

Fauquier Times

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Annamaria Ward
FAUQUIER TIMES
GRAPHIC DESIGNER



Bob Good defeats incumbent Denver Riggleman in Republican nominating contest

Social conservative wins 58% of vote at June 13 convention

By Coy Ferrell
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Bob Good emerged as the Republican Party's nominee for the 5th Congressional District seat after a nominating convention on Saturday, unseating incumbent Congressman Denver Riggleman. Good received 58% of the weighted vote total, and 60% of the raw total of votes, after 2,537 delegates cast ballots at a drive-thru convention held at a church in Lynchburg. The convention was originally scheduled for April but was delayed because of the pandemic.



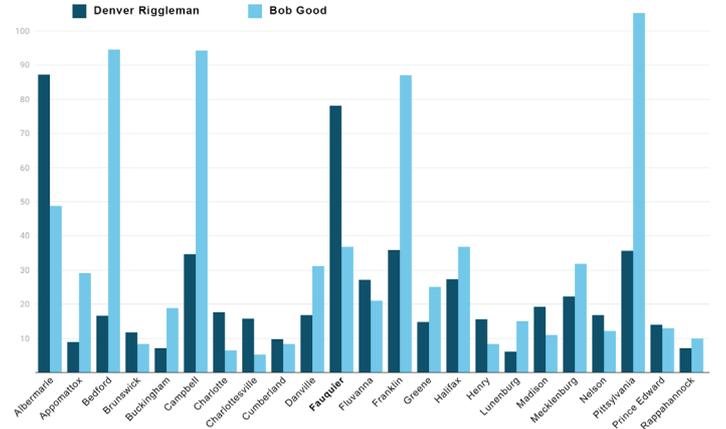
BOB GOOD

Good missed the deadline for filing paperwork to the Virginia Department of Elections to be on the ballot in the November general election, but the Republican Party of Virginia has filed an appeal to retroactively extend the deadline; a decision will be made by VDE board members on July 7.

If the extension is not granted, Good may

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Weighted votes by delegation



TIMES STAFF PHOTO/COY FERRELL

A child holds a sign as the march proceeds through the intersection of Lee Highway and Broadview Avenue in Warrenton.

Young people call for equality, justice during June 10 Black Lives Matter Peace March

Procession from Fauquier High School to Eva Walker Park draws 250 participants
Full story on page 8.

LFCC/U.S. 29 INTERCHANGE PARTIALLY OPENS JUNE 23. SEE PAGE 10.

Landlords and loyal customers help shops and restaurants weather the pandemic

By Christopher Connell
PIEDMONT JOURNALISM FOUNDATION

It's an old saying: A friend in need is a friend indeed. For some small businesses in Fauquier County that have been shut for weeks during the pandemic, their landlords have turned out to be good friends indeed.

That's what florist Dawn Borusky found. She has owned and operated Village Flowers in the old firehouse on Main Street for 33 years.

"Our landlord told us that if we could not pay the rent, do not worry about it. I called and told him I was concerned because we had to close down. He stopped me and said, 'Dawn, whatever you need, you've got. Do not worry about it,'" she related.

That landlord is Scott Humphrey, who heads the R.L. Kane property management company in Alexandria and who was part of a group that purchased the historic firehouse in the 1970s. "My wife and I try to support downtown Warrenton in every way we can," said Humphrey, 88, whose family also owns a farm in Fauquier.

Borusky is "an absolutely wonderful person who does things maybe a lot of other tenants don't do, making sure the building is safe and secure," said Humphrey. "I did the same thing with the other tenants in the building."

He admires the entrepreneurial spirit of small-business owners who "are not interested in the security of



TIMES STAFF PHOTO/COY FERRELL

Dawn Borusky, owner of Village Flowers in Old Town Warrenton, works on an arrangement of roses with her dog, Bree.

a paycheck and don't always have very much money (to start) ... but they work really, really hard to gain equity in their company."

Nationally, not all landlords have been so forgiving, nor were businesses, big and small, able to keep paying their rent. The Washington Post, citing data collected by Datex Property Solutions, reported that fewer than 60 percent of retailers paid their rent on time in May.

Customers are rallying behind favorite businesses as well.

Restaurateur Stan Heaney opened the Corner Deli in Remington 32 years ago and purchased the building 15 years ago, but still has a mort-

gage to pay. Take-out orders became its mainstay.

Help came from a longtime customer, Steve Payne, the owner of This n' That Amish Outlet north of Warrenton, who lent Heaney four big picnic tables to put in his parking lot to give customers a place to eat. "We never had picnic tables before, but he's been a real good friend to many people in Remington for years," including the fire and rescue company, said Heaney.

