecedented medical crisis. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has declared organ recovery as essential, and WRTC's dedicated front-line staff are tenacious and committed to fulfilling our mission. WRTC will be observing National Donate Life Month online. Please join WRTC on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to help honor donors, recipients, and their families and caregivers.

Be part of the miracle. During National Donate Life Month, give people like Malkia hope by registering to be an organ, eye and tissue donor at BeADonor.org.

## Chesapeake Life Center Moves Prince George's County Support Groups to Telehealth

By ELYZABETH MARCUSSEN  
Hospice of the Chesapeake

LARGO, Md. (April 6, 2020)—For the duration of the COVID-19 health emergency, Chesapeake Life Center, 9500 Medical Center Drive, Suite 250, Largo, Maryland, will offer its regular support groups via a telehealth platform, Zoom for Healthcare, and not in its offices. Chesapeake Life Center Director Susan Coale said that increased feelings of anxiety, loneliness and depression are normal in the face of so many changes. "We know how important our services are to people who are already coping with the loss of a loved one," she said. "Grief can be even more acute when it is compounded with decreased social interaction, the cancelling of events that we were looking forward to, and worrying about the health and safety of others as well as ourselves."

With all of these factored into place, the center will offer as many services as is feasible via telehealth. The team's

counselors have all received training in telehealth to be sure that the center's services meet best practice standards. All groups scheduled in the month of April for the Largo office will meet via telehealth. Whether or not those groups' May or June meetings will be held via telehealth or in the office will be determined prior to the scheduled date.

- **Prince George's County Teen Support Group** is a way for youth ages 13 to 18 to connect with others their age who also grieve the death of a loved one. It will meet via Zoom for Healthcare from 6:30 to 8 p.m. May 13 and June 10.

- **SoulCollage Grief Support Group** has participants create a series of collages to commemorate lost loved ones and to visually journal the grief process. The group will meet via Zoom for Healthcare from 5 to 8 p.m. May 4 and June 1.

Acknowledging that not everyone has access to this technology or may

not be comfortable with it, the center suggests people call or email the office and grief professionals will work with individuals to help them find appropriate resources. The center is constantly monitoring the impact the pandemic has on families and individuals and has responded by implementing recommended safety practices and postponing public events scheduled in April.

Registration is required for all groups and can be completed by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing [griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org](mailto:griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org). For details on telehealth bereavement services, visit [www.hospicechesapeake.org/clc-covid-19](http://www.hospicechesapeake.org/clc-covid-19).

Chesapeake Life Center, a program service of Hospice of the Chesapeake, serves hospice family members and the community with bereavement services and activities aimed at enhancing the quality of life for those grieving the loss of a loved one. For details, visit [www.chesapeakelifecenter.org](http://www.chesapeakelifecenter.org).

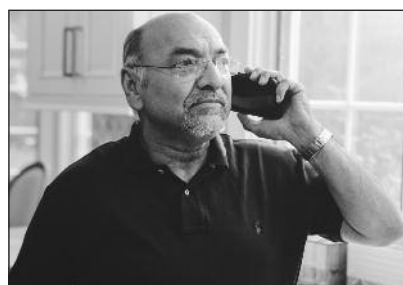
## Coronavirus and Alzheimer's: What Family Caregivers Need to Know

(StatePoint) The COVID-19 pandemic threatens the health of millions in this country and around the world, but the novel coronavirus presents unique challenges for more than 5 million Americans living with Alzheimer's and more than 16 million family members and friends serving as their caregivers.

"Public health strategies aimed at limiting contact with others are nearly impossible for people living with Alzheimer's and other dementias who rely on family caregivers and others to live their daily lives," says Beth Kallmyer, vice president, care and support, Alzheimer's Association. "This reality affects these individuals across all settings, including home, adult day services, residential and assisted living facilities and nursing homes."

To help family caregivers navigate the complex COVID-19 environment, the Alzheimer's Association is offering additional guidance to families, including:

- **Foster safe hygiene habits.** People living with Alzheimer's and other dementias may forget to wash their hands or follow other precautions to ensure safe hygiene. Caregivers are encouraged to be extra vigilant in helping individuals practice safe hygiene.
- **Monitor sudden or sustained behavior changes.** People living with



COURTESY ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

Alzheimer's and other dementias may not be able to communicate if they are feeling bad or showing early symptoms of illness. Caregivers should monitor family members closely and respond quickly to any signs of distress, discomfort or increased confusion. These signs do not necessarily indicate a serious condition like COVID-19, but it's important to determine the underlying cause.

- **Prepare for potential changes in care and support.** As public health containment strategies for COVID-19 escalate, families need to anticipate that less help may be available. It's important for families to anticipate these changes and make plans for filling gaps in caregiving.

- **Be calm and create a nurturing environment.** The current COVID-19 pandemic is creating added anxiety for everyone. Do your best to remain calm, particularly in your interactions with family members liv-

ing with dementia. These individuals often take their cues from the people around them. Creating a calm environment will help them feel safe and protected.

- **Play gatekeeper with outside caregivers and guests.** Carefully monitor who is coming into the home to ensure all who enter are healthy. Be proactive in asking outside caregivers and guests about their current health status and make sure they are not experiencing any early or recent symptoms of illness.

