

Senior Grace Kellermann, performs the role of a humor filled Waitress, Dolores, in upcoming Marshall High musical: Working will stream online beginning Friday night, May 14 at 8 p.m.

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Fairfax Supervisors Didn't Know About Davis History

Community organizations call for Chairman McKay to rescind Davis' appointment.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

On Saturday evening, May 1, with a little more than 36 hours before the effective date of hire, May 3, for Kevin Davis as Police Chief of Fairfax County, Supervisor John W. Foust (D-Dranesville) said that the incidents underlying the two judgments against Davis should have been disclosed to Board by Davis himself and the consultant search firm.

"To my knowledge, they were not [disclosed]. ... I was not aware of these incidents until after the selection of Mr. Davis was announced, and a local news station reported on them," Foust said.

"The alleged misconduct underlying these judgments is very disturbing. The Board made its unanimous decision to hire Mr. Davis based on the information that was available at the time. Speaking only for myself, given these subsequent disclosures, I believe Mr. Davis needs to establish that he is still the right person to take on this critically important responsibility," Foust said.

SATURDAY, MAY 1, The Activated People, along with eleven other organizations and faith-based groups, sent a letter to Chairman Jeffrey McKay (D-At Large) Fairfax County Board of Supervisors calling for "the immediate rescission of Kevin Davis' appointment as Fairfax County Chief of Police."

"We deserve someone in that office whose character and experience is more effective and more reflective of the values and vision



Chairman Jeffrey McKay (D-At Large)

of Fairfax County," signatories said.

The Activated People Inc. is a "Black-owned and operated independent activist organization and media platform dedicated to promoting racial and gender equity. The Activated People was formed for the purpose of advocating for legislation, regulations, and government programs to improve racial and gender equity, according to its website, <https://www.theactivatedpeople.com/>. Kofi Annan is the president. In the organization's letter, signatories cited the discovery of two lawsuits against Davis as Prince George's County, Md. police officer.

The letter alleges findings of "excessive use of force, kidnapping, the flagrant use of racist slurs, and violent discriminatory actions towards Black and indigenous people of color (BIPOC)."

"Amid such drastic need for police trans-



Supervisor John W. Foust (D-Dranesville)

formation, accountability, and transparency, Fairfax County cannot afford to place the trust and safety of its residents to someone who has demonstrated such blatant racial bias, impropriety, and disregard for public safety for all," writes the signatories.

The police reform movement must prevent officers found to use excessive force or brutalizing citizens from getting promotions or moving to different jurisdictions to find new jobs.

As of May 2, Kevin Davis's LinkedIn page highlights of experience list Davis as Director Consulting Services, GardaWorld (May 2020-present); Chief Security Officer, Armored Things (Nov. 2018 - May 2020); Police Commissioner Baltimore Police Department (July 2015 - Jan. 2018); Chief of Police, Anne Arundel County Police Department (July 2013 - Dec. 2014); and Assistant



FILE PHOTO

Diane Burkley Alejandro, ACLU People Power Fairfax

Chief of Police, Prince George's County (Oct 1992 - Jul 2013).

"Kevin Davis is not representative of the County's values, our One Fairfax policy, or the critical change in the culture that Fairfax County Police Department needs," the letter concludes.

Earlier last week, community opposition surged against the Davis' appointment and the Board of Supervisors' interview and evaluation in closed-door sessions.

Karen T. Campblin, president of the Fairfax County NAACP, voiced disappointment with the process used to select the new leader for Fairfax County police department.

SEE POLICE CHIEF, PAGE 11

Davis Promises 'Blue Waters Ahead' for County Police

ACLU People Power Fairfax joins the Fairfax County NAACP calling for new search.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

On May 3, Kevin Davis assumed the office of Chief of Police, Fairfax County. In the video, Meet Kevin Davis - YouTube, released that day by FCPD, Davis said it had been a long journey for him in policing from 1992 through 2018. "I've learned a lot. I've grown a lot...I have a far different mindset today than I did in 1992," he said.

According to Davis, policing is in crisis; it is under the microscope, and he doesn't want to sit on the sidelines. He said having been a part of major reform efforts in a "couple of jurisdictions," he knows why reform is needed and how to implement it. "I know how to change behaviors that detract from our relationship with the community. And I think 2021 is the perfect opportunity for me to return to what I love," Davis said.



FCPD

Kevin Davis assumed the office of Chief of Police, Fairfax County on May 3, 2021.

DAVIS said in the video that as he introduces himself to the men and women in the police department, they are not just going to see him occasionally nor as a "virtual police chief." Davis will back up the police officers. He will be with them on the streets, scenes, and all critical incidents in the county.

"I'm going to be communicative. I'm going to involve people in all my decisions because I don't think we need to run away from our

traditions and policing. I think we need to embrace our traditions," Davis said. Also, he is going to explain his decisions, find common ground, and move forward.

After learning that Davis assumed the Office of Fairfax County Police Chief, ACLU People Power Fairfax issued a Press Release that same day saying it joined the Fairfax County NAACP in calling for a new search to fill the Police Chief position. "We believe the process must begin anew," the press release read.