Payne owns Amish outlets in Leesburg and Winchester, too, and is opening a new downtown Warrenton shop

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Landlords and loyal customers help shops and restaurants weather the pandemic

LOCAL BUSINESS, from page 1

this week. When the Corner Deli no longer needs the \$1,000 tables, they'll go back to This n' That Amish Outlet for sale. Heaney is keeping them spruced up. "We go out and wash them every half hour," he said.

Cammie Fuller, a former school librarian and author, and two partners launched The Open Book in Old Town Warrenton in March 2019, giving Fauquier its first store selling new books after several years without one.

"We have a wonderful landlord. He cut the rent by 75 percent, with no obligation, no IOU ... he doesn't want us to go away," said Fuller, who has a three-to-five-year lease.

The owner of her store and most of the commercial property on that block of Main Street is John Capetanakis of Arlington, Virginia. "I consider this a partnership between myself and the tenants. If they do well, I do well. That's my philosophy," said the self-effacing businessman, who has a Ph.D. in electrical engineering from MIT.

"You get to know these people, the tenants. When the pandemic hit, all of a sudden in a week or two weeks, things went very bad. I think it's going to take months to get back to where they were," he said.

He is still discounting the rents, although at the moment "they are not covering my costs," including the county tax bill. But "if they have no customers, what are you going to do?



TIMES STAFF PHOTO/ROBIN EARL
Carolyn Kinder, Kierra Lewis, Faith Freeman and Isaiah Lewis settle in to watch "Dirty Dancing" during movie night on Friday at Uncle B's Soul Food restaurant in Bealeton.

I'll work with them," Capetanakis said.

The doors at The Open Book are open again for customers, two or three at a time. Online sales helped Fuller through the past few months, and she even delivered books to customers' homes. "The community rallied and a lot of orders came in, with people telling us they didn't want us going anywhere," she said.

Bernard Northam, the proprietor and chef of Uncle B's Soul Food in Bealeton, was accustomed to drawing big crowds to karaoke nights on weekends, as well as diners who came for fat pork chops and other delectables. Now his family and staff carry food out to customers who tailgate in the parking lot and watch movies projected on a newly

purchased an oversized screen.

"We have a lot of fun," said Northam, 58 (no relation to the governor). "That's the joy of not franchising. You can push the envelope. We try to do whatever the clientele is looking for - as long as it's legal."

Northam's landlord didn't cut the rent but allowed him to pay half twice a month without late charges. "He's very understanding," the proprietor said.

Philip Mulford, an attorney and sole proprietor of Mulford Mediation, which provides families facing divorces a less adversarial way to resolve disputes, never approached his landlord about getting a break on the rent, although his business is off 70 percent. "That didn't even cross my mind," said Mulford, who's rented the office above the Black Bear Bistro on Main Street in Warrenton since 2000. "It doesn't seem fair to them. They still have the mortgage and expenses to pay," he said.

Richie Parsons, owner of Anytime Fitness franchise in Warrenton Village Center, decided not to accept relief on the rent that the landlord offered all the tenants, including a Chipotle restaurant. Gyms were brought to a standstill by the governor's stay-at-home order. The offer "was one size fits all, take it or leave it," said Parsons. "For other tenants, it might have been a good deal, but for me it was not ideal."

Parsons began occupying that space 13 months ago, not long enough to "build up history of good will and rapport with (the landlord). For us to turn around and say, 'Hey, 13 months in, now I need a break,' that could have been problematic for them. They still have a mortgage to make."

The former political consultant and congressional aide owns another Anytime Fitness franchise in Bridgeport, West Virginia, which has been open for six years; there he did get a break on the rent. Parsons said, "We have a long history with that landlord of payments on time, demonstrating a track record of being responsible and dependable, so when it came time for us to ask for help in a way we never had before, I think they were more inclined to be responsive." They renegotiated the lease terms and signed the renewal early, he said.

Warrenton's Anytime Fitness is now back open with new safety protocols and limits on how many people can work out at one time. Business is



TIMES STAFF PHOTO/COY FERRELL
Cammie Fuller stands with her puppy, Poppins, in the Old Town Open Book in Warrenton.

about half the previous level, but some customers have been eager to get back in and resume workouts and new customers are signing up. "A lot of people realize it's not just about looking and feeling good, it's about being healthy and less susceptible to illnesses and disease," the owner said.



Richie Parsons owns Anytime Fitness.

In difficult times, there's another apt saying that applies to small, enterprising businesses: It's an ill wind that blows no good.

Field & Main Restaurant in Marshall, once open for dinner only, quickly pivoted to a thriving take-out business, including lunch burgers and sandwiches and home-style meals that customers can take home and reheat for dinner.

Proprietors Neal Wavra and his wife pay rent to the investment group that bought the building when they opened the restaurant in 2016. "Basically, they hold the mortgage. When this happened, they allowed us to sunset the payments. We did that for about a month, but then we caught up," said Wavra.