- **Ask residential care facilities about communication policies.** To protect the health of residents, many facilities are restricting access to outside visitors. Ask the facility about alternative communication methods during the crisis, including phone calls, video chats or emails. If your family member is unable to engage in calls or video chats, ask the facility how you can connect with staff to get health updates.

For more information, visit [alz.org](http://alz.org), the website of the Alzheimer's Association or call its free 24/7 Helpline at 800-272-3900.

Many primary caregivers are not good about asking for help even as care responsibilities escalate. It's important for family members and friends to be proactive during the current crisis in asking caregivers how they can help.

## Affinity Community Development, Inc. Announces Free Mental Health Counseling Services For First Responders

A Focus on Community Wraparound Services

By MATEEN ABDULLAH  
Affinity Community Development, Inc.

SILVER SPRING, Md. (April 8, 2020)—On Thursday, April 2, Affinity Community Development, Inc. announced immediate availability of free mental health counseling services for those directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This offer of support will encourage first responders, fire fighters, EMT's, police officers, veterans, doctors, and hospital staff, including civilian staff members of these organizations to receive mental health counseling. Furloughed workers, those laid off and individuals from underserved communities are also able to receive this assistance to navigate this traumatic and uncertain time through this free service.

"I think it's important for essential workers and first responders to have access to mental health assistance, to help them develop coping skills and respond in the right way to what they face when dealing with COVID-19 patients. This includes your day-to-day workers at grocery stores and restaurants on the front lines, that may also need support," said Chanel Hicks, Resident Therapist with Fairfax County Government and volunteer for Affinity Community Development, Inc.

Firefighter, Adam Turner IV of DC Fire & EMS Engine Company #26, a volunteer for Affinity's S.T.E.A.M. program, agrees with Chanel Hicks and emphasized "The amount of first responders that have been diagnosed with COVID-19. The stress and the surge in 911 calls due to COVID-19 plays a role in the day-to-day stress, but also the families of the first responders experience anxiety for their loved ones."

In keeping with the national social distancing regulations, the Washington D.C. clinic, Life Enhancement Services and Healthy Lives Maryland of Baltimore City, will be providing the mental health counseling services via video and conference call. Additionally, these sessions will include coverage for co-pays paid for by Affinity Community Development. Since the launch of this service a week ago, community members have been taking advantage of the free service. These counseling services for first responders and others directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, are the first steps in improving the mental health of our community. **For more information on how to access the mental health counseling services email [info@mdartdistrict.com](mailto:info@mdartdistrict.com) or contact 202-681-2622.**

### Expanded Services for the Community

Affinity Community Development, Inc. is a Maryland based non-profit company that focuses on community wraparound services, affordable housing and land development.

We have been in the community feeding the homeless and initiated a S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Math) program at Discovery Lane Preschool in Waldorf, MD. We launched the first phase S.T.E.A.M. program at Discovery Lane Preschool with actor/comedian Felonious Munk from ABC's acclaimed show, For Life. Unfortunately, due to the current circumstance and restrictions presented by the COVID-19 pandemic,

See COUNSELING Page A11

## Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter Offers Free Virtual Education Classes

By CINDY SCHELHORN  
Alzheimer's Association

MCLEAN, Va. (April 7, 2020)—While the COVID-19 pandemic threatens the health of millions in this country and around the world, the novel coronavirus presents unique challenges for more than 5 million Americans, including 110,000 people in Maryland living with Alzheimer's and their caregivers.

The Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter is offering free virtual education programs, as well as telephone and virtual support groups, in the coming weeks to help caregivers and their families. The Alzheimer's Association offers a number of education programs that can help those living with Alzheimer's and their families understand what to expect so they can be prepared to meet the changes ahead and live well for as long as possible.

"During this challenging time, it's critical that all people in Maryland affected by Alzheimer's disease and dementia have ready access to information and support," said Kate Rooper, president of the Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter. "While the COVID-19 crisis has impacted our daily lives, support and resources are even more critical for our caregivers and those with the disease. By transitioning our education programs from in-person to virtual presentations—and our support groups to telephone and virtual meetings—we're providing real-time connection, vital information and support. Through these services, and more, the Alzheimer's Association is here for our community.

Free webinar topics include Alzheimer's disease and dementia basics, warning signs of the disease, effective communication strategies, caregiving, and brain health. Each virtual education program is approximately one hour and allows the audience to ask questions and engage with others going

through the journey online. Information on upcoming webinars and support groups can be found on the chapter's website at [alz.org/nca](http://alz.org/nca) and by calling the Alzheimer's Association at 800-272-3900.

The Alzheimer's Association also offers online resources at [alz.org](http://alz.org), including ALZConnected®, a free online community where people living with Alzheimer's, caregivers, family and friends can ask questions, get advice and find support, and a section specific to caregiving during the current complex and quickly changing environment of COVID-19. The Association's free 24/7 Helpline (800-272-3900) is available around the clock, 365 days a year, with professional staff ready to provide reliable information and support to for caregivers and families impacted by Alzheimer's and all dementia.