ACLU People Power Fairfax demanded community involvement in the vetting process, saying, "The closed-door deliberations by the Board of Supervisors that led to Kevin Davis' selection, coupled with the Board's failure to address his excessive use of force against a Black man in 1993 and serious misconduct six years later, render the selection process fatally flawed."

Diane Burkley Alejandro, Lead Advocate for ACLU People Power Fairfax stated in the Press Release that Davis has two strikes against him. "The third strike belongs to the Board. Most of us believe in redemption, but the neces-

sary precursors—public disclosure of the incidents at the time the selection was announced, acknowledgement that the conduct was wrong and a Board explanation of why Mr. Davis is still the best candidate—did not take place," she said.

ACCORDING TO ACLU People Power Fairfax, it cannot accept the Board's word that Davis is the "best" candidate without "adequate disclosure."

"A public forum involving Mr. Davis would be welcome but is not sufficient. Community trust has plummeted and a cloud of mistrust is gathering over both the Board of Supervisors and the Fairfax County Police Department," stated the release.

For additional information about ACLU People Power Fairfax, a grassroots organization that advocates for equal justice for all community members, including undocumented immigrants, regardless of race or ethnicity, visit Twitter @PeoplePowerFfx and Facebook @peoplepowerffx or by email at aclupeoplepowerfairfax@gmail.com.

'Long May It Turn'

Colvin Run Mill reopens with a new flume and waterwheel debut.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Colvin Run Mill opened in a grand celebration for its first grind of the season on Sunday, May 2, 2021. The occasion marked the completion of the replacement white oak flume and water wheel that power grinding operations at Colvin Run Mill.

According to the Fairfax County Park Authority website, voter-approved Park Bonds financed the \$382,000 project. The Park Authority's board of directors approved the project on May 27, 2020, and notwithstanding COVID-19 and Route 7 renovations, work began the second quarter of 2020. Staff estimated the new wheel and flume would cut annual maintenance costs by \$6,000 per year.

"We would be remiss if we did not recognize today's reopening of the flume as yet another step in the progression of historic restoration and preservation. It is our mission and our duty, but it is also our privilege," said moderator Tim Hackman, the Dranesville District member of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board.

Hackman welcomed speakers Jane Edmonson, representing Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust, Sara Baldwin, Acting Director of the Park Authority, and Dan Dyke, President of the Friends of Colvin Run Mill. On hand was a special guest, Kelly Hummer, a relative of the millers who owned and operated Colvin Run Mill from 1883 to 1934.

LOOKING BACK to when Colvin Run Mill first opened to the public in 1972, Hackman said at that time; it was the culmination of over "four years of exhaustive preservation and restoration efforts." While that seemed like an ending, the 1972 opening marked the beginning of preservation and interpretation.

According to Edmonson, this project had to happen to keep the site relevant. She recognized millwright Ben Hassett of B.E. Hassett-Millwrights Inc. of Louisville, Ky., hired to build and install the new flume and wheel. The value of the Friends of Colvin Run Mill did not go unnoticed by Edmonson.

"They have a legacy of giving more than we can ask, providing support that tax dollars simply cannot do on their own... On behalf of Supervisor John Foust, I congratulate all of you who are involved in this project and wish you many happy milling days in the future," Edmonson said.



Dan Dyke, President, Friends of Colvin Run Mill

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



Tim Hackman, Dranesville District member of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board.



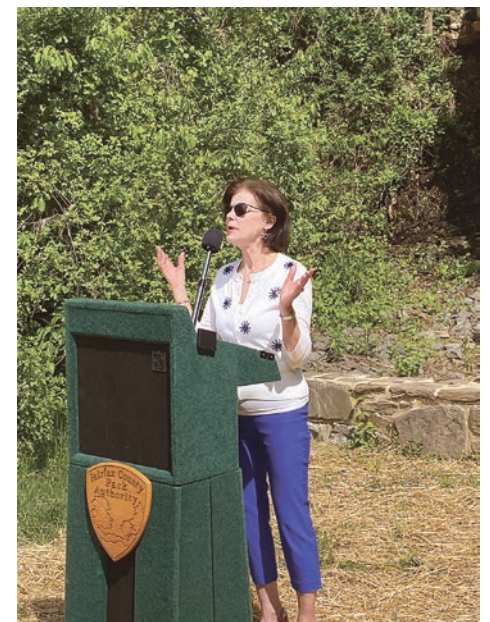
Water will flow into the elevated flume and over the wheel of the mill.

fabricate the wheel and flume, remove the deteriorated parts, and then finally install. They did this despite the Route 7 road project, no water, and COVID. "This project was delivered on time and on budget... It's a feel-good story that I'm very happy to be part of," Baldwin said.

DAN DYKE said he thought about the lifespan of one wheel. The mill was built in 1810 and stopped its commercial operation 124 years later, in 1934. "This wheel was replaced six or seven times. And each time it was replaced, it was because of financial necessity... The farmers that lived around here depended on this mill; needed this mill." He said the mill was ignored from the 1930s until Fairfax County acquired in the 1960s. "This is its third wheel... It's not an inexpensive project. In fact, it's outrageously expensive," he said.

Dyke expressed gratitude to Fairfax County Park Authority for having the foresight to make the investment in history. "For understanding that the public recognizes touchstones to our past, like this mill," he said. "Knowing how much the visitors to this site appreciate it. Knowing how much the volunteers who donate their hours to support this mill, love this mill, I have the confidence that this will not be the last wheel."