Fourteen of his 20 employees are on the job, and the waiters will return in July when the restaurant reopens its dining room.

"I'm not running a super-efficient operation at the moment, sort of intentionally," said Wavra. "I have more (staff) than I need, but I want them here, working and drawing a paycheck." He plans to continue selling lunches to go and operating a retail market selling wine, fresh produce and some prepared meals -- even when customers are back in the 80-seat dining room ordering entrees cooked over the 10-foot-wide, wood-burning hearth.

"We had some of these ideas before," he said. The pandemic "provided the opportunity to try them out."

Christopher Connell is a freelance writer, working with the Piedmont Journalism Foundation.

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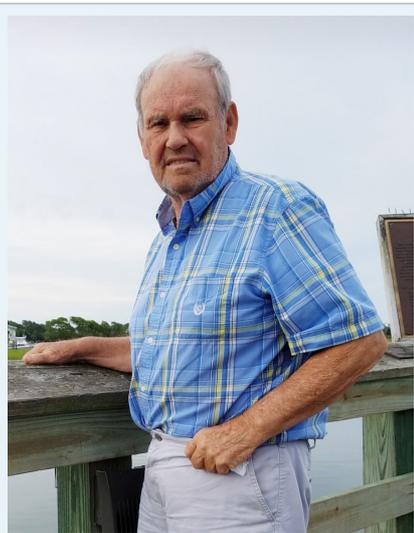


Congratulations to the Liberty High School Class of 2020!

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COURTESY PHOTO

Glen Cordell passed away May 10 at the age of 79.

Saying goodbye

Beloved coach and father of three succumbs to COVID-19

By Robin Earl

TIMES STAFF WRITER

Only 17 people were at Moser Funeral home in Warrenton on May 15 to attend the funeral of Milford "Glen" Cordell of Casanova. If it wasn't for COVID-19, his wife Carol believes there would have been more than 200 attending. Cordell coached youth sports in Vienna for more than 40 years and was inducted into the Vienna Baseball Hall of Fame and the Washington Home Plate Club for his contributions to the game.

Cordell had been a resident of the memory care unit at The Wellington at Lake Manassas in Gainesville for the last year, after suffering two strokes. He first showed symptoms of COVID-19 on May 3 and died exactly one week later.

Carol Cordell said, "On Sunday [May 3], he had a slight fever and his oxygen levels were dropping, but he was eating and doing well, they told me. After a day or two, his fever went up to 104 and his oxygen levels kept dropping. They took him to Heathcote [Haymarket Medical Center], but ... they transferred him to Prince William [Novant Health UVA Prince William Medical Center]. He died on May 10."

See CORDELL, page 4

During the pandemic, the emergency never ends for Fauquier Hospital employees

By Christopher Connell

PIEDMONT JOURNALISM FOUNDATION

Hospitals practice regularly for disasters or disease outbreaks that bring a flood of patients to their doors. But those drills are predicated on the assumption that it's temporary – that the dire event will soon pass and operations return to normal.

The coronavirus pandemic is not like that.

"The only thing we didn't practice for is that this isn't going away anytime soon," said Fauquier Health CEO Chad Melton. "Everyone fully expects that 12 to 18 months from now, we're still going to be dealing with COVID-19."

That will mean the extra precautions and screening of those who come to Fauquier Hospital and the adjacent long-term care facility, Fauquier Health Rehabilitation & Nursing Center, will be the new normal.

To date, Fauquier Health has identified seven employees who have tested positive for COVID-19. In early April,