### Additional Alzheimer's Statistics:

- More than 5 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease, including 110,000 in Maryland—a number estimated to grow to as many as 130,000 by 2025.
- More than 16 million family and friends, including 294,000 in Maryland, provide unpaid care to people with Alzheimer's or other dementias in the United States.
- In 2019, those family members and friends in Maryland provided an estimated 335 million hours of unpaid care, a contribution valued at more than \$4.389 billion.

Source: Alzheimer's Association 2020 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures Report ([alz.org/facts](http://alz.org/facts))

The Alzheimer's Association leads the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia—by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia®. Visit [alz.org](http://alz.org) or call 800.272.3900.

# COMPUTERS AND TECH

## Amid COVID-19 Restrictions, The Hotel at the University of Maryland Offers Virtual Planning Tools for Clients

*The Hotel partners with digital platforms to offer clients interactive video tours and diagrams of event spaces*

By GRACE CLARK

for The Hotel at the University of Maryland

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (April 7, 2020)—As a result of COVID-19 and the restrictions on travel and gathering, The Hotel at the University of Maryland, a luxury hotel and conference center adjacent to the University of Maryland (UMD), and its managing company Southern Management Corporation, are looking to innovative ways to conduct business. The Hotel and Southern Management Corporation have launched digital solutions to provide clients with tools to virtually experience and interact with its properties and event spaces.

“Our goal is to provide clients with the opportunity to begin planning now, even if they are unable to be on-site,” said Jeff Brainard, vice president of Sales and Marketing at Southern Management Corporation. “We must be ready to respond to the needs of the market as soon as it recovers, and in the

meantime, interactive video technology can help us overcome some of the challenges that have surfaced as a result of the pandemic.”

One of the services being utilized, Realync, is a platform that allows for live interactive video tours of sites. These live video tours will allow meeting and event planners from around the world to take guided, customized site tours of The Hotel without boarding a plane or stepping onto the property. At the conclusion of the tour, the recorded video is automatically emailed to the client, where it can be saved and forwarded to other key decision-makers. Additionally, The Hotel has partnered with multiple video-conferencing companies to complement in-house capabilities by connecting groups of any size from anywhere around the globe.

“These new virtual opportunities will be key in helping our teams drive toward building a strong future. We want to provide our team and clients with hope and show that we are working with them to bring

business back to our properties as quickly as possible,” said Brainard. “There are actions we can take today to shape our future, provide for our team members, and help our industry recover—the future is what we make of it, and we know there are very bright days ahead.”

For more information on how to utilize the new services offered by The Hotel at the University of Maryland, visit <https://www.thehotelumd.com/events-conferences/> or call the hotel’s Director of Sales and Marketing, Adriana Niepa at 301-699-4253.

The Hotel at the University of Maryland is an independent hotel offering business and leisure visitors elegant accommodations, an array of dining choices and world-class service and amenities. Located across from the main entrance to the University of Maryland, College Park campus, the AAA Four Diamond luxury hotel and conference center is convenient to Washington D.C., Maryland and Virginia.

## Facial Recognition in Law Enforcement: A New Normal

*Join the National Law Enforcement Memorial and Museum for a free special live-streamed event on Thursday, April 23 at 10 a.m. EDT*

By PRESS OFFICER

National Law Enforcement Museum

Join the National Law Enforcement Memorial and Museum for a special event: Facial Recognition in Law Enforcement: A New Normal. The program, which is part of the organization’s Conversations series, will focus on issues surrounding facial recognition technology, including the pros and cons of its use, applications during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, normalizing surveillance in public spaces, the need for effective and efficient law enforcement tools in the digital age, ethnic bias and privacy concerns, and legal accountability and oversight. The panel discussion will include an opportunity for listeners around the world to ask questions and add to the conversation.

Moderator: James Burch, National Police Foundation President

Panelists:

- Sakira Cook, Director of Justice Reform, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the Leadership Conference Educational Fund
- Barry Friedman, Faculty Director and the Jacob D. Fuchsberg Professor of Law Policing Project at New York University School of Law
- Dr. Jonathan Phillips, Electronic Engineer at The National Institute of Standards and Technology’s Information Technology Laboratory
- Jay Stanley, Senior Policy Analyst, American Civil Liberties Union

Facial Recognition in Law Enforcement: A New Normal will be live-streamed via Crowdfunder. To register, go to Crowdfunder, click on Save My Spot, and enter your email address. You will receive a confirmation email upon registration.

This program is provided to the public for free, thanks to the generosity of Target.

### NASA LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

## Mark Uffner—From the Depths of A Submarine to Outer Space

By ELIZABETH M. JARRELL

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center

Name: Mark Uffner

Formal Job Classification: Structural analyst  
Organization: Code 542, Mechanical Systems Analysis and Simulation Branch, Applied Engineering and Technology Directorate

**What do you do and what is most interesting about your role here at Goddard? How do you help support Goddard’s mission?**

I work with engineers and designers who develop a concept for a part or component. They provide me with the design and I go through the gambit of structural analysis using finite element analysis. I build finite element models, which are used to predict how a part will behave under certain conditions. I can then analyze the model by applying launch loads or determining the fundamental frequency response.

I am also a co-chair for the Veterans Advisory Committee.

**Tell us about your 10 years as a nuclear machinist’s mate in the U.S. Navy?**

After I graduated high school, I enlisted in the Navy because of all the opportunities offered. I had a choice of careers and decided to become a nuclear machinist’s mate, which involved two years of Navy schooling. As a nuclear machinist’s mate, I performed maintenance and operated the nuclear propulsion plant of a submarine.