All grain products at Colvin Run Mill are \$7.97.



Jane Edmonson, representing Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust



Sara Baldwin, Acting Director Fairfax County Park Authority

Marshall High Presents Working – The Musical

Performed live on stage, presented virtually.

BY DONNA KELLERMANN

It's been a difficult year for all students – but especially those who live, breathe, and participate in live theatre. When COVID-19 shut down schools last March, George C. Marshall High School's theatre department was well into rehearsals for the uber-silly pop musical Xanadu. Seniors from the class of 2020 were robbed of one last exuberant song, dance & curtain call on their beloved stage and Statesmen Theatre Director (and Falls Church City native) Bernie DeLeo was determined not to let that happen again.

With last year's seniors having lost their spring musical, DeLeo was determined to put one on this spring in whatever form the current school status would allow. DeLeo scanned the slim list of musicals that were allowing their shows to be produced digitally – and one jumped out at him: a musical from the late 1970s called Working.

Working was first a well-received book consisting of verbatim interviews with various American workers by legendary American newsman Studs Turkel published in 1974. Composer Stephen Schwartz (Wicked, Pippin, Godspell) spear-headed a musical version,



PHOTOS BY BERNIE DELEO

Senior Adriano Moran, senior, performing as retiree Joe Zutti wondering how to spend his days.

recruiting other song writers such as Mary Rodgers, James Taylor & Micki Grant to help write a revue-style show of songs and monologues culled from Turkel's book. The show premiered in Turkel's native Chicago at the Goodman Theatre in 1977 and landed on Broadway for a short-lived run in 1978 (featuring soon-to-be-famous-name actors Joe Mantegna and Patti Lupone). The show has had a healthy life in high schools, colleges & regional theatres for decades,

SEE MUSICAL, PAGE 9

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7 Republicans Vie To Be Governor

May 8 convention to determine direction of party heading into November.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

Republicans haven't won a statewide race since 2009, when Attorney General Bob McDonnell received 59 percent of the vote against Democrat Creigh Deeds. Since then, Republicans have been shut out of the Executive Mansion. Ken Cuccinelli lost to Terry McAuliffe in 2013, and Ed Gillespie lost to Ralph Northam in 2017. Now Republicans are about to determine their statewide candidates in a May 8 convention, which will take place at 37 locations.

"This is a great year for Republicans, and we have a good chance to win the Executive Mansion," said Frank Fannon, a former Republican member of the Alexandria City Council. "A lot of people are not excited about a recycled Terry McAuliffe running for governor again."

The candidate with the most votes in the first round of counting may not end up as the winner. That's because Republicans are using a process called ranked-choice voting to make sure that the nominee has support from more than 50 percent of the delegates. When the voting ends at 4 p.m. on May 8, votes will be hand counted and then sent to Richmond, where party leaders will use mathematical formulas to give more weight to parts of the state that

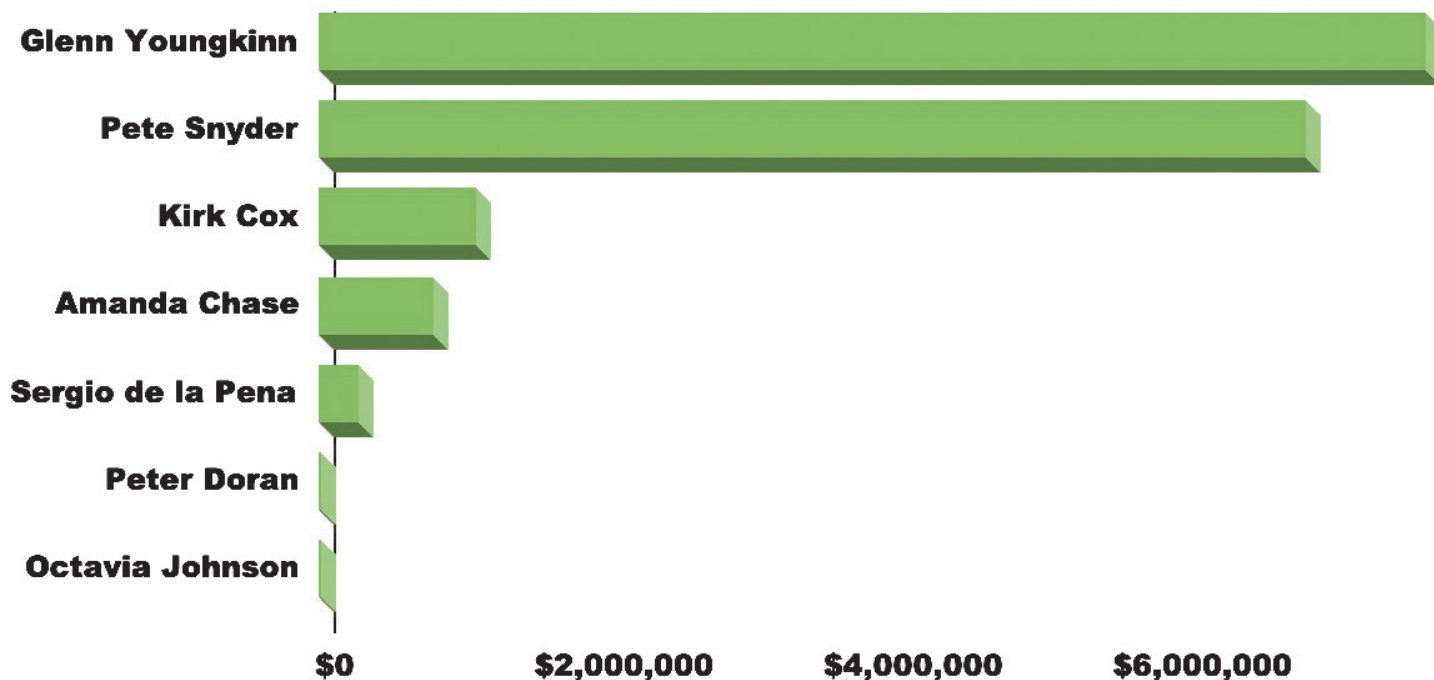
"We've seen a lot of interest in this convention. It's a sign that the two-party system is alive and well."

