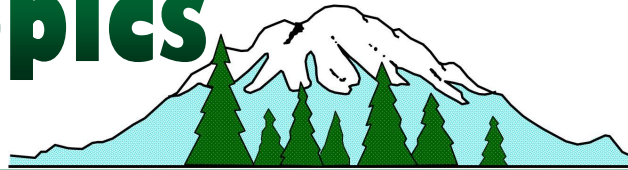


City of Fircrest Town Topics

June 2020

CITY COUNCIL

Hunter T. George, *Mayor*
Brett Wittner, *Mayor Pro Tempore*
David M. Viafore
Shannon Reynolds
Joe Barrentine
Denny Waltier
Jamie Nixon



Mayor's Message



The last time I wrote this column it was mid-March and we were just starting life under the state's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" orders. I signed off saying I didn't know what would happen over the next couple of months, but I was sure that Fircrest residents would look out for each other.

My heart is full as I think about the acts of kindness that I know about. This is by no means a complete list, but I offer the following as examples of acts big and small that are making a difference in the lives of friends and strangers.

Jodene Calvary made and distributed face masks from her home on Paradise Parkway. Ken Viehmann stocked the Little Free Library on Princeton Street. The Dawson family children gave away free "happiness drawings" from their driveway on Alameda Avenue. Retired teacher Miles Fiala offered to help students with their math. Neighbors "flocked" each other's yards with plastic pink flamingos to support a local Girl Scouts troop.

Police Chief John Cheesman broadcasts regular readings of children's stories on the city's Facebook page, and he was often joined by special guests who resemble certain copyrighted princesses and super heroes. The Fircrest Police Department participated in some fun birthday parades that brought joy to kids and adults alike as we all coped with staying home.

Lots of Fircrest residents worried about food security for their community, especially as so many people lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Our local churches in Fircrest collected food and clothing to help those in need. City Councilmember Joe Barrentine's family turned their house into a mini bubble-making factory as they sold jars of his homemade concoction to raise money for St. Leo's Food Connection.

The children of Eric Bergson and LO Monaghan — Kelsey and Greyson — were concerned for their classmates who relied

on free meals at school. So the family opened "Pantry 253" at their home to provide an opportunity to donate food if you're able, or to receive if you need it. They'll keep it going as long as they can. You can find out more at facebook.com/Pantry253.

And that brings me to the inspiration for this column.

Jim Baurichter owns the building that houses Choppers, Spring Lake Cafe, Salon Mosaic, Mimi's Teas, and the Fircrest Swim Shop. In early May he emailed me to ask if the City could recognize Fircrest resident Heath Hollensbe for an outstanding job of boosting our collective morale.

"When the virus shut down began, Heath approached me and asked if he could use the east end of my buildings to create a community chalk board that would help to lift the spirits of the folks in Fircrest," Jim wrote. "He has worked tirelessly on this project. It has been a beautiful and fun thing to watch. His idea has lifted the spirits of the community on many levels. Hopefully, you and the council members can find a way to publicly recognize him for his contribution and efforts. It would be well deserved."

Consider it done, Jim. And I want to take it a step farther and thank all of the individuals, families, and organizations who have done something to lift the spirits of friends and strangers during this crisis. None of you did this for recognition. I offer it anyway because I'm certain your actions will inspire others.

Friends, let's keep up the great work. I'll close by quoting something Heath wrote on the "Friends of Fircrest" page:

"This virus isn't going to stop us. We're for life and are grateful for every day that we get up to see another sunset. And sometimes we just need to remind ourselves how beautiful of a thing each breath is."

Hunter T. George
Mayor

Capital Improvements Summer 2020

The City of Fircrest has received two grants from the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) to fund the Emerson Sidewalk Extension Project and the Alameda Overlay Project. Both projects will be starting construction this summer around August.

The Emerson Sidewalk Extension Project will add sidewalks to the south side of Emerson from Alameda to Thelma Gilmur Park. The project also includes improving the existing crosswalk at Thelma Gilmur Park across

Emerson so that becomes a safer crossing situation. Estimated cost of the project is \$590,700.

The Alameda Overlay project provides a grind and overlay of Alameda from Regents to Electron Way. This project will grind down the existing pavement to improve the gutter height for better drainage and also improve the existing roadway surface. Estimated cost of the project is \$638,200.