**What is the rotation schedule for a nuclear submarine?**

I was on a ballistic missile submarine, which has a crew of about 130 people. Each sub has a set rotation schedule of personnel, meaning two crews, each of which takes out the sub for about three months before returning to rotate. When a crew is on land, the crew receives training. We had three months in a sub, combined with the other crew for a month of maintenance, and then three months of training on land.

**Please describe life on a submarine.**

A sub is a long, steel tube. There are no windows. All the light is artificial. The air is artificial. We make our own water using steam and heat from the power plant and then desalinate the water, which was something I did. It is pretty much a large industrial space and is not meant for comfort.

The back third is the engine room and is primarily where I worked. There is a dining area called the crew mess.

We worked on an 18-hour day and in different watch sections. There were three main watch sections. Each watch section would take over the ship for a six-hour block. So you had six hours of watch, then six hours of maintenance or training, and then six hours of sleep.

**How did you cope with the isolation while on the sub?**

In one way, we were isolated but in another way we were in each other’s face.

Each person lives in a bunk room with a total of nine people. My bed was 2½ feet wide by 6 feet long. The beds were arranged in a horseshoe and stacked three high. There was a little storage under each bed for personal items. We were all together. We had no other option but to work together. When put in a hard position, you ultimately have to deal with it and move forward.

I worked out a lot. We did not have a gym, but equipment, such as a treadmill or free weights, were tucked in corners.

We could receive incoming emails from loved ones, but we could not send any. We had no telephones or internet. We could not send or receive regular letters. We were isolated.

I also read a lot. I also watched movies on my laptop. We could not live stream, so we had to download any movies before embarking. The same was true for any e-books.

**After 10 years in the Navy, why did you decide to become an engineer? How did you come to Goddard?**

Right before my last underway, meaning my time at sea, I met my future wife. Not being able to talk and being isolated from her made it too difficult, so I decided to leave the Navy.

A lot of my job in the Navy was mechanical and hands-on in nature. I very much enjoyed working difficult mechanical problems.



PHOTO CREDITS: NASA/W. HRYBYK

Mark Uffner

So going to engineering school seemed a natural progression.

I originally started at Montgomery College’s mechanical engineering program and then transferred to the University of Maryland’s mechanical engineering program. I also became a Pathways student at Goddard, so I was a full-time student and part-time employee. I started in safety and moved into structural analysis. When I graduated in 2017, I began working full-time in my current position.

**What are some of the more interesting projects you have worked on at Goddard?**

I am very excited about my current project working for the spacecraft Plankton Aerosol Cloud Ocean Ecosystem (PACE). I am part of the group working on the actual spacecraft. I did some of the observatory-level performance analysis, a multi-disciplinary analysis involving thermal and systems engineers. I applied a temperature profile to a structural model to see how the temperatures caused the structure to expand and contract. This movement, although slight, is significant in that any instruments attached to the structure would also shift slightly altering where they were pointing. This is phenomenon is called thermal distortion.

**What do you enjoy best about Goddard?**

I love my job. I love being able to answer difficult questions. It is always something new, always challenging and I love challenges.

**What do you do as co-chair of the Veterans Advisory Committee?**

We have a monthly meeting of the entire committee. The three co-chairs meet more frequently. One of our co-chairs left, and two others replaced her. Everyone is always willing to drop everything they are doing to work on what needs to be done. We are very involved in the center’s diversity and inclusion program.

Our two big, center-wide events usually help celebrate Veterans’ Day in November and Memorial Day in May. We do all kinds of different things. Sometimes we have a speaker or an Honor Guard, often both. We recently brought four people from the Veterans Administration to answer questions about personal benefits. We try to do anything and everything we can to help our veterans.

**Who was your last speaker?**

For our last Veterans Day event, November 2019, Dr. Jonny Kim, then an astronaut candidate and now an astronaut, spoke at Wallops Flight Facility. Astronaut Kim was a Navy seal and is a medical doctor. We hope someday to ask Dr. Kim to speak at Goddard.

His speech blew me away! He said he wanted to become an astronaut to reach out to kids having trouble with direction. He wants to show them that they can do big, amazing things.

Is there something surprising about you, your hobbies, interests or activities outside of work that people do not generally know?

I am really into audio equipment. Over the shutdown, I built a headphone tube amp. I am now building a bigger and better one.

Also, I was an amateur bodybuilder while in school. I competed in a regional event in Baltimore. I still enjoy working out, but not to the level of bodybuilding.

### EDUCATION

## New Ways to Keep Kids Engaged While Distance-Learning

(StatePoint) As learning goes remote, many teachers and families are doing their best to adjust. Luckily, new resources and tools are emerging to help ease this process.

For example, the “Learn Through This” campaign, an initiative of VTech Electronics North America, is expanding learning opportunities for kids at home. Here’s what to know about the campaign and how your family can access these resources:

### Online Resources

Through the LeapFrog Learning Path, an online portal featuring free resources to keep children learning at home, parents can find valuable advice from learning experts on a variety of topics, such as preparing kids with 21st century skills and learning to read. In addition, the portal provides a suggested daily schedule, a curated list of educa-

tional websites and free printable activity books to help parents maximize their children’s time outside the classroom and keep them engaged.