— Pete Benavage,
chairman of the Alexandria
Republican City Committee.

support Republican candidates for president and governor. They'll also be going through several elimination rounds, distributing the second choice of voters whose first choice has been eliminated.

"There is a lot of concern about one candidate in particular, Amanda Chase, who has perhaps strong support among a particular faction within the Republican Party but not broad-based support," said Mark Rozell, dean of the Schar School of Policy and Government. "Some believe in a multi-candidate race she could come out as the nominee, but in a ranked-choice voting system, she would likely have no chance at all of

Republican Candidates for Governor



source: Virginia Public Access Project

winning the nomination."

Seven candidates will be on the ballot for governor, a crowded field that seems likely to send the ranked-choice voting into several elimination rounds before a winner is determined. For voters who are interested in participating in selecting which of those seven candidates for governor will be the nominee, the deadline to register has already passed, but Republican officials say they've seen out-sized interest in participation. Under normal circumstances, the convention would have a limit to how many delegates from Alexandria could participate. But this year the cap was eliminated, and candidates were allowed to help potential new delegates register. As a result, Alexandria has 703 credentialed delegates.

"We've seen a lot of interest in this convention," said Pete Benavage, chairman of the Alexandria Republican City Committee. "It's a sign that the two-party system is alive and well."

GLENN YOUNGKIN is a former lobbyist for the Carlyle Group who has raised more money than any of the other candidates, \$7.7 million, thanks in part to a \$5.5 million loan from the candidate. He's also received large donations from real-estate developers, subcontractors and



Convention Locations

- ❖ 8th Congressional District Convention Location
National Right to Work Building
8001 Braddock Road, Springfield VA 22151
- ❖ 10th Congressional District Convention Location
10th District Republican Headquarters
20098 Ashbrook Place, Ashburn VA 20147
- ❖ 11th Congressional District Convention Location
NOVA Community College, Annandale campus
8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale 22003

lawyers. He's never run for office before, although he's trying to use that as an asset by selling himself to voters as a candidate who's not a politician. On the campaign trail, he talks about opposing abortion rights, supporting gun rights and ending the public safety protocols put into place by the current governor during the pandemic.

"When this governor opened up massage parlors and ABC stores and kept my church closed last year, I knew he didn't share the same values I do," said Youngkin in a candidate forum. "So we're going to stand up for our First Amendment rights. But we're also going to stand up for the unborn, but we're also going to stand up for our Tenth Amendment rights and the overreach from Washington right now."

PETE SNYDER is a businessman who's probably best known for founding a social-media marketing agency known as New Media Strategies. He's raised \$6.8 million, thanks in part to a \$5.2 million loan from the candidate. He also received a \$1 million donation from CapFi Partners CEO Mark Kimsey of Great Falls. In 2013, he was an unsuccessful

candidate for lieutenant governor at the Republican convention that selected E.W. Jackson as the party's nominee that year. On the campaign trail, Snyder talks about opening schools five days

a week with a teacher in every classroom and opposing efforts to use taxpayer dollars to pay for in-state tuition for undocumented immigrants.

"Illegal immigration costs taxpayers billions, and it brings crime and gangs into our communities," said Snyder in a campaign video about immigration posted to YouTube. "Northam and McAuliffe won't take violent illegals off our streets, but I will. When I'm governor, I'll enforce the law and deport violent criminals."

KIRK COX is a former Speaker of the House of Delegates who has represented Colonial Heights since he was first elected in 1989. He's raised about \$1 million, including large donations from Republican Party



SEE REPUBLICANS, PAGE 7

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Republicans

FROM PAGE 6

leaders and general contractors. During his time in the House, he supported a controversial plan to raise taxes for roads during the McDonnell administration and, more recently, expanding Medicaid to help low-income people get health insurance. On the campaign trail, the one issue that animates him more than anything else is his opposition to abortion rights.

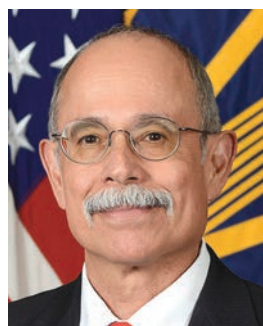
"I will stand up to the pro-abortion radicals," said Cox in a campaign video posted to YouTube. "I will never stop fighting for the promise of life."