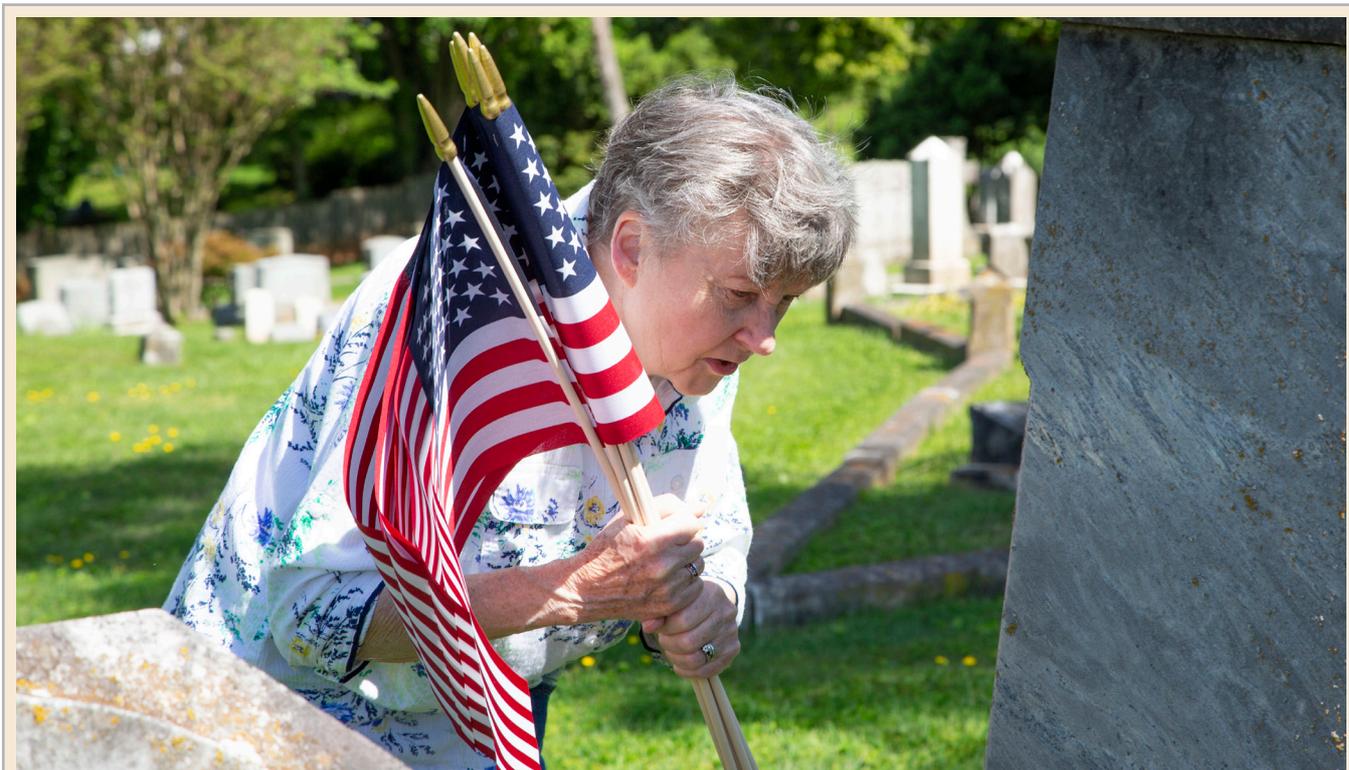
TIMES STAFF PHOTO/COY FERRELL

From the Fauquier Health Catheterization Lab: Darryn Neujahr, Cardiac Cath Lab tech, Shannon Vooy, RN, Erin Steele, RN, Staff Development and Bridget Loeb, RN, Radiology Special Procedures.

three employees were identified; Fauquier Health worked with the Virginia Department of Health to notify and test all exposed staff members who came into contact with these individuals and they self-isolated while waiting for test results. At that time, all tested negative for COVID-19.

Four more employees have tested positive since then, and the same procedures were followed. Sarah Cabbage, Fauquier Health spokeswoman said that if testing is indicated, it is done in accordance with VDH and CDC guidelines.

See HOSPITAL, page 8



TIMES STAFF PHOTO/ROBIN EARL

Kathleen Caron was one of 70 volunteers who placed flags by the graves of fallen soldiers at the Warrenton Cemetery May 16th.

Volunteers honor fallen veterans with flags - See Page 2

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The emergency never ends for Fauquier Hospital employees

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Fauquier Health is the county's largest private employer with a staff of 1,100 and 200 physicians for the 97-bed acute care hospital and 113-bed nursing home. The health system also runs an assisted living facility, The Villa at Suffield Meadows, where similar precautions are in place.

More than two months into the maelstrom, Fauquier Health selected a cross-section of staff to respond to questions in writing. They all expressed pride in how they and their institution are meeting the challenge -- and gratitude as well, for an outpouring of community support including donations of masks, gift cards, lotions, pizzas and other treats.

"It's humbling," said Angela Hurst, the nursing home's dietary director. "The generosity of our families, local businesses and community groups has been overwhelming."

Across the country, the pandemic has been unsparing of the elderly patients in nursing homes and some caregivers as well. In Virginia, 190 outbreaks of COVID-19 have occurred in long-term care facilities, resulting in 4,404 cases and 681 deaths. But not a single patient nor staff member at the Fauquier home has contracted COVID-19 thus far, Melton said.

"We got ahead of it very quickly," he said in an interview. "We went to a no-visitor policy over a month ago, started screening everybody at the door, started taking temperatures well before [others] did. We started masking our staff right off the bat. We don't allow visitors or any vendors unless it's absolutely critical. Deliveries are left at the loading dock area and staff bring it in."

Long-term care workers often work at more than one facility. FHRNC administrator Katy Reeves said she has asked employees to choose only one place to work during the pandemic to prevent cross contamination.