Families can also access an extended free trial of the LeapFrog Academy educational app, as well as reduced costs on the six-month and 12-month plans. An interactive learning program filled with over 2,000 engaging games and activities for 3-6 year olds, the app can be used on any device with no Wi-Fi required.

### Learning Toys

It’s not always easy to ensure toys chosen for children enrich their development and encourage learning. To help parents find the right toys to meet their children’s needs, VTech and LeapFrog will be sharing video walkthroughs on their YouTube channels. Whether a par-

ent is looking for a role-play toy for their child that loves pretending to be a chef, a desk to practice writing skills or an interactive learning system to get kids excited about reading, personalized toy recommendations will make it easier for parents to keep children engaged and learning.

### Support for Schools

As schools remain closed, many parents are getting a fuller picture of the important role teachers play and the scope of their responsibilities. To support educators faced with the challenge of recreating the classroom from home, VTech Electronics North America made a \$50,000 donation to AdoptAClassroom.org’s COVID-19 Disaster Relief Fund. The fund will be disbursed to high-needs teachers and schools impacted by COVID-19. A national, award-winning nonprofit, AdoptAClassroom.org is working directly with educators, schools and vendor partners to identify their needs and get tools in the hands of students to make sure the learning doesn’t stop.

For more information about the “Learn Through This” campaign and the resources available to your family, visit [learnthroughthis.com](http://learnthroughthis.com).

Parents, teachers and children are facing unique challenges during this unprecedented time. But with the right balance of education and fun, children can continue to thrive and learn.



PHOTO COURTESY STATEPOINT



# ENVIRONMENT



IMAGE CREDIT: LIVIER GARCIA, PEXELS

Although Americans love corn, its ubiquity in our diets and agricultural sector isn't so good for the planet.

## Earth TALK™ The Environmental Impact of Corn

Dear EarthTalk:

How did corn become such a dominant crop in the U.S. and what's the effect on the environment of growing so much of it?  
—J.S., Washington, DC

It's true that corn is the most dominant agricultural product in the U.S., and perhaps the world. Originally domesticated in Central America, European explorers initially shunned it. But when their crops failed, the conquerors of the New World decided to integrate corn into their agricultural efforts. Fast forward: A couple of hundred years and this tall grass now covers 90 million acres of land in America alone, and accounts for some 10 percent of total crop production globally.

Corn is so ubiquitous in our food system that an estimated 70 percent of the atoms in the body of the average American originally came from it.

One of the reasons corn is so dominant is that, as far as crops go, it excels at converting raw materials into chemical energy. Growing corn generates far more calories per unit of land than nearly any other crop. Another key factor in corn's rise was the surplus of ammonium nitrate after the end of World War II. Agricultural scientists repurposed this compound, originally stockpiled for explosives, into a cheap form of fertilizer. This allowed corn to be grown in the same fields year after year, without depleting the nitrogen already in the soil. Additionally, corn is incredibly versatile. We can eat it, process it into syrup and use it as a sweetener, fuel our cars with it, and feed it to our animals.

Currently, we use approximately 40 percent of corn grown in the U.S. to create ethanol, and 36 percent to feed animals. Unfortunately, both uses wreak havoc on the environment. Ethanol has a low "energy-returned-on-energy-invested" ratio, meaning we must put a large amount of energy into producing it, in some cases even more than ethanol itself generates.

Even just growing corn is far from environmentally friendly. Conventional monoculture farming (the way most corn is grown) degrades soil and often leads to harmful runoff into streams and rivers. Pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers can all wreak havoc on aquatic organisms.

An indirect negative effect of the supremacy of corn has been its help in fueling explosive growth in the livestock industry at home and abroad. These days we use about 80 percent of the world's farmland for animal production. But as a result of animals' inefficiency in converting feed to energy, animal agriculture produces only 18 percent of the world's calories.

So, what can we do? On a political level, agricultural subsidies for corn can be either eliminated or redistributed. Some 60 percent of farm subsidies in the U.S. go toward corn and other grains, while only one percent goes toward promoting healthier and more eco-friendly fruits and non-grain vegetables.

Farmers themselves can transition from monoculture practices to those that incorporate a wider variety of species into the mix. As consumers, one of the best measures we can take is to buy organic corn. Organic agriculture is not quite as eco-friendly as some make it out to be, it's miles ahead of conventional farming.

**CONTACTS:** "The Environmental Risks Of Corn Production," [wbur.org/hereandnow/2014/06/11/corn-environmental-risks/](http://wbur.org/hereandnow/2014/06/11/corn-environmental-risks/); "How a national food policy could save millions of American lives," [wapo.st/corn-op-ed](http://wapo.st/corn-op-ed).

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: [question@earthtalk.org](mailto:question@earthtalk.org).

Take 10 minutes and BE COUNTED!

Have You Completed Your Census Questionnaire?

### YOUR GARDEN

## Your Backyard Isn't Cancelled: Six Tips to Celebrate Earth Day Right at Home

(NAPSI)—The 50th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22 can be a good time for everyone to take some time to get outside, even if current conditions mean a community event to celebrate isn't available. Fortunately, there are plenty of ways to honor the Earth in your own backyard.