AMANDA CHASE is a state Senator from Chesterfield who unseated incumbent Sen. Steve Martin (R-11) in 2015. She's raised about \$800,000. Chase is probably best known for speaking at the Jan. 6 rally before the insurrection at the Capitol. She later defended the people involved by saying "these were not rioters and looters, these were patriots." On the campaign trail, she's tried to cast herself as "Trump in heels," repeating baseless assertions that the 2020 election was stolen.



"What I believe I bring is something we've never had before. We've never had a Republican woman to seek the Republican nomination for governor," said Chase in a candidates forum. "You know 50 percent of the population is women, and that's a democratic we need. We also need suburban women. I am a suburban woman."

SERGIO DE LA PENA is a retired Army colonel who served as a deputy assistant secretary of defense for the western hemisphere during the Trump administration. He's raised about \$263,000. On the campaign trail, he talks about how his experience as an immigrant might help bring new people into the party and win over voters in Northern Virginia.



"I came from Mexico. I was raised in a house with dirt floors and no running water, picking cotton at 10," said de la Pena. "I fought socialists and communists the entire time I was in the Army, and I continue to do so even to this day because what we've seen is that they've gone from bullets to ballots."

PETER DORAN is a former think tank executive and author. He's raised about \$16,000. On the campaign trail, he talks about phasing out the state income tax.



"I spent my career helping countries that have been destroyed by socialism to chart a new path and to get strong," said Doran in a campaign video. "I'm running for governor because I think it's about time that we have a candidate with a winning conservative vision leading our commonwealth."

OCTAVIA JOHNSON is a former sheriff of Roanoke who's raised about \$900. In 2014, she ran an unsuccessful campaign against Sam Rasoul for House District 11.



"Everybody has heard of all the other candidates. They know what their message is," said Johnson in a television interview. "Now they're going to hear Octavia Johnson's message, and that will help them to decide who is stale bread and who is fresh bread."

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WELLBEING

Meeting Increased Mental Health Needs

Affordable treatment options highlighted during National Mental Health Month

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Resulting from the tumultuous and emotionally charged year past year, there's been an uptick in reported mental health conditions. The demand for mental health treatment for conditions such as anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation have increased by nearly 40 percent over the past year. During May, Mental Health Awareness Month, those in the profession are working to raise awareness, educate the public and fight stigma around mental health.

"The stress of the pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, and other civil rights atrocities over the past year have certainly driven more people to seek out behavioral healthcare services, said Kurt Larrick, assistant director, Arlington County Department of Human Services. "Surveys show a major increase in the number of U.S. adults who report symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression during the pandemic, compared with surveys before the pandemic."

"It is tough to secure affordable treatment," added Allana Taylor, Director of Student Counseling Services at Marymount University. "This is true, especially in this area where private providers are able to fill their caseloads with clients who can afford to pay out of pocket."

Community Services Boards (CSB), a public agency with a mission of providing affordable mental health services to both children and adults, is one resource in Virginia. "CSBs are the best alternatives ... for low-cost services," said Taylor. "Every county or locality has a CSB. They provide publicly funded mental health, substance abuse, and intellectual disability services. CSBs offer a sliding fee scale based on income. Those who typically have minimal income, can be seen for low to no cost."

"The CSB offers a range of telehealth and in-person services including individual and group therapy ... psychiatric services and crisis stabilization," said Lisa Flowers of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board. "Individuals are assessed and based on need are provided a treatment recommendation to the appropriate level of care."

On college campuses mental health is often neglected by students. On college campuses many students feel embarrassed or ashamed when it comes to discussing their personal struggles, says Jennifer Kahler, director of Counseling and Psychological Services at George Mason University.

"[Students] often have a misconception that they only should seek help when or if their problems are



PHOTO COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY

Those who are experiencing mental health challenges are encouraged to seek assistance from agencies and therapists with income sensitive services.

Locating a Community Service Board Near You

CSB/BHA Directory - Virginia Association of Community Services Boards (VACSB)

FAIRFAX-FALLS CHURCH CSB

Phone: (703) 324-7000

Coverage Area: Fairfax County, City of Falls Church, City of Fairfax

Website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/community-services-board/#gsc.tab=0>

severe, not realizing seeking help earlier can often prevent the issues from becoming more severe," she said. "The stigma of seeking help for mental health issues, as well as the stigma of having mental health needs remain a problem at Mason as well as universities throughout the U.S."

In addition, students are busy and feel as though they do not have time to seek counseling.

As part of STEP-VA, a long-term state mandated initiative designed to improve the community behavioral

health services available to all Virginians, Arlington's Department of Human Services and Community Services Board, implemented same day access for behavioral healthcare services before the pandemic, says Larrick.

"With same day access, individuals who are interested in seeking mental health or substance use treatment services can get a service eligibility assessment on a walk-in basis, without an appointment," he said. "[When] the pandemic hit we had to change things around. We still do same day access, but instead of coming in person, we provide the services virtually or over the phone."

While acknowledging that stumbling blocks to mental health care still exist, Flowers says that mental health professionals, "are committed to tackling these barriers and continuing to let people know that [they] are going to do everything they can to help, to establish a rapport and to generate trust and meet the needs of those we serve and our communities."