Hurst knows that the no-visitor policy is tough on the families of

residents. She said, "My heart goes out to the families of our residents ... Many residents have dementia and limited understanding of what is happening and we as staff have taken on the task of trying to fill this void. Video chats and phone calls are a way to allow those visits to occur, but it isn't the same as being with your family. I keep trying to imagine what it would be like to have my mom in a community senior care setting and not be able to walk in and see her."

Elective surgeries

Gov. Ralph Northam's initial executive order in March shut down elective surgeries statewide. Fauquier, which normally sees 500 surgeries a month, saw that volume drop 78 percent. The hospital furloughed 61 employees.

With Virginia, like other states, starting to open up and allow elective surgeries, Melton believes hospital operations will climb toward 50 percent of normal, then reach 75 percent by the end of June; over the summer it could rebound "back to where we were previously."

"That's our goal, but we'll see if it happens or not. There are a lot of variables," said Melton, including the fact that a lot of those in the community who lost their jobs may also have lost their health insurance.

The hospital is taking a cautious approach to who will be admitted for elective surgery, he said. It requires prospective surgical patients to test negative for COVID-19 and adhere for seven days prior to the Virginia Department of Health's "safer at home" guidelines, which requires



"... maintaining preparedness and providing the most up-to-date care for our COVID-19 patients are a big part of my daily responsibilities now."

DR. TAM LY
Infectious disease specialist

minimizing trips outside the home and contact with non-family members. Surgical candidates must also check their temperature twice a day during this seven-day period and report temperatures higher than 100 degrees to their provider.

Employees' concerns

Nurse Shannon Vooyoys has less to do these days in the cardiac catheterization lab, where she normally

assists cardiologists with angioplasty and stent procedures. So instead, she helps screen patients, visitors and employees at one of the two entrances the hospital has left open.

"As a pregnant nurse, I am of course worried about catching the virus," said Vooyoys. Apart from her husband, she has "not seen my friends or family in well over two months."

Sarah Bales, a nurse who directs the Wound Healing Center, said, "Our job during the pandemic is to maintain the healing process and health of our medically fragile patient population, which, in turn, keeps them out of the ER, urgent cares and hospital settings."

"My team brainstormed and implemented changes to ... provide care through alternative and creative methods," including telemedicine, for those whose regular visits to the wound center were interrupted, she said.

Environmental Services supervisor Leona Grandy, who's worked for Fauquier Health for 17 years, said her team has stepped up cleaning frequency and placed special emphasis on sanitizing "high-touch areas such as chairs, desks, handrails and elevators." They scour operating suites daily, even if no surgeries have been performed.

Grandy, too, has been moved by the outpouring of public support. "The donations, encouragement, thoughts and prayers are astonishing," she said.

If there is a uniform message that the hospital workers have for Fauquier residents, it's that they want them to wear masks, practice social

distancing and avoid spreading the deadly virus unwittingly.

They practice what they preach.

"Given the fact that the population we care for has the highest mortality rate, I am very aware of my actions and do everything possible to limit being out in public and to take the proper precautions," said the nursing home's Hurst. "We would be devastated if [COVID-19] was brought unknowingly into our senior care communities."

Dr. Tam Ly, an infectious disease specialist, said her workload has shifted. "I still see hospitalized patients, wound clinic patients and patients in my clinic," she said, but "maintaining preparedness and providing the most up-to-date care for our COVID-19 patients are a big part of my daily responsibilities now."

"My family is very supportive of my work, but in turn, I also do not want to bring any infection home," said Ly. She checks her temperature daily, washes her hands even more than she always did, changes clothes before going home, "and I avoid unnecessary interactions with my elderly family members and those who are immunocompromised."

Bales agreed, "Fortunately, our families understand the risk we take, COVID-19 or not, when providing medical care to patients with a multitude of communicable diseases. All we can do as a family is follow the recommended guidelines to prevent contracting the infection," she said.

Lab technician Kim Lomax said the work the phlebotomists and technicians do is "very hands on" with patients. Everyone already wore gloves and coats. Now they're masked and "if any testing would result in aerosols, we perform those under the safety hood," she said.

No one leaves their cares behind at work.

"I have a young son at home who understands what is going on and even he is worried and frustrated dealing with this situation, but we try to take it one day at a time and be thankful we get to spend more time together," said Lomax.

Apart from going to her job, Sarah Mawyer, a supply management worker who makes sure nurses have all the supplies needed to care for patients, limits "my trips in public to only when absolutely necessary."

The staff has the gratitude of the public and admiration from their boss.

"I do appreciate our team. It's been very hard and stressful on them, taking care of patients and showing up every day," said Melton.



"As a pregnant nurse, I am of course worried about catching the virus."

SHANNON VOYOYS
Registered Nurse



"... I am very aware of my actions and do everything possible to limit being out in public and to take the proper precautions. We would be devastated if [COVID-19] was brought unknowingly into our senior care communities."