"You don't need to leave home to celebrate Earth Day. Remember, nature starts at your back door," explains Kris Kiser, President of the TurfMutt Foundation, an organization that encourages outdoor learning experiences, stewardship of green spaces, and care for living landscapes for the benefit of all.

"Get outside, mow your lawn, trim bushes, plant a butterfly bush. By becoming a steward of your yard, you are helping the planet. At the same time, you're supporting your health and well-being, which is increasingly important as families spend more time at home."

#### What You Can Do

Here are six tips to celebrate Earth Day without ever leaving home:

**1. Get outside.** Your backyard is an outdoor living room and safe place for pets and kids to play. Science proves spending time in your family's yard is good for your health

and well-being, and so important today as everyone looks for creative ways to stay well while being confined to the home. Researchers have found that people living in neighborhoods with more birds, shrubs and trees are less likely to suffer from depression, anxiety and stress.

**2. Make the outdoors a family project.** Take your loved ones outside to assess your space. What's working well? What could be improved? What can you plan to do together in your backyard? Anything needing to be cleaned up? Make a plan to expand or spruce up your yard.

**3. Connect kids to nature.** Free, online, do-at-home lesson plans are available from the TurfMutt.com. The environmental education program resources and activities, based on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) principles, give kids the prompts they need to have fun learning about and exploring the nature and science in their own backyards.

**4. Know your climate zone.** Learn about climate-zone-appropriate plants, the importance of pollinators, and how backyards can support local wildlife. Conduct a plant inventory to determine what's currently thriving in your backyard. Match that up against the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map to de-

termine the best types of turf, trees, shrubs, and plants for the climate zone.

**5. Keep pollinators in mind.** Your yard is an important part of the connected ecosystem providing much-needed food and shelter for pollinators, such as birds, bees, butterflies, bats, and other creatures. Select a variety of plants that will bloom all year long. The Audubon Society's database can help determine which birds will be attracted to which plants for unique regions so you can make good choices about what to plant.

**6. Plant, prune or mow.** Staying confined to home base doesn't mean gardening and yard work have to stop. Order garden supplies online or have them delivered from a nearby nursery. Mow the lawn and trim bushes.

Research shows people who gardened for at least 30 minutes a week had lower body mass indexes (BMIs)—measure of body fat—well as higher levels of self-esteem and better moods overall. They also reported lower levels of tension and stress.

#### Learn More

For further facts and tips on saving the planet one yard at a time, go to [www.turfmutt.com](http://www.turfmutt.com).

## New NASA Podcast Helps Listeners Explore Our 'Curious Universe'



IMAGE CREDIT NASA

By SEAN POTTER / KATIE ATKINSON

NASA Headquarters / Goddard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Md.

WASHINGTON (April 6, 2020)—NASA's newest podcast is taking listeners on an adventure to explore the wonders of Earth and help unravel the mysteries of the universe.

NASA's Curious Universe explores the wild and wonderful places on our home planet and beyond. Host Padi Boyd transports listeners into the world of

NASA's missions, projects and people. Each episode is an invitation to an adventure with a NASA expert, such as astronaut Nick Hague and astrophysicist Michelle Thaller.

The show, which launched Monday, April 6, visits a wide range of tour stops along NASA's journeys in science and spaceflight. Listeners will tra-

verse the Amazon rainforest, dive into an astronaut training pool, and peer inside a lab where "space crafters" sew for NASA missions. The premiere episode, which debuted April 13, honors 50 years of Earth Day. New episodes will be released every Monday.

NASA's Curious Universe is for everyone and doesn't require any prior knowledge of NASA or its missions. First-time explorers welcome!

Find the NASA's Curious Universe trailer now on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, and Soundcloud.

NASA's Curious Universe is the latest addition to NASA's podcast portfolio, which includes Houston, We Have a Podcast, On a Mission and Gravity Assist, among others.

Discover all of NASA's podcasts at: <https://nasa.gov/podcasts>

## Earth TALK™ Our Pets and Coronavirus

Dear EarthTalk:

Can our pets get sick from the coronavirus too, and can they pass it along to people?

—J.M., Bridgeport, CT

Given that Covid-19 probably originated in bats means that it's no surprise that the dreaded virus can pass between animals and humans. But when a four-year-old Malayan tiger at the Bronx Zoo tested positive for Coronavirus recently (and six of his peers showed similar symptoms), it sent shock waves across the United States, especially in the two-thirds of American households with pets.

Zoo officials report that the tiger started getting sick on March 27 after exposure to a human handler who later tested positive for Covid-19. (The zoo has been closed to the public since March 16.) While the sick tigers are expected to recover fully, the spread of the infection beyond humans is worrisome to not only pet owners but also to those of us concerned about the health of the planet's wildlife and biodiversity, which is already teetering on the ropes given the one-two punch of habitat loss and climate change.

And if tigers can get it, what about house cats? What about dogs? "There have been reports outside the U.S. of pet dogs or cats becoming infected after close contact with contagious people, including a Hong Kong dog that tested positive for a low level of the pathogen in February and early March," reports Jennifer Peltz for the Associated Press. "Hong Kong agriculture authorities concluded that pet dogs and cats couldn't pass the virus to human beings but could test positive if exposed by their owner."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) concurs that it's not our pets we should be worrying about, as the pandemic is spreading as a result of human-to-human transmission thanks to our coughing,

sneezing and even just talking. "There is no reason to think that any animals or pets in the United States might be a source of infection with this novel coronavirus."

