



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/GAZETTE PACKET

While the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors issued another statement affirming their selection of Police Chief Kevin Davis, interfaith leaders from throughout the County prepare to lead a prayer vigil in the First Amendment area outside the Fairfax County Government Center, an hour before the Board is scheduled to meet.

Police Chief Begins Job with Trust Deficit

SEE MORE,
ON PAGE 3

Faith leaders question 'flawed' selection process and Supervisors' values during prayer vigil.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
GAZETTE PACKET

Approximately thirty interfaith leaders from across Fairfax County gathered in the "First Amendment" area outside the Fairfax County Government Center at noon, Tuesday, May 4. They exercised their Constitutional right of free speech to lead a prayer vigil in response to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors' recent selection of Kevin Davis as the County Police Chief. Inside the Government Center, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors meeting was about to get underway at 1 p.m.

"[The hiring of Davis] was a decision made in the dark," said Denise Wilson, President of Baptist Ministries of Northern Virginia.

Moderator Rev. Dr. Vernon Walton, the First Baptist Church Vienna senior pastor, addressed his fellow faith leaders from different traditions, denominations, and worship styles, yet holding a common interest. Walton said that they were there to pray and lift to God the concerns of their people and those of County residents about the selection of Kevin Davis as the new police chief.

"No one, especially a police chief, should begin a job with a trust deficit," said Walton, senior pastor of

SEE POLICE CHIEF, ON PAGE 11



Rev. Dr. Vernon Walton, the First Baptist Church Vienna senior pastor, leads his fellow faith leaders in prayer.



Workhouse Arts Center is Opening to Commercial Entities as Attractions

A restaurant and brewery were among the desired occupants they are seeking.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

In the southern part of Fairfax County, the Workhouse Arts Center is preparing to expand in a commercial direction to include a restaurant, brewery or other small business that should increase the foot traffic to this county entity. Opportunities are available to lease two vacant buildings at 9514 and 9517 Workhouse Way, totalling 4,500 square feet of commercial space.

It will be a welcome addition, says Kristen Morsches, who has had a studio in the ceramics building over the past four years. "I think it would be awesome, it would bring a lot of people," she said. "We've always wanted some other draw," besides just the art, she said, adding that it might bring young people too. She said the foot traffic had been increasing until the pandemic and this could reboot the trend.

The two buildings the new tenants will occupy are the closest buildings to Ox Road out in front of the workhouse. They are all-brick buildings, like the rest of the Workhouse.

According to Sharon North, the Section Chief of Communications for the Fairfax County Department of Public Works

and Environmental Services, a commercial entity at the Workhouse is part of their ongoing plan to create a destination "with unique economic development opportunities," she said, via email. "We continue to evaluate land use options to further activate the site in pursuit of this goal," she added. "The renovation of W13/W15 for tenant fit out and use as food establishments is yet another step in creating a mix of uses, activities and community experiences."

There is access to the Workhouse from Ox Road, which is a major thoroughfare from Occoquan through Fairfax County, and Lorton Road, which links directly to Richmond Highway. The site is surrounded by big parking lots too.

"This is an exciting opportunity for new partners to join the vibrant Workhouse community and continue the placemaking that the county began over a decade ago," said Fairfax County Supervisor Daniel G. Storck (D-Mount Vernon).

The walls of the restaurant and brewery could be a place where the artists can exhibit their work, like is seen on the walls of other eateries and county municipal buildings in

SEE WORKHOUSE, ON PAGE 4



ARTIST RENDERING

With a brewery and restaurant, the Workhouse could see more traffic as in this artist rendering.

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NEWS

Fairfax Supervisors Didn't Know About Davis History

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

BY MERCIA HOBSON
GAZETTE PACKET

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



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.

"We are disappointed in how the new police chief was selected and how the public was excluded from the process. This lack

SEE POLICE CHIEF, PAGE 14

'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.



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 necessary 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.

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NEWS



This fire escape is on one of the buildings targeted for renovation.

Workhouse Arts Center is Opening To Commercial Entities as Attractions

FROM PAGE 1
the area.

Historical Evolution

The Workhouse started as a prison over 100 years ago when President Theodore Roosevelt was in office. The District of Columbia Jail was experiencing over-crowding and unsanitary conditions so the Congress approved the purchase of a 1,155-acre tract of land north of the Occoquan River. The first prisoners arrived in 1910, built wooden structures from trees along the bank of the river which were replaced by brick structures in the 1920s. It became overcrowded in the 1990s and Federal legislation required the Lorton Correctional Facility to be closed by Dec. 31, 2001, Workhouse information says.

In 2002, 2,324 acres were sold to Fairfax County for \$4.2 million, and plans were underway to transform it into a cultural arts center, which opened in September 2008. The Workhouse currently consists of six artist studio buildings, supporting more than 100 artists by providing them affordable studios and galleries. In addition, there is a theater, classes, and the Lucy Burns Museum.

