

Masked heroes

Local tailor makes custom-made face coverings for kids

By Lisa Reisman 5/22/20

BRANFORD — As of May 15, Lucy Camarda had produced upwards of 5,000 masks for area nursing homes, nurses, doctors from CT Hospice, ambulance drivers, police officers and firefighters, restaurant workers, and countless citizens.

Most of them the Branford tailor made for free. Then she ran out of materials and began asking for \$5 donations. "People came through," she said.

Now the Puglianello, Italy native, whose altruism was recently recognized with a phone call from U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-3, is at it again.

In mid-April, as evidence mounted, as the New York Times reported, "that masks — if worn in public places, by everyone — are far more effective at stopping transmission than previously realized," the Centers for Disease Control recommended that children 2 years and older should wear a mask.

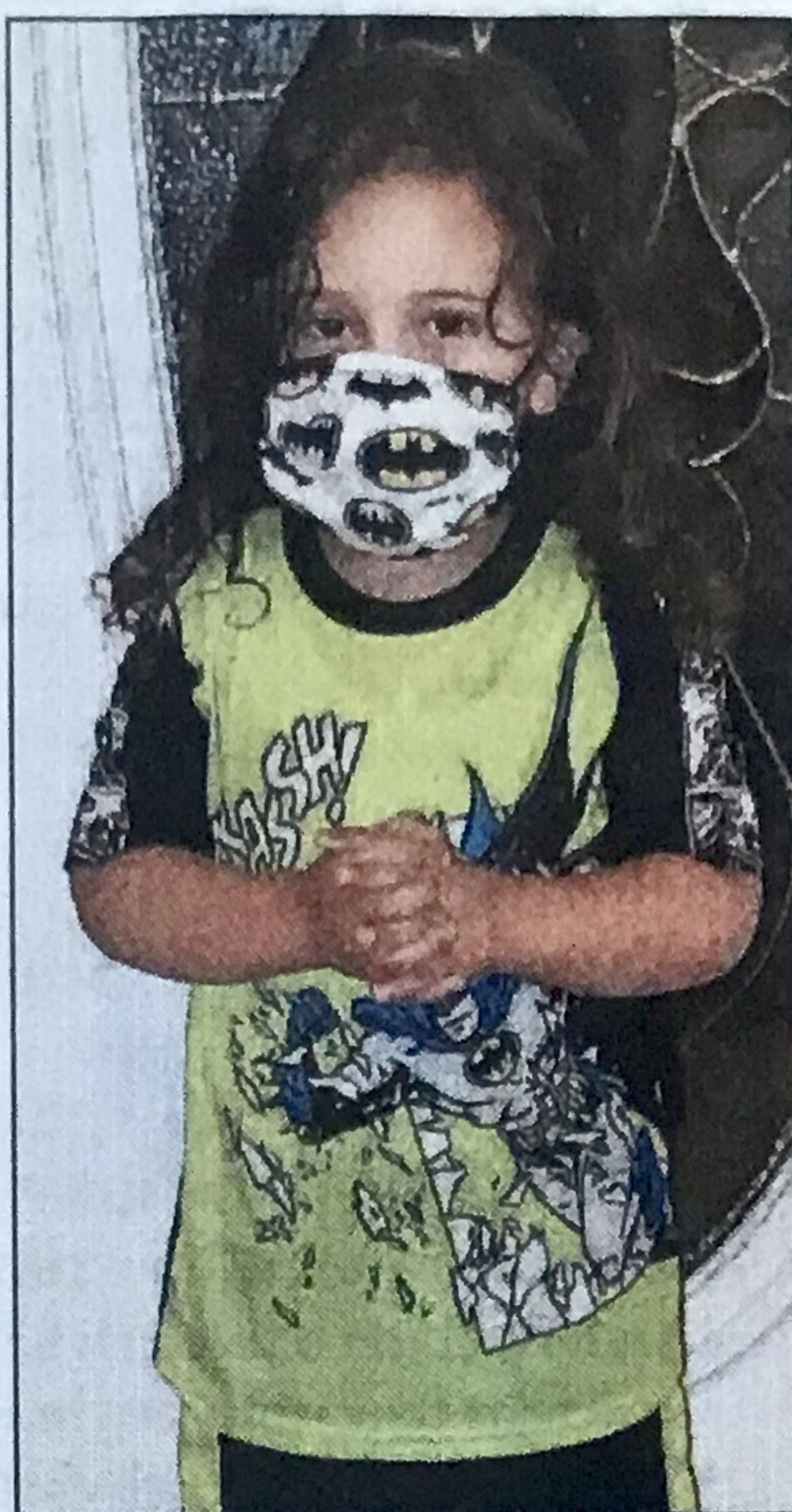
Then came word, early this month, of a growing number of cases of a rare but potentially deadly Covid-19-related disease that causes severe inflammations in young children.

Last Thursday, the New Haven Register reported that the number of children hospitalized with that mysterious inflammatory condition had reached 10.

Having heard of the strange ailment, Camarda thought at once of her 5-year-old grandson Luciano.

"Putting a mask on him would be easier said than done," she said, shaking her head.

Then she remembered Luciano's beloved Batman



Contributed photo

Luciano Lugo, 5, grandson of Lucy Camarda of Lucy's Tailors, donning Batman mask.

pajamas. She had her daughter order another pair.

"We told him that he can be a superhero like Batman and protect other people from germs by wearing the mask," she said.

It worked, and now she wants to help other parents and grandparents make sure their children stay safe.

Camarda is asking parents to have their kids pick out a favorite superhero, cartoon character or animal, and drop off the material, whether from pajamas or pants or a shirt, at her shop. The material should be new to ensure safety and allow for breathing without restriction.

"If you hold it up to the light and it doesn't shine through, you can't breathe in it," she said.

She's asking for a \$5 donation for each mask if families can afford it. Otherwise, she's happy to custom-make them for free.

"These kids are our future," she said. "It's up to us to protect them."

Lucy's Tailors, 504 Main St. Branford 203-315-6666.