But CDC nevertheless recommends staying out of contact with pets if you have contracted the virus (or if you suspect you have it). "Although there have been no reports of pets becoming sick with COVID-19 in the United States, it is still recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus," warns CDC. "This can help ensure both you and your animals stay healthy."

If you are sick, CDC recommends trying to get other people to take care of your animals until you're all better. And if that's not possible, minimize contact with your pets (especially petting, snuggling, kissing or licking, and sharing food) and wash your hands before and after your interactions.

"If pets go out and have contact with an infected person, they have the chance to get

infected," reports Li Lanjuan, an epidemiologist with China's National Health Commission, adding that a pet who has been exposed to Covid-19 should be isolated just like any human who has shown symptoms or tested positive. "In addition to people, we should be careful with other mammals especially pets."

**CONTACTS:** "Can Dogs Get Coronavirus," [akc.org/expert-advice/news/can-dogs-get-coronavirus/](http://akc.org/expert-advice/news/can-dogs-get-coronavirus/); Coronavirus and pets: How COVID-19 affects cats and dogs, [cnet.com/how-to/coronavirus-and-pets-how-covid-19-affects-cats-and-dogs/](http://cnet.com/how-to/coronavirus-and-pets-how-covid-19-affects-cats-and-dogs/); CDC's "If You Have Animals," [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html](http://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html).

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PHOTOGRAPH CREDIT MUHANNAD ALATAWI, PEXELS

A few dogs and cats tested positive for Covid-19 in Hong Kong, but experts don't think these animals can spread it to humans.

# PETS

## THE 2020 AMERICAN HUMANE *Hero Dog Awards*®

First Round of Voting is Open Until May 7, 2020!

[www.herodogawards.org/vote](http://www.herodogawards.org/vote)



The Lois Pope LIFE Foundation, Inc.



The Heart of TV



AMERICAN HUMANE  
HERO DOG AWARDS®

## Who's a Good Dog? More than 400 of Humankind's Best Friends Nominated for Chance to Become Nation's Top Hero Dog

Public Voting Open to Choose Semifinalists for 2020 American Humane Hero Dog Awards®

Sponsored by the Lois Pope LIFE Foundation, national campaign to culminate in red carpet awards gala and two-hour special on Hallmark Channel this fall

By MARK STUBIS  
American Humane

WASHINGTON (April 2, 2020)—Every dog has its day, and more than 400 of the nation's bravest dogs are hoping that day will come for them this fall during the 10th annual American Humane Hero Dog Awards®, which is sponsored by the Lois Pope LIFE Foundation and will be broadcast as a two-hour special on Hallmark Channel this fall. Fully 408 of them are competing for the honor of being named 2020's American Hero Dog, the highest honor a dog can receive. Now it's up to America to help decide which of these dogs will take home the top prize.

"Our best friends do so much to improve and even save our lives, and every dog owner knows about the extraordinary, unbreakable bond they share with their dog," said Dr. Robin Ganzert, American Humane president and CEO. "The American Humane Hero Dog Awards are our way of celebrating the power of the human-animal bond, which has been a core part of our organization's mission for 143 years."

Dog lovers across the country are invited to visit [www.herodogawards.org](http://www.herodogawards.org) and vote once per day for their favorite dogs in each of seven categories. After the first round of voting ends on May 7, 21 semifinalists (the top three in each category) will move on to the second round of voting. From this pool, the field will narrow down to the seven category finalists. The winning dog in each category will take part in the nationally televised Hero Dog Awards this fall and this year's top American Hero Dog will be revealed.

The seven categories for 2020 are: Military Dogs, sponsored by the Lois Pope LIFE Foundation; Therapy Dogs, sponsored by the World Pet Association; Law Enforcement Dogs; Service Dogs; Shelter Dogs; Search and Rescue Dogs; and, Guide/Hearing Dogs. American Airlines is the official airline of the Hero Dog Awards.

"The Hero Dog Awards recognize some of America's bravest

heroes," said philanthropist and Platinum Presenting Sponsor Lois Pope. "I am honored to present this invaluable effort to honor the best of our best friends and shine a light on the extraordinary acts of courage and kindness performed by ordinary dogs."

During the past nine years, Americans have cast millions of votes for more than a thousand dogs, all seeking the coveted title of American Hero Dog. The program reaches more than 1 billion people each year and draws the support and participation of top celebrity dog lovers from all over the world. Hosts, judges, award presenters and entertainment acts have included Jay Leno, Billy Crystal, Betty White, Ariel Winter, Vivica A. Fox, Rebecca Romijn, Alison Sweeney, James Denton, Beth Stern, Bindi Irwin, Derek Hough, Richard Marx, Katharine McPhee, Michelle Beadle, Whoopi Goldberg, Denise Richards, Lisa Vanderpump, Chelsea Handler, Martin Short, Jewel, Wilson Phillips, John Ondrasik, Carson Kressley, Miranda Lambert, Pauley Perrette, Kristen Chenoweth, Naomi Judd, Eric Stonestreet, Danica McKellar, Bailee Madison and many, many more.