The Workhouse Arts Center is operated by the Workhouse Arts Foundation, Inc., a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The organization survives on income in the form of tuition and ticket sales, donations from the surrounding community and DC Metropolitan Region, and in-kind support from Fairfax County, it said on the website.



This building and the building in the distance will be home to the new commercial additions.



Looking from Ox Road, the Workhouse has a few arterial roads that could accommodate more visitors.



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/GAZETTE

Looking west, the rest of the trail to Richmond Highway is slated to be upgraded.

Mount Vernon Bike Trail Resurfacing Work Temporarily Closes Trail

Missing segments of this trail will be part of a bigger project.

BY MIKE SALMON
GAZETTE PACKET

In a step to prepare for an upcoming \$6.5 million Mount Vernon Memorial Highway Trail Project on the south end of the Mount Vernon bike trail, a portion has been blocked off to bicyclists while crews resurface a portion of the trail between the Mount Vernon Plantation and Richmond Highway.

In the fall, crews from the Fairfax County Department of Transportation will embark on the bigger project to complete the missing segments within the Fairfax County portion of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. The project is located adjacent to the north side of Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, between George Washington's Gristmill entrance and Southwood Drive. Once complete, the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail will provide a continuous facility, separated from the roadway, for pedestrians and bicyclists from Richmond Highway to the Mount Vernon Estates. The project consists of the construction of approximately 6,200 linear feet of 10-foot-wide shared use path. The project also proposes a pedestrian bridge adjacent to the existing Mount Vernon Memorial Highway bridge, spanning Dogue Creek. Architectural treatments are incorporated in the design of the pedestrian bridge. The treatments are selected to match the character of the historic George Wash-

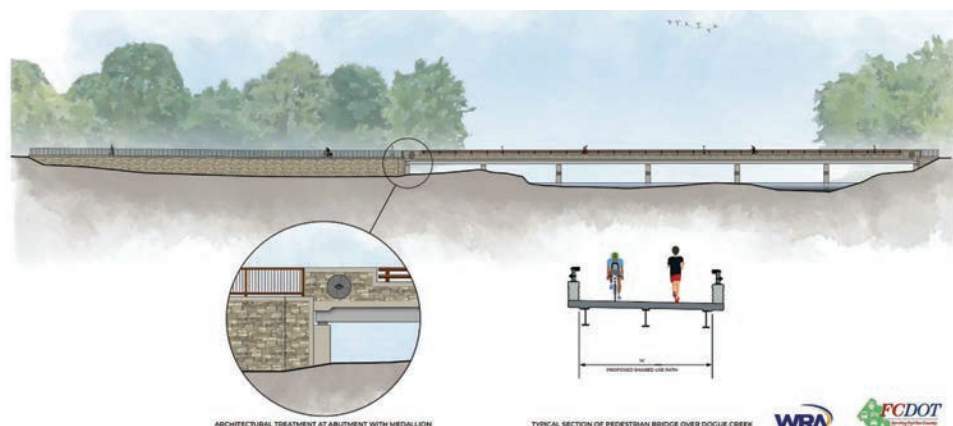


This portion of the trail southwest of the Mount Vernon Plantation is under construction now. Bicyclists navigating this portion to the trail along the Potomac River have to share the road with the cars now.

ington's Gristmill.

Parts of the project that will interest cyclists and pedestrians include a trail separated from the roadway along Mount Vernon Memorial Highway between Grist Mill Road and Patton Boulevard; relocation of the trail between Peartree Landing and Southwood Drive; and a pedestrian-actuated Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon is proposed for the pedestrian crossing on Mount Vernon Memorial Highway at Southwood Drive.

According to Robin P. Geiger, Head of Communications at the Fairfax County Department of Transportation, the project is currently in land acquisition phase. The construction of the project is expected to begin in October 2021. The project is anticipated to be completed by Winter 2022.



ARTIST RENDERING AND MAP FROM FAIRFAX COUNTY

The new bicycle and pedestrian bridge planned for Dogue Creek.

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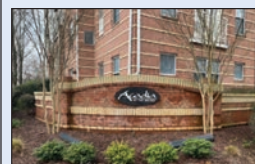


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Taking Out the Trash

In April, 82 volunteers picked up 126 bags of trash, 8 tires, and nearly 2,000 pounds of bulk trash along Little Hunting Creek at ten different sites.

BY DELEGATE PAUL KRIZEK

One of the rites of spring in Mount Vernon is our annual creek and community clean-ups. It is always immensely gratifying to remove bags and bags of trash from our public spaces and equally, to be a part of such a large volunteer effort. However, it can also be depressing to realize that so much litter—from cigarette butts to mattresses, plastic bags to plastic toys, and so much more—continues to make its way into our streams and parks. What can we do? What are we doing in the General Assembly to combat this constant attack on our environment that affects our communities and often circumvents conveniently located trash containers? Every day we see signs of littering everywhere.