ANGELA HURST
Dietary director, Fauquier Health
Rehabilitation & Nursing Center

Getting regular health care in a pandemic – it's complicated

By Christopher Connell
TIMES CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Even in a deadly, once-in-a-century pandemic, people need medical care for other reasons.

Across Fauquier, surgeons, pediatricians, eye doctors, nurse practitioners, dentists, chiropractors and other health care providers are scrambling to provide care that can't wait, even as they struggle -- like other businesses -- to keep their doors open and meet payroll with only a fraction of their usual patients.

Here's how nine providers are rising to these challenges.

The ophthalmologist

Ophthalmologist Charles Hogge, M.D., of Dominion Eye Care normally performs 10 cataract and glaucoma surgeries and laser procedures a week. Now he operates only in emergencies and even then, rarely. "I've done zero cases (in April), one on March 25 and two the week before," said Hogge.

Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam ordered hospitals to stop performing elective surgeries until April 24 and that will likely be extended. "We shut down everything but emergent care," said Hogge. That stopped routine eye exams and put follow-up visits on hold for patients with chronic conditions. At least two-thirds of Dominion's patients fall into high-risk categories for COVID-19, including the elderly.

Dominion stopped giving routine eye exams. Instead of appointments five days a week, "we're seeing patients Monday and Thursday mornings who have ongoing, more acute issues," he said. Unlike some specialties, "you really can't do a traditional eye exam by telemedicine."

The practice takes every extra precaution, with both doctor and patient wearing masks, said Hogge. But they are face to face, 6 inches apart, and breathe on each other as the ophthalmologist peers at the patient's eyes through a microscope and slit lamp. "I tell them hold steady, look straight ahead and don't talk," Hogge said.



CHARLES HOGGE, M.D.

"After I see what I need to see, I back off, wheel to the desk and we can talk from a few feet away."

Even when practice restrictions are lifted, Hogge doubts Dominion will be as busy as it was before.

"I think things are going to be different for a long time," he said. "Two of three patients who walk in our door are at high risk for COVID-19. I think many are going to be very reluctant to come in and a lot of those with less severe issues will try to grind it out a little bit."

Dominion has more than a dozen employees. "They are furloughed. We got word today we're going to get some of that PPP (Payroll Protection Program) money" to pay them for two months. Medicare also is advancing practices payments. "That will get us through the next few months," he said. "It's totally bare bones. But I'm hopeful we can at least start to open up a little in the next few weeks."

The orthopedic surgeon

Blue Ridge Orthopaedics & Spine Center is the only orthopedic practice in the county. With 10 doctors, five physician assistants, 11 physical therapists and almost 100 staff in total, it treats patients who need broken bones set; hip, knee and shoulder replacements, and therapy afterward, as well as relief from chronic pain. "Blue Ridge is OPEN!" its website says. The practice offers telemedicine, but "if your visit requires your physical presence in the office, we are here." Blue Ridge Physical Therapy remains open.

Jeff Hollis is the CEO for Blue Ridge and several other practices in internal medicine, urology, ear, nose and throat, nephrology and other specialties that belong to the Greater Piedmont Medical Alliance. He handles the business side.

The orthopedists are still repairing broken legs and hip fractures, "but our surgical practice has gone to practically nothing. That's just a reality now. Imagine you're driv-

ing a car at 60 mph day in and day out. All of a sudden it comes to a screeching halt. We're cruising at 7 to 8 miles an hour." He estimates patient numbers are down 60 percent. Thirty percent come in and 10% get virtual exams.

"When you have to touch the patient or get an X-ray or give a pain-alleviating injection to their knee or shoulder, you can't do that by telemedicine," he said. "It's hard to tell someone in chronic pain that they can't come in for weeks, so we try to get them in the building and do whatever we can to make people's lives better during this mess."

"The goal the doctors have as business owners is to maintain full employment so we don't lay off or furlough anyone," he said. If they lost their jobs, they'd lose health insurance and other benefits, too.

"The thinking is that sometime in the short term this has to end. It will return to normal. We'll be doing surgery and physical therapy and patients in this community will be treated like they have for 44 years here," he said.

The pediatrician

Piedmont Pediatrics normally sees several hundred infants, toddlers, children and teens each week. Now it's treating half that many, in the office and by telemedicine.

"We've seen a precipitous drop," said Joshua Jakum, M.D., one of the four pediatricians who own the practice. They employ three nurse practitioners and have a total staff of 23. They've kept the office open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays but cut the evening hours that accommodated parents' commuting from jobs in Northern Virginia.

The pediatricians told their staff they are committed to keeping everyone.

"That's our goal. We're a small business. We're being impacted like all small businesses throughout the country. We don't have the deep pockets a hospital or large corporation has," said Jakum. "But sick kids are still sick kids. They don't stop being ill."