As of the time this was written, the **Strawberry Feed and Band Concert (June 28th)**, and the **Fircrest Picnic and Rod Run (July 5th)** have been canceled due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions and guidelines set out by the Governor's Safe Start plan. This summer, we will not be able to hold events where we are not able to adhere to capacity and social distancing requirements. Our Parks and Recreation staff will continue to monitor the Washington State Safe Start Guidance and will be evaluating our remaining events. Please check the City's website for the latest status on City events at www.cityoffircrest.net/coronavirus-information.

Serving the Community Since 1925

Thank You David Viafore!



David, thank you for everything you have done for the citizens of Fircrest and for the greater Tacoma area that you served.

It is difficult to write a congratulatory letter because of a retirement but, in your case, it's easy. It is easy because you were, and are, an icon in Fircrest.

You were more than a deli owner or a council member or resident. You were someone who cared. You cared deeply about people. You were always helping those who were in need. You did it your usual way, quietly. If you got a call from one of the local churches asking for help, you helped. If you got a call from a person in need, you helped.

You were the youngest Mayor of any city in our state when you became the Mayor of Fircrest. You served our city as Mayor for more than 20 years. You then left the council. You returned 2 years later to serve again, and you remain a steadfast city council member.

During your tenure, you led the city through difficult times and good times. You always looked out for the pennies because you understood that in order to maintain our city you needed every penny. You watched, you scrutinized, and you challenged any expenditure that was too expensive or not properly funded or not needed. When you left as mayor, Fircrest was in a strong fiscal position for a town of our size. Fircrest is a hidden gem and you were its gate keeper.

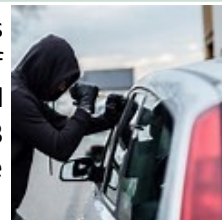
You worked. Your routine of 4:30 am to 7:30/8:00 pm was a grind. You did it for 30+ years. You were always there and always willing to help.

That is why it is easy to say, CONGRATULATIONS. Congratulations on a job well done David Viafore. You will be missed by those many people whom you served. Thank you.

John Miller
Fircrest Municipal Judge

Preventing Theft From Your Vehicle

As the Governor begins his phased in re-opening of the stay at home order and as the weather gets warmer and the days get longer, more and more people are out moving around and enjoying this time of year. Unfortunately, our law abiding citizens are not the only ones out moving about more. The criminal element is as well. This time of year we see a rise in vehicle prowls in Fircrest. In 2019 we responded to 83 thefts in our city and many of them were from vehicles. In several recent cases the victim vehicles were left unlocked and valuables were not only left in the victim's vehicle but also were left in plain sight.



Let's not make it easy for thieves. Following these simple guidelines will make it difficult and less inviting for would be thieves to come into our community. We are encouraging our residents to employ some basic preventative measures:

- ⇒ **Never leave keys inside the vehicle.**
- ⇒ **Ensure that the windows are all the way up before locking your vehicle.**
- ⇒ **Lock your vehicle even if you are going to be away for a short time.**
- ⇒ **Be sure to activate your vehicle alarm whenever you exit/lock your vehicle.**
- ⇒ **Remember to remove portable G.P.S. devices.**
- ⇒ **Lock your vehicle even if it is parked in your driveway, inside your garage or on the street in front of your residence.**
- ⇒ **Do not leave valuables inside your vehicle even if it is locked. (i.e. purses, wallets, cell phones, computers, cameras, shopping bags, back packs, etc.).**
- ⇒ **Even if your vehicle is locked and alarmed do not leave items in your vehicle.**
- ⇒ **If you have a removable faceplate on your stereo, always remove it and take it with you.**
- ⇒ **If you see anyone acting suspiciously in the area of your vehicle or in your neighborhood, please report it immediately by calling 9-1-1.**
- ⇒ **Do not keep a "Hide-a-Key" in the wheel well. Vehicle prowlers will often look for this. When they find one not only will they be able to steal your property inside your vehicle, but you have now made it easy for them to steal your vehicle.**

These simple steps will deter most would-be thieves. Do not hesitate to call 911 immediately if you see ANYTHING or ANYONE that seems out of place or suspicious. We cannot do our jobs effectively without the help and assistance of those we serve. Don't become a victim and as always, let's watch out for each other.

John Cheesman
Fircrest Police Chief