Most of us understand that people should not litter and yet it is difficult to get a consensus on how to deal with it. In Mount Vernon and throughout the Commonwealth, there is a strong grassroots effort to attack the problem both legislatively and by massive volunteer clean-ups. This past Saturday, Sen. Scott Surovell and I held our annual creek clean-up at a number of sites on the west side of Richmond Highway along Little Hunting Creek. We collected reams of trash, including grocery carts, tires, and bags and bags of plastic items — trash that would otherwise make its way out to the Potomac River to flow into our oceans and beyond to pollute our planet forever.

In April, 82 volunteers picked up 126 bags of trash, 8 tires, and nearly 2,000 pounds of bulk trash

along the creek at ten different sites. In fact, this was the 20th annual cleanup organized by the Friends of Little Hunting Creek and sponsored by the Alice Ferguson Foundation. The good news is that the marsh is cleaner this year than in previous years due in part to the County's new Operation Stream Shield program, and the trash trap installed behind Mount Vernon Plaza that targets some of the worst trash areas. A big shout out to all of the volunteers from Gum Springs, River Farms, Riverside Estates, Stratford Landing, Wessynton, and Williamsburg Manor, and the leadership of Betsy Martin, President of the Friends of Little Hunting Creek. Thank you to all of you that participated, including the many children and young people. You can read more about that tremendous effort in an April edition of this newspaper.

Legislatively, the General Assembly passed a bipartisan supported law introduced by Delegate Jim Edmunds (Republican from Halifax), that will double the initial fine from \$250 to \$500 for littering with a maximum fine for repeat offenders at \$2,500 and a requirement for community service with a conviction spending ten hours picking up roadside litter. That law will go into effect on July 1st. The goal is not to penalize people but to stop littering by sending a strong message that it is a serious offense to toss trash along the roadside or into other people's yards.

On May 1st, my bill to impose a \$100 penalty for those businesses



Krizek

that pay the \$20 litter tax per establishment late or not at all (that also was increased from the decades-long \$10 fee this May 1st) goes into effect for businesses that opened on or before Jan. 1, 2020, but paid after the May 2, 2020 due date. The fine also includes a late payment equal to 100% of the tax due plus accrued interest. For the most part, the industry was supportive of this law since many businesses are not in compliance with the litter tax, meaning there are hundreds of thousands of fewer dollars going into local litter control efforts, including purchasing trash traps on creeks and educational programs, for example. In addition, continuing to allow businesses to be delinquent with their litter tax with little punishment was unfair to all of the law-abiding Virginia businesses that diligently pay their annual litter tax. There is an additional litter tax of \$30 per business establishment for manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors, and/or retailers of groceries, soft drinks, carbonated water, and beer beverages. If you have questions about the litter tax or registering your business with Virginia Tax, contact their customer service helpline at 804-367-8037.

More importantly, a bill I introduced a few years ago and this year we passed into law (but it won't go into effect until July 1, 2023, for restaurants and by 2025 for all food vendors) prohibits the use of single-use expanded polystyrene food containers, also known as sty-

rofoam — a particularly difficult pollutant to remove from the environment as it breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces.

And, Senator Adam Ebbin's introduced bill that authorizes any locality to impose a tax of five cents per bag on disposable plastic bags by retailers has been the law since the beginning of this year. This law allows the retailer to retain one penny of the five-cent tax for their costs. At least a couple of counties are looking into adopting such an ordinance.

The very best way for us to get rid of litter is to change our buying habits and try to recycle waste and reuse those items too many of us throw away. We are consuming an ever-increasing level of natural resources which is contributing to global climate change, threatening our environment, and disposing of plastic that makes its way to the ocean, which harms marine life and creates hardship for not just those who rely on the ocean for their food and livelihoods, but for all of us who are ingesting food from the seas and lakes, much of which includes nanoparticles of plastic. Replacing plastic water bottles with reusable bottles and thermos for coffee or tea, disposable utensils for reusable ones, metal or paper straws, paper or cloth towels for dish towels and replace those plastic grocery bags with reusable canvas bags, to name a few, go a long way to reducing waste and the amount of nonbiodegradable material in our landfills and oceans. We need to return to the days of reusable items and rethink ways to reduce the need for single-use items, especially our plastic intake.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Noisy Planes and Silent Local Leaders

One audible indicator that the pandemic recovery may be underway is increased air traffic from Reagan-National. Planes approaching or departing (depending on wind direction) fly on their new, non-deviating path over Mount Vernon with the length of Sherwood Hall Lane seemingly the exact and relentless low-altitude route.