While acknowledging that stumbling blocks to mental health care still exist, Flowers says that mental health professionals, "are committed to tackling these barriers and continuing to let people know that [they] are going to do everything they can to help, to establish a rapport and to generate trust and meet the needs of those we serve and our communities."

"It is tough to secure affordable treatment. This is true, especially in this area where private providers are able to fill their caseloads with clients who can afford to pay out of pocket."

— Allana Taylor, Director of Student Counseling Services at Marymount University.

CALENDAR

NOW THRU JUNE 26

Ken Britz, Artist of the Year. At VAS Gallery in the Village Green, 513 Maple Ave. W, Vienna. The Vienna Arts Society is thrilled to present a collection of "Favored Subjects", artworks by Artist of the Year Ken Britz. The exhibition is open April 12 through June 26, Mon. - Sat., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Discover more about Ken on the website: www.ViennaArtsSociety.org

APRIL 30-MAY 14

Art as Life Vale Arts. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. More than 160 works of fine art will be on exhibit in the virtual "Art as Life" ValeArts show April 30-May 14, 2021. Normally held at the Vale Schoolhouse in Oakton, the online show will show all types of abstract, representational, and impressionist art. Guest Artists Deb Keirce and Andrea Cybyk join the core ValeArtists Laura Barringer, Linda Bullen, Lorrie Herman, Kim Richards, Diana Eichler and Jenna Klimchak. Visit www.valearts.com

SATURDAY/MAY 8

A Song of Freedom. 8 p.m. Streaming through GMU's Reva and Sid Dewberry Family School of Music. Featuring world premieres by Evelyn Simpson-Curenton and Michael W. Nickens. The concert celebrates unity and resilience in the face of division and uncertainty and showcases works by Black composers as well as selections inspired by the African-American experience. Visit: <https://cfa.calendar.gmu.edu/a-song-of-freedom-featuring-world-premieres-by-evelyn-simpson-curenton-and-michael-w-nickens>.

MONDAY/MAY 10

Monarch Butterflies. 4-5 p.m. At E.C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Ellanor C. Lawrence Park is hosting a program on monarch



Dan Navarro performs at Jammin Java in Vienna on Sunday, May 9.

SUNDAY/MAY 9

Dan Navarro Performs. 7-9 p.m. At Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave., Vienna. With a career spanning decades and a dozen albums with Lowen & Navarro, Dan Navarro is currently on tour in support of his solo album, "Shed My Skin." Cost is \$25. Visit the website: <http://www.jamminjava.com>

butterflies on Monday, May 10, 2021 that's geared toward second grade students and their parents. It offers a unique opportunity to supplement your child's science learning with real outdoor experiences and application of the concepts

required in the Virginia Standards of Learning. The cost is \$6 per person. All attendees, parents and students, must register to control group size. Call 703-631-0013.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

The Musical

FROM PAGE 5

and had a major update in 2012 with new songs by Lin-Manuel Miranda (Hamilton, In the Heights) replacing some of the more dated tunes.

It didn't grab him at first. It wasn't until he pitched the idea to Marshall's chorus teacher and his musical partner, Kelli Pierson, that he was sold.

"I walked into her room in late November, and asked, 'do you know the show Working?' She immediately lit up and burst out, 'I love Working! That was my brother's first show in high school'" and she had fond memories of it. That was the sign DeLeo was looking for.

He decided to take on the chore of attempting his first (and hopefully last) online musical. "I'd seen Kelli Pierson, my chorus teacher, put together two chorus concerts in the fall, with kids recording from home, and an editor seamlessly fusing them together. She's way younger than me and more facile with technology, and she figured out how we'd make the vocal tracks with kids at home and safely distanced. Another lucky break happened in December when DeLeo discovered in an online theatre chat room comments that the full orchestral tracks could be licensed from an outside company, saving him potentially thousands of dollars in having to record those together himself. "Daily, things just kept falling into place, convincing me at

each step that we were on the right path."


It also would not have happened without Kelli's wunderkind junior student Luke Batarseh who'd worked on her fall chorus concerts; a whiz with camera and editing skills, Luke runs his own side business shooting and editing films for various clients. "Honestly, if Luke hadn't signed on to handle all of the filming and editing, alongside Kelli Pierson on vocals, this show wouldn't be happening. They were the major pieces that allowed me then to focus on directing the show."

Working will stream online beginning Friday night, May 14 at 8 p.m. Go to www.statesmentheatre.org for the ticket link & streaming platform. Tickets will go on sale May 1 and run \$15 for adults and \$10 for students. (Yes, you can stream for the entire family with one ticket, but you are encouraged to pay for however many viewers you have in your household.) The play is written for adults, with some mature material that may not be suitable for younger audience members. NOTE: it streams just like a live play, meaning that if you tune in at 8:15, you will be 15 minutes into the show; the show doesn't start for you once you log on! So, it is advised that you arrive 10 minutes early to log in, just like you would at a live show.)

Donna Kellermann is Parent and Booster to the Students of Statesmen Theatre at GCM High School.

Here's What's Happening at MCC!