Piedmont quickly applied through its bank for a \$10,000 economic injury loan from the Small Business Administration and for the forgivable Payroll Protection Program loan for those that keep employees on the payroll for two months. They haven't gotten approval yet, but Jakum is hopeful.

The pediatricians conduct some exams by videoconference, which works fine if a child has a rash or pink eye that can be remedied with a prescription.

"But there are patients I have to touch to be able to diagnose. I have to listen to them with my stethoscope. I have to press on their abdomen. I have to look in their ears and mouth. And I need the labs that are in my office, whether it's blood chemistry or urinalysis or a strep throat test," Jakum said.

Crowded waiting rooms are just a memory. The entire staff is masked,

and Jakum's brother-in-law bought a 3-D printer and made plastic shields for everyone.

The Piedmont Pediatrics website lays out what families can expect when they bring in a child: "We are checking in all of our patients remotely (call us from your car) and we will come out to get you when we are ready. This enables us to bring you straight back to the exam room."

And the website offers tips for telemedicine visits, too. Parents are asked to have a thermometer and flashlight handy. The doctor or nurse practitioner "might have you show the phone to your child's throat (and push on their belly)," it says. To allay fears, "it might be fun for your child to show us their favorite toy or introduce us to their pet."

Fortunately for children, the pandemic primarily strikes adults. But kids run other risks if they miss regular vaccinations, including measles and whooping cough, both of which are entirely preventable. Fauquier and surrounding counties saw a resurgence of whooping cough in 2019. Parents "know we wouldn't ask them to come in if the health and welfare of their children wasn't topmost in our mind," Jakum said. He saw one child on a sick visit who required immediate hospitalization for a life-threatening illness, he said.

Amid the precipitous drop in patients, there is one upturn for Piedmont. "I'm seeing all of my college students. They're all home because of the coronavirus. They're back in our fold," said Jakum.



JOSHUA JAKUM, M.D.

The hospital obstetrician

Barry Aron, M.D. is one of the two obstetricians on staff at Fauquier Health Hospital. Aron customarily delivers five babies a week – 250 a year – at the 97-bed hospital in Warrenton.

During the pandemic, he is still averaging five deliveries a week. Babies "still come when they're going to come," Aron said. He reassures pregnant mothers it's safe to come in and that they are not at greater risk of getting the virus; mother-to-child transmission during pregnancy is unlikely.

There was concern that pregnant women might get very ill as they tend to react worse to other viruses due to changes in their immune system, but "fortunately, that hasn't been the case yet," he said. The data is limited, but even when the mother is infected, "the virus does not appear to cross the placenta," he said.

"I tell my patients they and their husbands should be doing the same things we all should be doing to help minimize getting it and spreading it to somebody else: staying home as much as they can, using social dis-



BARRY ARON, M.D.

See **OBSTETRICIAN**, page 7

The family practitioner

Norris Royston Jr. founded Countryside Family Practice in Marshall in 1976. The former president of the Medical Society of Virginia took part in the extensive planning the state did after H1N1 influenza, a type of swine flu, swept the world in 2009. That was the last time the World Health Organization declared a pandemic.

“A lot of what’s being done at the state level now goes back to that original planning” for the swine flu, he said. Regulations were relaxed then to allow physicians to bill for telemedicine visits, then tightened again after that threat passed, only to be relaxed now in this pandemic.

Countryside does telemedicine visits every day, but continues to render care in its office, too. “We basically have a sign on the door that says, ‘If you’re sick, go back to your car and call us.’ I’m doing wellness care in here all day, every day,” he said. Patients show up with fractures and needing sutures.

Royston thinks this pandemic will have a last-



Dr. Kevin Olson, Linda Spencer, Dr. Norris Royston and Dr. Bob Houska stand outside Countryside Family Practice in Marshall.

TIMES STAFF PHOTO/COY FERRELL

ing impact on the delivery of care as doctors become accustomed to working remotely. “I believe that the way we do business is going to change dramatically based on this experience.”

Countryside has not cut back hours or reduced staffing. Doctors send out recorded messages. “A

whole lot of education is going on because we’re talking with patients a lot. We’re sending blast voice shots and emails with educational materials to our patients. That helps allay anxiety around the virus and gives them tools to lower their risk of contracting it,” he said.

The optometrist

Last November Shannon Moore, OD, purchased the optometry practice in Warrenton where she’d worked for 15 years and changed the sign on the door to Dr. Shannon Moore & Associates Optometrists. Now she’s facing the challenge of keeping the business – deemed essential -- open while other optometrists are closed.

“I’m trying to figure out how to make everything work,” she said. In normal times, “we see a ton of patients. We’re a very, very busy practice. On an average day, I would see between 13 and 17 full exams and medical (appointments) in between, she said.