What isn't audible, however, is any apparent noise being made by our local officials. Google the airport noise problem and you'll see officials from DC, the City of Alexandria, Arlington and Montgomery County weighing in, lobbying the FAA earnestly on behalf of their residents. But here in Mount Vernon, we hear the sound of crickets from Del. Paul Krizek (D-44), State Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36) and Supervisor Dan

Storck. In fact, my recent email inquiry on this matter to Storck's office went unanswered. If, in fact, any of them are doing anything on this matter, it's not evident on their various forms of constituent outreach.

It's time for some representation and relief, particularly as the airport expands, bringing with it the certainty that even more flights will be approved.

Bob Dane
Mount Vernon

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Board of Supervisors: Davis 'Has Our Trust'

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors released the following statement Tuesday, May 4, in support of Police Chief Kevin Davis:

"Police Chief Kevin Davis was chosen with the full support and confidence of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Following extensive community outreach and input, he was selected after a nationwide search. Chief Davis demonstrated to the Board that he can lead reform efforts, strengthen community relationships, and successfully manage change.

We are aware of the incidents reported in the local media. While they occurred decades ago, we understand the concerns of the community. We expect Chief Davis to respond to questions regarding those incidents in the media and directly with the community and the Board of Supervisors. He has also demonstrated through his leadership that his past experiences have shaped his focus on reform. He has our trust to guide the Fairfax County Police Department through the challenges ahead and build on the reform efforts already made.

As the Chief, we also expect him to be a strong and effective advocate for the types of reforms that are designed to protect at risk communities from police misconduct. The Board will accept nothing less going forward. We know and agree that this is critical to collectively reforming policing and continuing our journey toward One Fairfax.

The Police Chief is hired by the Board of Supervisors and as such, his performance will be evaluated at least annually.

Calling for New Police Chief Search

ACLU People Power Fairfax joins the Fairfax County NAACP in calling for a new search to fill the Fairfax County Police Chief position, this time with community involvement in the vetting process. 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.

Kevin Davis has an impressive

SEE CALLING FOR, PAGE 13

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Celebrate Small Business Week by Supporting Local Businesses

By HOLLY DOUGHERTY
MOUNT VERNON LEE
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



TISARA PHOTOGRAPHY
Holly Dougherty

This week, May 3-9, is Small Business Week and Mount Vernon Lee Chamber would like to recognize the contributions of entrepreneurs and small businesses in our community. These businesses give vitality to the community and ensure a robust economy.

Data shows that 94 percent of Fairfax County business establishments have 50 or fewer employees, and that these companies employ more than 200,000 people. The majority of businesses in eastern Fairfax County fall into this category with many local small and family-owned businesses.

A survey conducted by the US Census Bureau during the pandemic last August showed nearly 79 percent of small businesses surveyed had felt a moderate to large negative impact from the pandemic. It would be safe to say that all businesses have had to change how they operate.

According to George Mason University's Center for Regional Analysis, Northern Virginia lost 130,000 jobs during the pandemic with about 70,000 of those now returned. While most of these jobs are in the hospitality and leisure sectors, local businesses still need to fill some positions to be at pre-pandemic staffing.

The small businesses in our community have adapted and emerged from the pandemic in a strong position to continue offering their services and products. Here are three small businesses that were here before the pandemic and that continue to serve the community.

ServiceMaster Restore NCR is owned by



Unwined in Belle View Shopping center is a destination for wine and craft beers.

Greg and Jane Gandee and the next generation is now stepping into business leadership roles. The Gandeys started this business 40 years ago to provide restoration from water damage, fire and mold remediation.

They were at the Pentagon after 9-11 to help with restoration and now provide all

these services plus cleaning and disinfecting services to prevent covid for businesses and homes.

Another business, Unwined in Belle View Shopping Center is owned and operated by Vanessa Moore. This brick-and-mortar retail store showcases

quality wine, gourmet foods, gifts and unique accessories.

Vanessa and her staff give individual attention to each customer. You walk in the door and are welcomed and provided with information to make smart wine choices. It's fun just to browse all that the store has to



Woodlawn Auto Center has some of the lowest gas prices in the area.



ServiceMaster Restore NCR is local and now provides needed disinfection services.

offer, and a visit is much better than any on-line experience.

Woodlawn Auto Center is another community business that consistently provides quality services. Since 1983, Chris Lambrou and his staff have been providing certified state safety and emissions inspections. They do repairs on both domestic and foreign vehicles, and have 24/7 gas pump service. Without shopping around, you can know that some of the lowest area gas prices are found at Woodlawn Auto.

These are all great businesses and the Chamber's online business directory can help you find other local businesses. You will be delighted with the service and competitive prices they offer. Please visit MountVernonLeeChamber.org and learn more about local businesses.

offer, and a visit is much better than any on-line experience.

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These are all great businesses and the Chamber's online business directory can help you find other local businesses. You will be delighted with the service and competitive prices they offer. Please visit MountVernonLeeChamber.org and learn more about local businesses.