Key dates for the 2020 American Humane Hero Dog Awards (all rounds open and close at 12 p.m. Pacific Time):

1st Round Voting: April 2–May 7

2nd Round Voting: May 28–July 16

3rd Round Voting: July 30–September 10

Hero Dog Awards & Broadcast: Fall 2020, exact date/time to be announced

All rounds open and close at 12 p.m. Pacific Time. And because behind every hero pet is a hero vet or veterinary nurse, please be sure to cast a daily vote for your favorites in the 2020 American Humane Hero Veterinarian and Hero Veterinary Nurse Awards®, sponsored by Zoetis Petcare (a U.S. business unit of Zoetis), starting June 11 right here: [www.HeroVetAwards.org](http://www.HeroVetAwards.org).

For more information about the 2020 American Humane Hero Dog Awards, and to vote daily, please visit [www.herodogawards.org](http://www.herodogawards.org). For more information on sponsorship opportunities, email Mari

Harner at [marih@americanhumane.org](mailto:marih@americanhumane.org) or call 1-800-227-4645.

American Humane is the country's first national humane organization, founded in 1877. For more information, please visit [www.americanhumane.org](http://www.americanhumane.org). Please follow us on Facebook and Twitter and to inquire about Hero Dog Awards sponsorship opportunities, please email Mari Harner at [marih@americanhumane.org](mailto:marih@americanhumane.org).

As one of America's leading philanthropists, Lois Pope has positively impacted the lives of individuals at the local, national and international levels. She has established three separate organizations dedicated to helping those in need. These organizations are the Lois Pope LIFE Foundation, Inc., Leaders In Furthering Education (LIFE), and the Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation. For more than 20 years she has been the driving force behind the Lois Pope LIFE Center at the University of Miami School of Medicine, The American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, and a groundbreaking new program with American Humane in Palm Beach County. Lois Pope recently donated to American Humane several Lois Pope Rescue Vehicles. Each rescue vehicle is a 50-foot long response unit, complete with a Ford F-350 truck and trailer, which is specifically designed and outfitted to provide an array of animal emergency services and cruelty responses within a region. On Oct. 5, 2014, Mrs. Pope saw the completion of a decades-long dream—the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, which was dedicated by President Obama in Washington DC. It will stand in perpetuity as a reminder to the public and legislators of the courage and sacrifices of the four million-plus living disabled veterans and all those who died before them, as well as the need to be vigilant in assuring their support and understanding the human cost of war. Through her advocacy, Oct. 5 every year will serve as a National Day of Honor for disabled veterans. A mother, a grandmother, and a great grandmother, Lois has trained for and completed five New York City Marathons.

## Five Tips to Reduce Your Pet's Environmental Pawprint

(Family Features) There's plenty of advice on ways to reduce your environmental footprint, but you might be left wondering about the environmental pawprint made by your pet.

According to a 2019 survey conducted by the American Pet Products Association, 67% of families across the country have at least one dog or cat, which is why it's important to think about how your furry friends affect the planet.

Consider these easy lifestyle changes you can make to help reduce their environmental impact.

**Check those waste bags.** Use compostable baggies to pick up after your pet when you take walks. Plastic bags take years to break down, if at all. There are options made from plants and other materials that biodegrade quicker. When it comes to disposal, check with

your local waste management services as regulations can vary by community. While many places suggest the compost pile, others may not.

**Consider your kitty's litter.** For the vast majority of cat families, kitty litter is an absolute must. Look for a litter that's made from natural ingredients you can put in the compost bin. Not only is this better for the environment, but natural ingredients keep your cat from accidentally ingesting toxic chemicals.

**Look at food packaging.** Pets go through a lot of food, and that means a lot of packaging. You can reduce waste with an option like Petcurean's recyclable Tetra Pak cartons, which are made from 65% renewable materials for Now Fresh and GO! Solutions wet food recipes. Additionally, its Gather line of kibble in plant-

based bags is made from 30% sugarcane, which reduces the use of petroleum-based materials.

At home, consider ways to upcycle empty food bags to get more use out of the material, such as using them to collect garden and yard waste. You can also flatten bags into waterproof mats for your vehicle's floorboards or make a waterproof barrier between your pet's bed and the floor.

**Prepare for water on the go.** While humans can easily drink water from a reusable bottle, most pets cannot. Instead of making a mess by attempting to give water with your hands, make things easy on yourself and the environment by keeping a stainless-steel water dish in your car. It's a durable solution that keeps your pet from being exposed to chemicals in plastic or silicone.

**Think about accessories.**

Pets go through countless leashes, toys and dishes across their lifespans. Thinking about these items as investments and purchasing items that are more durable means they last longer and you'll waste less. For gently used items you're ready to discard, like outgrown leashes, consider whether they still have useful life and can be reused by a rescue group or shelter. Also, for toys in particular, it's important to know what materials they contain. For example, some pet toys are made with plastic containing BPA's, which can be harmful and negatively impact the environment. Instead look for toys that are made from eco-friendly materials.

For more ideas to reduce your family's environmental pawprint and care for your pet, visit [petcurean.com/blog](http://petcurean.com/blog).



