



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

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Dear Fairfax,

San Francisco's mask campaign tag line is: **"I got you covered."** I can't get it out of my head.

I've been contemplating the variety of ways in which this message can be applied to these times.

We are mandated and asked in good conscience to **cover our mouths and noses**. We know that mask wearing saves lives.

We are faced with unhealthy air quality causing us to **take cover**.

We are packing our "to go" bags in order to evacuate should we receive the order.

All the while our firefighters battle more than 650 wildfires across California, **covering impenetrable landscapes**

We are each challenged to **cover ourselves**, yet I receive emails daily from Fairfaxians who want to **provide cover** for one another.



This week the major sports leagues used their **power to support and cover**, and the **media covered it** amplifying the message of solidarity.

The Giants and the Dodgers stood together and postponed the Wednesday night game. Major League Baseball released a statement in the wake of the horrific Police shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin:

“MLB remains united for change in our society & will be allies in the fight to end racism and injustice.”

The NBA announced that all games would be postponed.

“Some things are just bigger than sports.”

It is when the stakes are high and obstacles seem insurmountable that we excel as human beings. We put our masks on and look one another in the eyes to connect and assure each other that **we’ve got them covered**.

We rise without pause to help when we recognize our own fear reflected back in those same eyes.

Divides, factions, fierce political disharmony and pain melts in those moments.

As we ride the waves of months of colliding world-shattering events and cries for core systems changes, it is challenging to sustain that level of commitment to one another.

My children’s kindergarten teacher taught the kids to practice “put-ups” and not “put-downs” when they communicate with others. There is always something for us to lift up. I recently heard at a Black Lives Matter protest a call to “stop calling one another out”, and “call in” and check ourselves instead.

It has never been more important that we put each other up and call ourselves in. This is where we will find our commonalities.

A friend just returned from a solo journey in a remote and deeply conservative part of Utah. Her car had broken down and she ended up spending 5 hours in a truck with a local Rancher. She recounted the story of their discussion of land stewardship, government, the economy, and all of the things that have become taboo to talk about across party lines, across lines slashed through families and friends.

Her takeaway was that within 95% of what they discussed they could find points of

Commonality. This is not the time to dwell in the 5% where we will never find peace. Even with deep gaping divides and disagreements embedded in that 95%, committing to human connection will sustain us.

The issues of our time do not discriminate in the power of their impact on all of our lives, and both the problems and the solutions are generated by and solvable within the bounds of our human community.

All Immunocompromised individuals with respiratory vulnerability are equally at risk when there is a deficit of ventilators. We need the same elemental ingredients to breathe.

Fire does not steer a belief-based course, and our fences don't protect us from embers which may ignite in our neighbor's yards. We are all subject to the same wind and natural environment.

Martin Luther King wrote: "**Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.**"

We are inextricably in this together!

We cannot hide from the challenges we face, but as we **take cover** and **cover each other**, we can find ways to call up our commonalities. There is always an intersection where no matter how many lanes converge, we will find our most meaningful and equitable path forward.

Please stay well everyone, and if you think of it, take a look into someone's eyes and let them know you've got them covered.

Renee Goddard

Mayor – Town of Fairfax