Northern Virginia Tourism: Key to Economic Recovery

Each May, tourism offices across the country celebrate the contributions of the U.S. travel industry during National Travel & Tourism Week (May 2-8, 2021). This past year, tourism has been decimated by the global pandemic, so now, more than ever, it is important to recognize the power of the travel industry, an industry that is vital to the economic recovery of the Northern Virginia region.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the travel and tourism industry was a significant contributor to the U.S. economy and supported millions of hard-working Americans of all backgrounds. The impact of the pandemic on

this industry has been devastating: more jobs lost than any other industry, the largest number of small business closures, and the greatest drops in tax revenue as a result of these losses. According to the U.S. Travel Association, travel spending is down nearly \$500 billion, costing the U.S. economy \$1.1 trillion – 10 times the economic impact of 9/11.

More than a decade ago, the five destinations within Northern Virginia united to create the Northern Virginia Tourism Partnership (NVTP). This region, which includes the City of Alexandria as well as Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties, accounts for approximately

41 percent of the Commonwealth of Virginia's overall tourism economy. Members of the NVTP joined forces to strengthen their community's economic position and leverage the power of regional collaboration.

"During this pandemic, we have seen firsthand how detrimental a plunge in tourism and travel is to our economy," said Patricia Washington, president of the Northern Virginia Tourism Partnership. "As travel intent continues to rise, we recognize that now is a pivotal time to accelerate our recovery efforts in promoting Northern Virginia as a premier travel destination."

This group of destination marketing professionals will utilize their years of

experience in strategic marketing, brand development, management, communication, marketing, sales, visitor engagement, and passion to elevate the visibility of their communities and welcome back visitors this year who are key to the economic recovery of the region. Working alongside Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), the NVTP will roll out several new initiatives that encourage people to plan for travel in a safe and healthy way. Visitors bring new money into the economy, making cash registers ring and hotel rooms sell out. One visitor experience can touch dozens of tourism jobs and have a positive ripple effect on the region's economy.

Learn more at NorthernVA.org.

NEWS

Alexandria Old Town Springtime Art Festival May 15 - 16

Event will host local and national artists showcasing thousands of works in John Carlyle Square

The free, outdoor, fine art event premieres May 15 - 16 from 10 am to 5 pm both days and features enhanced safety guidelines.

Visitors to the free, outdoor event will see thousands of handmade-in-the-USA, exquisite pieces of art across every medium, including life-sized sculpture, paintings, jewelry, pottery, textiles and more.

WHAT: Alexandria Old Town Springtime Art Festival

WHEN: Saturday, May 15 and Sunday, May 16 from 10 am to 5 pm

WHERE: Old Town Alexandria in John Carlyle Square

Navigation: 300 John Carlyle Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

COST: Free and open to the public

WEBSITE: www.ArtFestival.com

CONTACT: Howard Alan Events: info@artfestival.com or 561-746-6615

Alexandria Old Town Springtime Art Festival on May 15 - 16. Art is back in Old Town with safety guidelines and a beautiful location providing ample space for social distancing. Visitors to the free, outdoor event in John Carlyle Square will see thousands of handmade-in-the-USA, exquisite pieces of art from every medium.

Masks are mandatory, directional traffic and social distancing will be enforced to maintain the comfort and safety of artists and guests during this intimate, artistic affair.

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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."

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Police Chief Begins Job with Trust Deficit



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/GAZETTE PACKET

Rev. Dr. Vernon Walton, the First Baptist Church Vienna senior pastor.

FROM PAGE 1

the First Baptist Church Vienna.

“Specifically, many are concerned about the integrity of the process and the more recent findings that have become public since the announcement of the hire. Many are concerned about the lack of transparency and obvious due diligence in this search process,” said Walton. “Speaking the truth is not always comfortable, but it is necessary. Either we are facing a process issue or values issue. Either way, there’s a flaw,” he said.

Walton referenced incidents involving Davis solely by the years 1993 and 1999 when Davis was a police officer. He did not say the incidents led to lawsuits against Davis with claims he used excessive force. Walton did not need to; those gathered learned from the media and other sources after the County Supervisors selected Davis in a closed door meeting.

Walton said Supervisors acknowledged they were not aware of the 1993 or 1999 incidents regarding the new Chief. “That’s a flaw,” Davis said. He questioned how the Board could make an informed decision without dialogue. “Either you, [Supervisors] knew of the history of our Chief and have made a determination that it was so insignificant that you are standing by your choice. Or you didn’t know of these events. And as a result, you are grieved by the fact that critical information with regard to one’s professional career has been purposely withheld, and you want to revisit your decision,” he said.

Walton said it is the Board of Supervisors’ responsibility to tell the community why

they selected Davis, and in light of recent findings, why they are remaining with him. Walton said the trust deficit is not Davis’ alone to own. It is a burden the Board of Supervisors also carries.

“The moment there is a questionable stop, or God forbid, something worse, it will also be on your hands [Supervisors] because of your decision-making process. And so, we gather to pray, praying for God’s will to be done.”