Now she and a second optometrist work reduced hours, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., three days a week. Five of her nine-person staff rotate working the reduced shifts.

“But we’re staying open because a lot of people have to come in if something happens to their eye, an injury or infection,” she said. “Obviously it’s not easy to make ends meet, but we’re trying to do what we can while we can.”

“The staff is very understanding. It’s tough on everybody. We applied for the Payroll Protection Program. They’ve approved it and we’re just waiting for the thing to process,” she said.

“If someone picked out glasses before this whole thing happened and wants to pick them up, they can call us and we’ll take them outside,



SHANNON MOORE, OD

so they don’t actually have to come in to the office,” she said.

In exigent circumstances, she has done a couple of exams without dilating patient’s eyes. One was for someone whose glasses broke, was out of contacts, and didn’t have his prescription because his own eye doctor’s office was closed. “He had no way of seeing to get around,” she said.

“If the assistance from the government does go through, that’s a big sigh of relief not just for me as the business owner but for all the employees,” said Moore. “I have a family to take care of, too. I’m taking it day by day and trying not to get too stressed out.”

The chiropractor

Robert Breen, D.C., opened his chiropractic clinic in Manassas 30 years ago and added a second center in Warrenton a decade ago. The busy solo practitioner spends a half-day in each office, typically treating more than 30 patients a day and staying open until 8 p.m. Now the workdays end at 5 p.m. and he sees eight to 15 patients.

“The days are more interesting,

People can get in to see me now,” said Breen. He’s spacing appointments out so one patient never crosses paths with the next.

But he believes the long, busy days will return. In the meantime, he’s anticipating the stay-at-home order may bring new patients to his practice “as more people injure themselves putting down mulch and planting gardens.”

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tancing, washing hands and wearing a mask out in public,” he said. “We wear masks and have our patients and their partners wearing masks as well. We don’t give it to them, and

they don’t give it to us.

“People are afraid they’re going to get sick if they come to a hospital. But it’s really much safer for moms to come to the hospital to have their baby than try to do it at home,” Aron said. “Fortunately, we’ve been able



JASON BOUDREAU, DMD

The dentists

One dentist has a very large, busy dental practice in the middle of Warrenton with another dentist, five hygienists and a staff of 20. The other is a solo practitioner in Bealeton who, with an assistant, sees all patients by himself and even cleans teeth. Both face the same challenge of staying open in the pandemic for urgent care only.

“We have 10,000 patients in the practice. It’s a huge workload,” said Jason Woodside, DDS, of Drs. Woodside, Sentz and Associates. Fifty to 70 patients a day would come to the office for exams, cleanings and other work. Now it’s down to four or five patients on Mondays and Thursdays only.

Woodside has remote access to all his dental records and X-rays. He can FaceTime with patients and prescribe medicine for swelling or a broken tooth.

But “the majority of my workload since we shut down has been figuring out how we are going to pay bills and pay staff,” he said. He’s already gotten a SBA grant and quickly got approved for the Payroll Protection Program. His commercial lender at Atlantic Union Bank, Andy Rose, “has been an absolute godsend.” The practice secured a two-month deferral on

mortgage payments.

He encouraged employees to go on unemployment when the shutdown started and “hang in there until I get the funds to start paying them. A lot work paycheck to paycheck so they’re really hurting.”

When restrictions are lifted, “I think we’ll see some trepidation on the part of patients, but we’ll be busy because we do

have a backlog.... There’s always a need in dentistry. There’s always the problems. I get emergency calls every morning, so I’m not too worried.”

James Boudreau, DMD, opened Bealeton Family Dentistry two and a half years ago, treating five to nine patients daily. Now the former U.S. Army captain sees three or four patients on the one day a week he opens.

He’s always texted and used social media to stay in touch with patients and he still does, ordering medications if necessary. He doesn’t charge for the service. “It’s usually pretty quick and simple. I don’t have any problem helping them out,” said Boudreau.

He initially was “extremely excited about the prospects” for government assistance but nothing has come through. “My worry is we need the money now.”

Boudreau has “always been a one-patient-at-a-time practice. We never double-booked.” He reassures patients, “don’t be afraid to come in because this is as prepared and safe a place as you could possibly be during this time.”

He remains an optimist. “It could get worse before it gets better, but ... this just another part of living on this big rock floating in space. We’ll get through this for sure,” he said.

to reassure our patients and they’re continuing to deliver with us.”

The hospital, which employs 1,100 people and is part of the LifePoint Health chain, is seeing far fewer patients overall because of the halt on elective surgeries.

“The economics of all this, with the numbers going down, we’re trying to keep everybody employed as best we can” while reducing hours, said Aron. The upside is “it gives us more time to spend with our patients. That’s a great thing.”