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 (the) Unruly Theatre Project's Virtual Improv Show
Wednesday, May 12, at 7 p.m.
Free admission

Celebrating Our Hometown


 McLean Day 2021: A Drive-Thru Entertainment Event
Saturday, May 15, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.
At MCC, 1234 Ingleside Ave.
Free admission



OFC Friday Night Trips

 Nationals vs. Orioles
Friday, May 21, 4-11 p.m.
\$60/\$50 MCC district residents

Sponsored by The Alden

 (the) Unruly Theatre Project's Virtual Improv Show
Wednesday, May 26, at 7 p.m.
Free admission

Old Firehouse Family Events




 Mommy & Me Snack and Paint
Friday, May 28, 7-9 p.m.
\$30/\$25 MCC district residents



The McLean Community Center
www.mcleancenter.org

Home of The Alden Theatre
www.aldentheatre.org

1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean, VA 22101

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FROM PAGE 9

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Let us know about an upcoming event

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

TUESDAY/MAY 11
 Super Snakes. 10-10:55 a.m. At Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. You may love them or hate them, but snakes are important residents of Fairfax County. Join a naturalist to meet live snakes and learn what makes them super. Then, go on a hike through the park to search for snakes and discover more about their habitat and habits. The cost is \$10 per person. Be sure to dress for the weather and wear comfortable shoes. Meet at the campground office. Call 703-323-6600.

THURSDAY/MAY 13
 Free Artist Demonstration. 10:30 a.m. to noon. The Vienna Arts Society invites the public to free virtual art demonstrations the second Thursday of each month. Popular Art Instructor Bryan Jernigan will Zoom as he demonstrates the art of Abstract painting. You can click on the invitation to join the demo on the website: www.ViennaArts-Society.org

MAY 14-31
 Dinosaur Drive-Thru Experience. The Dinosaurs are ready to return from extinction. The drive-thru dinosaur exhibit is the first of its kind at the Bull Run Events Center in Centreville. The Museum quality exhibit, with more than 75+ animatronic and static dinosaurs, runs May 14 through May 31. Tours are available Wednesday through Sunday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. Visit www.drivethrudinos.com or call 800-830-3976.

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
vienna@connectionnewspapers.com

Kemal Kurspahic
 Editor ♦ 703-778-9414
kemal@connectionnewspapers.com

Mercia Hobson
 Community Reporter
mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com

Ken Moore
 Contributing Writer
kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:
 For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
 703-778-9431

Debbie Funk
 Display Advertising/National Sales
 703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

Police Chief Controversy

FROM PAGE 3

“We are disappointed in how the new police chief was selected and how the public was excluded from the process. This lack of transparency gives us several concerns about the new chief and the future of the police force,” said Campblin. “Unlike the 2013 hiring process for the former police chief, Fairfax County residents were excluded from the candidate evaluation and interview sessions,” she said.

IN AN APRIL 29 STATEMENT, McKay said that community outreach included over 275 community meetings and calls, over 450 emails to stakeholders, and a survey that received over 3,000 responses.

Diane Burkley Alejandro, Lead Advocate of ACLU People Power Fairfax, said that they have and had concerns with the lack of community collaboration in an open public interview, evaluation, and hiring processes for police chief at the Board of Supervisors level. She said, “We sent a letter [March 10, 2021] on behalf of the Coalition asking that the interview process be public or, at a minimum, that there be a public representative on the interview committee.”

Alejandro added that the precedent for

public involvement at that level was established when Fairfax County Police Chief Edwin C. Roessler Jr. was hired in 1993. “Even though the Board says they want to be in closed session because it is personnel, the law does not require that. It permits, but it doesn’t require.”

Alejandro said community members and police reform advocates wanted to hear or read the answers police chief candidates gave to questions and why Supervisors would choose a given candidate as the best choice.

Speaking of Davis, Alejandro said, “What’s in his heart of hearts? And equally important can he gain the trust of the people of color in Fairfax, given what came out.”

Sujatha Hampton of Great Falls, Education Chair of Fairfax County NAACP tweeted that the @FairfaxNAACP statement on the new police chief hire is comprehensive and long, but she didn’t want anyone to miss this part of the message calling it the crux:

“The Fairfax County NAACP does not have confidence in the process by which the new Police Chief was hired-or its results - and requests that the County, in collaboration with the community, conduct a transparent search for a new Police Chief together,” wrote Karen T. Campblin, President Fairfax NAACP

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

MCLEAN FARMERS MARKET OPENS

The McLean Farmers Market will open for the 2021 season on Friday, May 7, at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. From 8 a.m. to noon every Friday (through November 13). Local farmers and producers will sell fresh produce and fruits; breads and pastries; prepared foods; herbs; flowers, and more. All products are grown or produced by the vendors and come from within 125 miles. Visit the website: <https://www.fairfax-county.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/>

MAY 3-21

Soccer Tryouts. Coaches from Spain return to Villarreal Virginia Academy for soccer tryouts in May. The soccer academy based in Northern Virginia will be hosting tryouts from May 3-21, 2021. The tryouts will take place at Mason District Park, Pine Ridge Park, Ossian Hall Park and Thomas Jefferson High School. Leading coaches from Villarreal CF, the Spanish club that works alongside VIVA, intend to be there in person for the first time since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, after previously offering support online throughout the pandemic. Visit www.villarrealva.org.