Faith Leaders:

Why are We at the Vigil:

“Justice, transparency that can shed light on truth. That the Supervisors do not operate behind closed doors in the process of a police chief. We, the People, have the right to hear the whole story.”

– Bishop Carroll A. Baltimore, C.A.B. Outreach International Ministries, Inc. Chantilly

“To shine a light on the truth.”

– Rev. Jacquelyn Hollingsworth, Ret. Pastor of AME Church

“I’m here to ask the County Supervisors to fix their mistake and rescind the contract of the new police chief... We need the right person for the job.”

– Rev. Sean S. Roberds, First Baptist Church of Herndon

“Lord, you are about that work of building the beloved community...and you are about that work right here in Fairfax County...Let your spirit fall upon all who are citizens of this County. Let your spirit fall upon

ing, 1-3 p.m. Via Zoom. Federal court records merit a close look by those putting together their genealogical puzzle. And there is no better guide than attorney, genealogist and acclaimed lecturer, Judy G. Russell. Nonmembers are welcome to attend one free event each year.

Register by May 12. Visit the website: <https://mvgenealogy.org>

ONGOING

Local, farm-fresh produce – including strawberries and asparagus – and more will be featured at the now-opened McCutcheon/Mt. Vernon

Farmers Market. From 8 a.m. to noon every Wednesday (through December 22), 16 local farmers and food producers will sell fresh, locally grown vegetables and fruits; meats; Chesapeake Bay seafood; breads and pastries; honey, jams and jellies; milk, cheese and eggs;

herbs and plants; and more. The market is located at the Sherwood Hall Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. All of the items sold at the market are grown or produced by the vendors and come from within a radius of 125 miles.



Rev. Dr. Denise Wilson, Baptist Ministries of Northern Virginia.



Rev. Dr. Scott Ramsey, Pastor at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church in McLean.



Rabbi Michael G. Holzman, Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation, Reston.



Rev. Jacquelyn Hollingsworth, (Ret.) Pastor of AME Church.

the Board of Supervisors. Let your spirit fall upon the Police Department.”

–Rev. Dr. Scott Ramsey, Pastor at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church in McLean

“We are here to do what is right and just for the Fairfax County community.”

– Rev. Dr. Paul A. Sheppard First Baptist Church of Merrifield

“It’s appropriate for us to be here today as clergy because what we are talking about is atonement ... The mistakes that we have to accept, the hardest ones, are the mistakes

we make. Atonement comes when we are given the opportunity to make the same mistake, we choose a different path. And we can only do that when we know what we’ve done is wrong.”

Rabbi Michael G. Holzman, Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation, Reston

“We would like to see justice served by the rescinding of the contract of new Chief Davis. The residents of Fairfax County are depending on us to do the right thing.”

– Rev. Dr. Denise Wilson, Baptist Ministries of Northern Virginia

BULLETIN BOARD

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

TUESDAY/MAY 18

Mount Vernon Genealogical Meet-

Annual Alexandria Jazz Festival on May 29

The City of Alexandria invites the public to the Annual Alexandria Jazz Festival on Saturday, May 29, from 4 to 9 p.m. at Oronoco Bay Park (100 Madison St.). Admission is free.

The Jazz Festival will feature a variety of musicians and styles of jazz throughout the day. Featured artists include:

- 4 p.m. - Cubano Groove (bossa nova)
- 5:20 p.m. - VERONNEAU (contemporary)
- 6:35 p.m. - Eric Byrd Trio (straight)
- 8 p.m. - Joel Ross 'Good Vibes' (modern)

Due to COVID-19 public health guidelines, attendance will be limited and pre-registration for assigned seating will be required in order to maintain physical distance between parties from

different households. Parties will be limited to four people or fewer. Masks covering the nose and mouth will be required for all attendees over age 2. Because space is limited, early pre-registration is encouraged.

Gates open at 3 p.m., and parties must use their assigned entry point. Visitors should plan on bringing a blanket and chairs to enjoy the music from the grass, but must leave umbrellas, tents and pets at home. A

attendees are asked to remain in their assigned seating areas unless visiting the restroom or food vendors.

Visit alexandriava.gov/Recreation to reserve seating and for more information.

SUMMER CONCERTS

Saturday, May; 8 | 5:30pm, 7pm

"A Song in My Heart: A Tuneful Gift for Mom"

Anna Bergman, soprano; Howard Breitbart, piano

Celebrate Mother's Day with internationally acclaimed singer Anna Bergman in favorites from cabaret to operetta. An unforgettable musical treat featuring gems from stage, screen, and popular hits.

Favorites from South Pacific, The Sound of Music, Fiddler on the Roof, and Into the Woods, and other songs made famous by Ella Fitzgerald, Edith Piaf, Julie Andrews, and more.

Enjoy a sparkling toast and a Mother's Day surprise.

<https://www.classicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts/https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-song-in-my-heart-a-tuneful-gift-for-mom-tickets-146510602155>

Thursday, May 13, 5:30pm, 7pm

"Bolero, Barcarola, and Bomba" Choir of Hope and Harmony | Dr. Diana Sáez

The Choir of Hope & Harmony returns to the Secret Garden for a vibrant evening of the synopated melodies and driving rhythms of the classical, dance, and folk traditions of Latin American music. The program features repertoire from Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela, by composers Astor Piazzolla, Rafael Hernández, Inocente Carreño, and others, conducted by leading specialist Dr. Diana Sáez.

Thursday, May 20 | 5:30pm,



The Secret Garden welcomes singers from the Choral Arts Society of Washington and Music Director Scott Tucker for a celebration of choral music by American composers on June 10.

7pm

"Meditations and Fantasies"

Thursday, May 20; 5:30pm, 7pm

David Kim, violin; Jeffrey DeVault, piano

Concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra since 1999, David Kim comes to the Secret Garden for a brilliant program demonstrating the range of his artistry, from the personal to the virtuosic. Highlights include Jules Massenet's "Meditation" from Thais and Pablo de Sarasate's Carmen Fantasy, alongside lesser-known works such as Maria Theresia von Paradis's Sicilienne and Igor Stravinsky's Suite Italienne – in honor of the 50th anniversary of the composer's death.

"Much burden fell on concertmaster David Kim, who carried a number of movements with style and buoyancy." (The Philadelphia Inquirer) This concert has been generously sponsored by Carolyn Fuller

Thursday, May 27; 5:30pm, 7pm

"Musical Gems from the Opera and Ballet" – Chamber Music

Musicians of the Washington National Opera/Kennedy Center

Opera House Orchestra:

Adria Sternstein Foster, flute; Susan Robinson, harp; Oleg Rylatko, violin; Allyson, Goodman, viola; Amy Frost Baumgarten, cello

Relive stunning moments from the opera and ballet stages when musicians from the Kennedy Center's other resident orchestra make a special appearance in the Secret Garden with a unique program of excerpts in imaginative arrangements, including favorite selections from Carmen, Don Giovanni, Tosca and Cavalleria Rusticana.

Thursday, June 3; 5:30pm, 7pm

"I Hear America Singing" Choral Arts Chamber Singers, Scott Tucker, conductor

The Secret Garden welcomes singers from the Choral Arts Society of Washington and Music Director Scott Tucker for a celebration of choral music by American composers, including a world premiere by B. E. Boykin celebrating Mary Church Terrell, an activist in the movements for civil rights and women's suffrage, commissioned by Classical Movements.

Feature Drive-In Movies, Craft Beer, Juneteenth Happenings and More

VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Outdoor, physically distant and virtual happenings celebrate the season

This summer, get outside with al fresco activities. Engage in Black history and culture-themed events from historic sites including Carlyle House and Lee-Fendall House. Spend a cinematic night at the drive-in or hop aboard the tall ship Providence for a cruise. Explore festivities at George Washington's Mount Vernon, hosted with pandemic protocols in place, including the annual Craft Beer Festival, Independence Fireworks, Summer Wine Festival & Sunset Tour and more.

For more summer events and activities in Alexandria, see the listings below and explore more at VisitAlexandriaVA.com/Summer.

Featured Summer Events

Alexandria Drive-In Movie Series
Fridays and Saturdays throughout the summer

Admission: \$40 per car
5001 Eisenhower Ave.,
Alexandria, VA 22304
571-281-2083
alexandriadrivein.com

The Alexandria Drive-In series, located in the city's Eisenhower corridor, announces new films every month and features a popular collection of movie classics and family favorites. Proceeds from the movie series benefit local Alexandria charity, ATHENA Rapid Response Innovation Lab, which funds projects for local students and healthcare workers, including custom-made PPE. Food trucks will be on-site each night providing delicious sweet and savory concessions with online ordering available.

"Sounds of Hope & Harmony" Secret Garden Concert Series

from Classical Movements

Thursdays at 5:30 and 7 p.m. and Saturdays at 4 and 7 p.m. throughout the summer

Admission: \$42 per person
The Rectory at Princess Street,
711 Princess St.,
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-683-6040
classicalmovements.com

"Sounds of Hope & Harmony" returns for a 40-concert season, extending through Aug. 26, 2021. The 2021 season features chamber music, recitals by stars of instrumental performance and opera, fascinating choral programs, jazz, dance and more – as well as four Savory Soirees, pairing elegant concert programs with gourmet meals and wine.