MAY 4 & 18, TUESDAYS

Caregivers Support Group. (Virtual via Zoom). Free. Shepherd’s Center of Northern Virginia hosts a support group for caregivers of adult family members with dementia the first and third Tuesdays of each month. Their virtual, facilitated meetings are from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Contact facilitator, Jack Tarr, at jtarr5@verizon.net for details on joining the meeting via zoom or to see the SC web site flyer: <https://www.scnova.org/announcements>.

MAY 5-JUNE 23, WEDNESDAYS

Virtual Active Aging Exercise Classes. (Virtual

via Zoom). Sponsored by Shepherd’s Center of Northern Virginia (SCNOVA) 10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. Exercise classes for older adults focusing on offering balance coordination, stretching and improved mobility. Class meets for 1 hour, once a week, for eight weeks. Cost: \$50 for 8 week session - payable to Sun Fitness LLC. To register or for more info, contact Casey Tarr at 703-821-6838 or eileentarr1@verizon.net. After registering, you will be contacted with payment instructions and will be provided with an invitation link to connect to the Zoom virtual class.

THURSDAY/MAY 6

Guest Speaker, Congressman Gerry Connolly. 1-2 p.m. Virtual. Congressman Gerald E. “Gerry” Connolly will be the guest speaker. He will be discussing Upcoming Priorities in the House of Representatives. Guests are invited to attend this special free session and registering by calling SCNOVA at 703-281-0601 or, you may register online at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZAqf-qrTioGNOYKJREZJM-vzln7c6s1d-dz> After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. To view the full spring semester of classes, visit www.scnova.org/ail

SATURDAY/MAY 8

Native Plant Sale. 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Freeman Store and Museum, 131 Church Street, NE, Vienna. Ayr Hill Garden Club Plant Sale plants for sun and/or shade; deer resistant plants; drought tolerant plants. Pick-up at the May 8 sale. Order now through May 1 at <https://ahgcplant-sale.square.site>. Or stop by and browse the plants for sale.

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Cats in the Belfry



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Have I mentioned in print lately that we, resident owners of “Belly Acres” in Burtonsville, are back to being a five-indoor-cat household? A few months back on a Sunday afternoon, my wife Dina offered up the seemingly harmless explanation for her need to go out that day. She said she was going to the local CVS for a few things, things which I had no interest or need to be involved in, so off she drove, with yours truly having nary a worry in the world. Little did I realize what actually was going on.

I don’t recall exactly the time element because when my wife goes to the store - of any kind, without a chaperone, I know from decades of experience that left to her own devices, she won’t be returning home anytime soon. So how ever long she was gone, I hadn’t a clue or a concern. I know the drill. She’s a big girl, but she is deliberate. At her main adult employer, the former Tivoli’s Restaurant in Roslyn, the owners jokingly nicknamed her “Speedy,” because she wasn’t. Nonetheless, she was however, a valued, trusted and appreciated employee.

Eventually, I saw Dina drive down our driveway. She parked in her usual spot alongside the house. A few seconds later she walked empty-handed into the house and asked for my assistance in unloading whatever was still in the car. “Whatever,” unbeknownst to me, were the two two-year-old tabby siblings she had just “rescued” waiting patiently in their cat carriers on the back seat. Dina could barely control her excitement as she opened the back door for me. At first glance, it became quite obvious what the “whatever” was: it was Louie and Mia. I grabbed one of the cat carriers and walked into the house. Dina had not really mentioned, until she did, that she had been wanting to increase our cat count to five after last year’s two losses: Biscuit and Chino, who both died within six months of one another, from complications due to their diabetes. Brothers in more than arms, Biscuit and Chino, who were nicknamed “The Buff Boys” due to their color, were the sweetest, most loving and affectionate cats one could ever hope to have.

Six months or so since the surviving brother, Biscuit had succumbed to his illness, Dina began her search for a new pair of cat siblings. After a few fits and starts and an application that was rejected, Dina’s month-long

search was finally rewarded on this Sunday. She met the owners in Beltsville, Md. where they exchanged the necessary pleasantries. The couple had to give up the cats because their infant daughter was allergic to them/their dander. Regrettably they needed to find a new home for these two cats whom they had nurtured since they were kittens. They were very generous with their supplies. They gave us wet and dry food, litter, a litter box and some toys. After a few sad goodbyes, Dina drove off for home, cats in tow where cluelessly I had been minding my own business.

We each brought in a cat carrier and once inside, opened their doors and introduced the cats to their new home. Out they scampered and of course began to sniff. Our other cats were nowhere to be found which given the territorial disputes which often occur when new cats are introduced to an existing cat home, was fortunate in that their first steps were not in retreat from some unexpected cat attack. Though I wasn’t of similar mind with respect to Dina’s feeling that we needed more cats, I have nevertheless embraced their arrival. There is no doubt that their presence has brought new life (no pun intended) into our home. Now, everywhere I go, or look, there seems to be a cat to talk to (or a hissing/growling fight to break up). No matter. It’s nothing that experienced cat owners wouldn’t expect. And though I was definitely surprised when I saw the two cat carriers secured in the backseat, now nearly two months later, I couldn’t imagine our life without them.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.



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