Tall Ship Providence River Cruises and Dockside Tours

Potomac River cruises beginning May 27, 2021; Dockside ship tours available now

Wednesdays through Sundays
Admission: Dockside ship tours - \$16 adults, \$14 military/senior, \$12 children, age 5-12; Cruises between \$45-69 per person

Tall ship Providence,
1 Cameron St.,
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-772-8483
tallshipprovidence.org

Enjoy Potomac River cruises and dockside ship tours aboard Alexandria's resident tall ship, Providence. Each week, Wednesday to Sunday,

dockside ship tours will be offered in the morning and two river cruises will be offered in the afternoon. Specialty cruises will include tast

ing cruises featuring cideries, rum and bourbon distilleries and maritime heritage cruises highlighting maritime history topics and/or guest speakers.

SEE SUMMER EVENTS, PAGE 14

Explore Caves, Critters, and Rocks May 8 Virtual Program

This free Virginia program is being held in support of the International Year of Caves and Karst.

Caves and karst landscapes are found all over the world, yet most people are still in the dark about the great value of these systems and why they must be protected.

For this reason, cave and karst enthusiasts, biologists, hydrologists, geologists, and educators worldwide have selected 2021 as the International Year of Caves and Karst. <http://iyck2021.org/> Across the globe, educational programs are being offered to increase the public's understanding of caves and karst.

The Virginia Cave Board and the Virginia Region of the National Spe-

leological Society (NSS) will join this effort with a day-long virtual program on Saturday, May 8, titled, "The Secrets of Caves, Critters, and Rocks."

The program is free and open to all, although registration is requested.

Presentations will begin at 9 a.m. and include cave video tours, a history of Grand Caverns, and lessons on geology, hydrology, and bats and other cave life.

Some material will align with Virginia Science Standards of Learning and will be geared toward both formal and non-formal educators.

<https://www.vacaveweek.com/iyck>

Calling for New Police Chief Search

FROM PAGE 7

resume and appears well versed in police reform. But the prior incidents, which had been reported in the media at the time, cannot be disputed given that two juries awarded judgments and damages against Mr. Davis.

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

We have reached out to the Board multiple times asking them to rectify the omissions. We requested:

A pause in Mr. Davis' start date.

Disclosure of all documentation the Board had about Mr. Davis, as well as court and administrative filings.

The Board declined to delay the start date; we have only received promises that "more information" will be forthcoming. The Board has sought to hide behind its policy that personnel matters should remain private, even though Virginia law allows them to be public.

To date, the Board has not addressed the incidents at all, much less told us whether or not they were aware of the incidents when they made their decision. Press reports indicate that Mr. Spann, the Black man involved in the 1993 incident, apparently was not interviewed as part of the Fairfax selection process. This is especially troublesome because the Prince George's County Human Relations Commission had concluded that this encounter was "an outrageous incident of police misconduct" and that Davis had used excessive force.

We are confident that the "surprise" revelations could have been avoided if community members had been privy to who was under consideration. Community input was sought, but it was a one-way communication. We led a coalition of police reform advocacy groups https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qdqBE7L_cxEAmnHp-J8OpRNYXlQf7S48q/view which asked that community members be included in the selection process, as the Board had done in 2013 when former Chief Roessler was

SEE CALLING FOR, PAGE 14

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Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Fairfax Water is requesting a permit from Virginia Marine Resources Commission to install, by the horizontal directional drill method, a 14-inch diameter HDPE water transmission line, a minimum 21 feet beneath a 68-foot wide section of Dogue Creek, immediately downstream of the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway (Route 235) bridge crossing in Fairfax County. Send Comments/inquiries within 15 days to: Marine Resources Commission, Habitat Management Division, 380 Fenwick Road, Building 96, Fort Monroe, VA 23651 or jpa.permits@mrc.virginia.gov.

CALENDAR

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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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NEWS

Police Chief Controversy

FROM PAGE 3

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 Ed-

win 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

Calling for New Police Chief Search

FROM PAGE 13

selected. The Board refused.

We cannot stand by and accept the Board's word that Mr. Davis is the "best" candidate without adequate disclosure. If he is, it will be borne out by the documentation on the prior incidents and the information that the Board considered. 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. As our past reports have

shown, communities of color are most likely to be affected by discriminatory policing.

For these reasons, we believe the process must begin anew.

ACLU People Power Fairfax is a grassroots organization that advocates for equal justice for all members of our community, including undocumented immigrants, regardless of race or ethnicity. To achieve this goal, we seek to end voluntary cooperation with ICE by local and state governments and to reform practices and policies that support systemic racism.

ENTERTAINMENT

Summer Events

FROM PAGE 12

**Craft Beer Festival at
George Washington's Mount Vernon**
June 19 to 20, 2021, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Admission: \$40 for members; \$48 for general public

George Washington's Mount Vernon,
3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy.,
Mount Vernon, VA 22121
703-780-2000
mountvernon.org

Sample craft beer from local breweries and see how beer was brewed in the 18th century.

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King & Rye's Cocktail Garden
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King & Rye, 480 King St.,
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-842-2761
kingandrye.com

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